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The Honorary Medal of the College was given to Peacock in appreciation of this gift. Alas, the specimens vanished along with many others in the bombing of the College during the Second World War (Personal communication from Miss Jessie Dobson). The London Chest Hospital Museum also contained some of Peacock’s specimens, but this too was a casualty of the War.

One of Peacock’s biographers, N. Flaxman, has calculated that Peacock, during his entire career, over a period of 35 years, exhibited a total of 158 specimens before the Pathological Society of London. Most of these were written up and published, either in the Transactions of the Society or elsewhere. Fortunately, most of Peacock’s writings, including the two editions of his famous book, are to be found in the Collection that bears his name, and which serves to remind us of the skill and art of this industrious Victorian physician.


References

British Tradition—Restated
Comprehensive Medicine

It is difficult to define the quality which characterises the city or community physician, for it is shared by all good doctors. It is an attitude of mind which curiosity is heavily laced with compassion; which always remembers that medicine is the servant of the patient; which, in bringing advances in knowledge to the bedside, pays attention to the quality as well as the quantity of life; which is prepared, under certain circumstances, not to investigate, not to treat, but to take responsibility which is all too easy to shelve in 1967. This kind of attitude is not amenable to measurement and can only be taught by precept; for these two reasons it may be underweighted in our training programme, though it will flourish in proportion to the degree to which students are exposed to community problems in close cooperation with public health departments of boroughs and colleagues at so-called “nonteaching” hospitals. Much attention is paid nowadays to study in depth, but it is just as important to encourage a breadth of approach.—John F. Stokes: A British View of the American Scene. The Pharos of Alpha Omega Alpha 30: 91, 1967.


100 Years Ago
A Routine Temperature Chart
Enteric Fever, Digitalis Treatment


Early Transplantation Experiments (circa 1750)

The success of this operation [transplanting teeth] is founded on a disposition in all living substances, to unite when brought into contact with one another; although they are of a different structure; and even although the circulation is only carried on in one of them.

This disposition is not so considerable in the more perfect or complex animals, such as quadrupeds, as it is in the more simple or imperfect; nor in old animals, as in young; for the living principle in young animals, and those of simple construction, is not so much confined to, or derived from one part of the body; so that it continues longer in a part separated from their bodies, and even would appear to be generated in it for some time; while a part, separated from an older, or more perfect animal, dies sooner, and would appear to have its life entirely dependent on the body from which it was taken.

Taking off the young spur of a cock, and fixing it to his comb, is an old and well known experiment.

I have also frequently taken out the Testis of a cock and replaced it in his belly, where it has adhered, and has been nourished; nay, I have put the Testis of a cock into the belly of a hen with the same effect.—John Hunter: The Natural History of the Human Teeth. London, Robert Hardwicke, 1865, p. 156.

100 Years Ago
Routine Temperature of Patients

For the last sixteen years my attention has been uninterruptedly directed to the course pursued by the temperature in diseases of various kinds. The thermometer has been regularly employed at least twice daily, and in febrile patients from four to eight times a day, and even oftener, in special circumstances, for all the patients in my wards. I have also experienced the applicability of this method of investigation in very numerous cases in private practice. In this way I have gradually got together a material which comprises many thousand complete cases of thermometric observations of disease, and millions of separate readings of the temperature. The more my observations were multiplied the more firmly rooted did my conviction become of the unparalleled value of this method of investigation, as giving an accurate and reliable insight into the condition of the sick.—C. A. WUNDERLICH: Preface of First Edition. On the Temperature in Diseases: A Manual of Medical Thermometry. London, The New Syndenham Society, 1871 [p. v].
This technique should permit more precise identification of endocardial fibroelastosis in infants and may provide supporting evidence of subendocardial myocardial infarction in adults. The ability to recognize fibrosis may, in addition, permit clearer distinction between the restrictive effects of the endocardial lining and the hemodynamic effects of associated valvular or other lesions.

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References


100 Years Ago

Concerning the Temperature in Acute Rheumatism

Abnormally mild cases are particularly common, or rather cases in which the temperature is either very slightly or, perhaps, not at all affected; although the local condition is not always correspondingly insignificant. Indeed, we cannot always tell why the fever should remain so trifling, or perhaps be altogether absent, when the joint affection is very severe; and cardiac complications are by no means excluded by the absence of fever. Cases with slight fever (not above 38.5° C.) (101.3° F.), or with only subfebrile temperatures, constitute about one third of all the cases of acute rheumatism. All other deviations from the course described, comprehending more or less severe cases altogether, do not, at least in our country, amount to more than one sixth of the cases.—C. A. Wunderlich: On the Temperature in Diseases: A Manual of Medical Thermometry. London, The New Sydenham Society, 1871, p. 398.


A Quotation for Interpretation

? Diet and Health (Ancient Greek)

An instinct, perhaps inherited, prompts me to introduce my subject with a text. A Greek author, centuries ago, left these words behind, but not his name: "You ask of the gods health and a beautiful old age; but your tables are opposed to it; they fetter the hands of Zeus."—E. W. Emerson, M.D.: Henry Thoreau: As Remembered by a Young Friend. Thoreau Foundation, Concord, Massachusetts, 1968.