

CAMDEN



GAZETTE.

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Volume I.

Terms.

THE price to Subscribers is THREE DOLLARS per annum, for fifty-two numbers, exclusive of postage; and in all cases where papers shall be delivered at the expense of the publisher, the price will be THREE DOLLARS and FIFTY CENTS a year, to be paid six months after subscribing.

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* * A liberal discount will be made on the bills of those who are constant or considerable customers in this line.

†† If no directions are given with an advertisement, it will be continued till forbid.

October 3, 1816.

COMMUNICATED.

Extract of a letter from New-York, dated October 12, 1816.

"There is great cause of rejoicing for the prosperity of Zion in these parts. At a camp meeting, which commenced the 11th Sept. about 40 miles up the North River from this place, and continued until that day week, the Lord manifested his power and grace, in the awakening and conversion of souls, in a wonderful manner. Speaking after the manner of men, the weather was very unfavorable. Five or six sloop loads of people started from New-York and Brooklin, against a heavy N. E. wind and rain: however, the Lord brought us all safe (through some danger) to the desired haven. The weather continued cloudy and rainy, and we saw not the Sun I think until Saturday, and then but for a short time. In short, I think we had not two days Sun altogether, during the whole of the meeting—in consequence, the public exercise of preaching was much interrupted:—but we prayed the more, which perhaps was better. The New-Yorkers are well prepared for camp meetings—they have no less than 12 large tents, made of sail cloth, under the direction of a committee, for the accommodation of those who go from the City, each person paying a small rate for the same. In some of the largest of these tents (as well as in other country tents, and tents from Brooklin) the exercise of singing and prayer went on in the intervals of preaching, day and night—and the Lord wrought wonderfully. Sinners, come into these tents, (like metal in the ore when cast into the furnace,) would soon be melted, moulded, made new, and come out bright and shining! Loud hosanna's—glory, glory, hallelujah, was heard almost incessantly. I think on a moderate calculation there were one hundred precious souls converted to God! All glory to his adorable name. My soul shared in the blessing of his grace. On the last evening of the meeting, while engaged with mourning souls with other brethren, my own soul was most sweetly filled with that "love which casteth out fear." I felt as a little child. Friday evening after we returned from the camp meeting, we had what they call here a camp meeting prayer meeting; i. e. a general prayer meeting, at which those who have been to camp meeting, are particularly desired to attend. They are generally much blest. There were forty who gave in their names to join society that evening, and several more found peace. Saturday and Sunday 29th and 29th Sept. we had two days

meeting in the woods over the river, about 9 miles from the city. Many that were disappointed in going to the camp meeting, went there, and we had a glorious time. On Sabbath I expect there were more than 2,000 people on the ground. I think more than 20 souls were converted. Tuesday evening following, at prayer meeting, eighteen joined society and three or four more found the Lord. There is at this time a gracious work among the people. Within one month I suppose not much short of 100 have joined our church. Other churches also seem to be somewhat stirred up. We receive accounts from the preachers of revivals and good prospects in almost every direction. Blessed be God, the latter day glory is hastening on. O let all the children of God swell the solemn cry. "Thy Kingdom come" until the glory of God shall fill the whole earth."

LITERARY.

FROM THE PORTICO.

Delaplain's Repository of the Lives and Portraits of distinguished Americans.

Another objection to the writer of the "Lives" under consideration, is, that he forestalls the judgment of the reader, by "summing up" the character, before he has related any of the facts, that enter into the composition of that *sum*. It is not the business of a biographer, to *sum up* characters, but to narrate incidents; from which every reader will form his own conclusions. To set out with telling the reader, what, if he has any sagacity, he must discover, either argues that consummate degree of vanity,—which leads the writer to believe himself the only competent judge; or, it evinces that want of confidence in his own skill, which induces him, like the wretched dauber of a sign, to write on the board, *this is a white bear, or this is a red lion*. And if the painter, or the writer, should unfortunately happen to produce something more like a *sheep*, than a *bear*, his awkwardness is only the more conspicuous, for this open declaration of his intention. In the "Life of Dr. Benjamin Rush" the discrepancy between the *design* and the *execution*, is singularly manifest. The writer begins, by "summing up" the character of this illustrious American, in the following pompous terms: "Considered in relation to the entire compass of his character—as a practitioner, a teacher, a philosopher, and a writer, Dr. Rush must be acknowledged to have been the most distinguished physician that America has produced."—"On the medical mind of his country he has left an impress of his intellect which will not be obliterated, perhaps, for the term of half a century; certainly not during the lifetime of many of those who were educated under the light and sway of his lectures." Now, the reader who should take the trouble, to *sum up* these declarations would very naturally conclude, that it was the writer's intention, to draw the character of a great man; and he would be confirmed in this opinion, perhaps, if a little while afterwards, he should meet with the following "In the course of his long continued and extensive practice, there is scarcely a malady to which human nature

is liable, that did not fall under his notice and his care. Nor is there reason to believe that he often failed to render whatever of service and relief the *state of the profession* was calculated to afford. But his highest excellence as a physician lay in *his knowledge and treatment of fever*. It was in his combats with that form of disease, that he manifested, at once, the *strength of a giant* and the *skill of an adept*. Although it must be acknowledged that he was frequently vanquished in the conflict, the misfortune arose, *not from any fault in him*, but from the *imperfect condition of the art* which he practised."—"What Boerhaave was to the school of Leyden, and Cullen to that of Edinburgh, was he to the medical school of Philadelphia." But how will he be disappointed, to find that this man, who was "an awakening spirit" to the minds of his pupils; who *seldom failed* "in his combats" with diseases, except from the *imperfect condition of the art which he practised*; who has left "an impress of his intellect, on the medical mind of his country, which will not be obliterated, perhaps, for the term of half a century;" how will the reader be disappointed, we say, to find, that the doctrines and sentiments of such a man, have *descended with him to the grave!* Let us hear, how this ingenious manufacturer of characters, makes this *most distinguished teacher and philosopher* that America has produced a mere propagator of ridiculous doctrines and "crude notions."

"His unqualified adoption of many of the crude notions of Dr. Brown led him to mingle a *mass of error, by no means inconsiderable*, with the salutary truths which flowed from his lips. His doctrine of *life, which he laboured with patience, and fortified with great ingenuity and address, his theory of fever*, ("It was in his combats with *that form of disease*, that he manifested, at once, the *strength of a giant* and the *skill of an adept*,") his unity of disease, and his rejection of nosology—all of them the offspring of Brunonian principles—will not long survive their illustrious author. We might almost have said that they descended with him to the grave. *Nor does a better fate await his doctrines respecting the functions and uses of the spleen, the liver, and the thyroid gland; to neither of which, indeed, were his eloquence and elevated standing able to give popularity or weight, even amongst his favourite pupils in the university.* But, to make amends for this, many of his *practical precepts* will be recollected and referred to as *canons in medicine*, while the human constitution and the nature of the diseases to which it is subject, shall remain unchanged."

Now, if we give credit to the judgment of the writer, that "Dr. Rush was the most distinguished physician that America has produced;" how are we to believe, that, "as a teacher," his doctrines and sentiments, were full of *error*; and that as "a philosopher," his views were neither *original* nor *just*—that his *precepts* are to be considered as *canons* to last forever, while the *theories*, upon which those precepts

must have been founded, are too absurd to "survive their illustrious author"? Setting aside the absurdity of calling Dr. Rush the author, and the *illustrious author*, too, of principles, which are "all of them, the offspring of Dr. Brown;" there is a variance between the *sum*, and the constituent *figures*, of his character, which we have, in vain, endeavoured to reconcile.

We have seen what he was, as "a teacher," and as "a philosopher," let us now see, whether, as "a writer," he stands any better chance, of being considered "the most distinguished physician that America has produced." "To the reputation of fine writer, (says this biographical *Aritbmetician*) which belongs not to the province of science but of literature, Dr. Rush had no pretension." How then, is he so "distinguished," as "a writer"? Is it for the *bulk* of his writings; or for the *excellence of their matter*? It surely cannot be for the former, because some physicians of America have written quite as much, or more; and as for the latter, the *medical theories, contained in his works, "appear to be destined to a premature death;" the metaphysics and views of mental affections* are "among the most unsatisfactory of the professor's speculations;" and the "miscellaneous essays" contain sentiments, of which the "pernicious effects have not yet entirely ceased to exist!" So much for the *matter*. But notwithstanding all these faults, "for nearly *three thousand years* past, but few physicians, *equal in greatness*, have appeared in the world; nor is it probable that the number will be materially increased for ages to come. A great physician is as rare a personage as a great monarch." Much more rare, it should seem; for, within the last three thousand years, there have been many great monarchs.

"Such was Dr. Rush"—and *such* with very little change of colouring, is the picture of every hero, which the writer has attempted to draw. They are all such men as *nature forms but once in a century*; and yet all these were borne, and flourished in the same age! Happy, happy country! "In other regions whole centuries pass away, and no such intellectual luminaries appear."

It would be tedious to go through the whole of "the Lives," as we should only be compelled, to repeat the same terms of disapprobation, upon all. The writer has not related a single anecdote, of any of the illustrious men, of whom he professes to be the Biographer: nor has he given a single fact, or incident, that does not, more properly, belong to the province of the Historian. The same fulsome adulation, the same invincible love of hyperbole, lead him into the same incongruities, in the delineation of all his characters. Fisher Ames was "a statesman and an orator of transcendent abilities"—"a patriot and legislator of tried integrity"—"an advocate and a counsellor of exalted standing"—"Cicero himself was scarce possessed of more varied attainments." "There is nothing very extravagant in all this; and, though nature does not often form such men