

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Mr. Lefanu, Librarian, Royal College of Surgeons of England, Dr. George Edwards, Hon. Librarian, St. George's Hospital, for permission to examine and reproduce extracts from the Brodie MSS. in their possession.

REFERENCES

1. BRODIE, B., *Autobiography*, arranged by Charles Hawkins, London, Longmans, 1865.
2. ——— Experiments and observations on the different modes on which death is produced by certain vegetable poisons, *Phil. Trans.*, 1811, 101, 194.
3. ——— Further experiments and observations on the action of poisons on the animal system, *Phil. Trans.*, 1812, 102, 205.
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5. THOMAS, K. B., Ether used to produce insensibility in 1821, *Brit. J. Anaesth.*, 1962, 34, 588.
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WHO WERE THE EDITORS OF  
'THE ANNALS OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY'?

THE short-lived journal, *The Annals of Medicine and Surgery: or Records of the Occurring Improvements and Discoveries in Medicine and Surgery and the Immediately Connected Arts and Sciences*<sup>1</sup> appeared quarterly—31 March, 30 June, 30 September, and 31 December—in two volumes, 1816–17.<sup>2</sup> It contained sections for (1) original papers—the only notable one was by Prout; (2) reviews—the greater part of each issue; (3) 'Intelligence'. The latter section always included an interesting tabulated 'Comparative View of the State of the Atmosphere, prevalent Diseases, and Mortality of the Metropolis', indicative of the current interest in meteorological theories of disease. The Royal College of Physicians' copy of Volume I has inscribed on a fly-leaf: 'To Dr Baillie From the Editors', and from internal evidence it would seem that there were *two* editors.<sup>3</sup> It would be interesting to know the identity of these gentlemen.

There is a suggestion by one of William Prout's obituarists that Prout and John Elliotson were responsible for the journal's appearance.<sup>4</sup>

It has been said that this journal was conducted by Dr. Elliotson and Dr. Prout; but the correctness of this statement we have no means of ascertaining. The first volume of the *Annals of Medicine and Surgery* is inscribed in a Latin dedication to Matthew Baillie, M.D., London; the second volume, in the same language, to James Hamilton, M.D., Edinburgh, at that time Physician to the Royal Infirmary.

However, none of Prout's writings makes any allusion to such a responsibility, and I understand that Dr. Harley Williams<sup>5</sup> cannot recall any such indication from Elliotson's work. Does any historian have proof for this claim? It is possible that the editorship might be discovered from internal evidence, and I therefore offer a few remarks which, though conflicting, may shed some light on the problem for other historians of medicine.

1. Prout and Elliotson were very good friends. They had been contemporaries at Edinburgh, and afterwards had walked the wards together at the Borough hospitals of St. Thomas's and Guy's. There are many references to the effect that Elliotson had

submitted pathological samples to Prout for analysis.<sup>6</sup> Prout suggested an iodine treatment for goitre which was successfully applied by Elliotson at St. Thomas's.<sup>7</sup>

2. An anonymous article signed 'A.B.', entitled 'Case of an earthy Mass discharged from an encysted Tumour in the Nape of the Neck',<sup>8</sup> which appeared in the June issue of the *Annals* in 1816, was in fact by Elliotson. This was revealed by Prout in 1819 when he published an analysis of the men so discharged.<sup>9</sup> However, such was the burden of anonymity, Elliotson had referred to Prout in the original note simply as 'A chemist'. Although this anonymity might be held as indicative of Elliotson's connection with the journal, there is, on the other hand, a signed communication by Elliotson addressed to the editors in the second volume.<sup>10</sup> This could mean that Elliotson was *not* an editor, or that he was only co-editor of Volume I, but not Volume II; or just a deception.

3. Prout's important 'Inquiry into the Origin and Properties of the Blood'<sup>11</sup> was published incompletely in three parts in the first volume, and later republished in a slightly abridged form (and again incompletely) in Thomson's *Annals of Philosophy*.<sup>12</sup> Prout gave as his reason for republication that 'the Work in which it (originally) appeared had a very limited circulation'.<sup>13</sup> But he omitted to refer to the journal by name! In the fourth issue there appeared the note, 'The Editors are sorry to hear from Dr. Prout that particular circumstances have prevented him from concluding his paper on Blood.'<sup>14</sup> This may indicate Prout was not an editor.

4. The title-page of both volumes stated that the journal was 'sold by most of the principal booksellers in the United Kingdom, and on the Continent'. The original publishers were E. Cox and Son, St. Thomas's Street, Borough (Southwark), perhaps significantly close to the United hospitals of St. Thomas's and Guy's. The final two numbers (7 and 8) were published by Thomas and George Underwood of Fleet Street.

5. Several reviews bear the mark of Prout's authorship. It is reasonable to suppose that if Prout were an editor he would himself have reviewed any books which related to his own research interests. We should therefore pay particular attention to the analyses of Scudamore's *Nature and Cure of Gout*<sup>15</sup> and Marcet's *Chemical History and Treatment of Calculous Diseases*.<sup>16</sup> For example, consider these two analogous passages from the review of Marcet's 'Experiments on the Chemical Nature of Chyle'<sup>17</sup> and Prout's essay on blood:

*Marcet review.* The reviewer commented on Marcet's claim that some chyme he had examined contained albumen.

We cannot account for the presence of albumen in this case, but we will venture to ask—ought a substance to be called albumen, till it be found to possess all the properties of the albumen of the blood of the animals from which it is taken. . . . The chyle, even when it enters the blood, contains, besides the albuminous principles, a considerable proportion of a substance which has been compared to caseous matter or cream, and moreover occasionally of a perfectly developed oil or fat, especially when the animal has been fed on flesh. . . . Vauquelin compared it to the fatty matter which he found in the brain, and *we made the same remark upon examining the chyle some time ago*.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Prout's article*

I have ventured to call by the name of *incipient* albumen, a peculiar principle uniformly found in the chyle of the mammalia, and which appears to decrease in quantity as the two albuminous principles increase. Concerning the nature of this principle, various opinions have been entertained. One of the oldest and most common has been, that it is similar to the caseous principle of milk. . . . What makes the resemblance still more striking is, that in the chyles an oily or

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butyraceous fluid is very often present, which rising to the top of its serum, in conjunction with the caseous-like principle of which we have been speaking, forms an appearance exactly resembling the cream of milk; and these principles are often so abundant, especially in the chyle of animals fed on flesh, that, as Dr. Marcet has observed, they may be readily detected, even in the blood itself. Vauquelin remarked the near resemblance of this fatty matter to that which he had extracted from the brain, and *I made the same remark before I had seen Vauquelin's paper. . . .*<sup>19</sup>

It may prove possible to identify other reviews as Elliotson's, for books on animal magnetism and the doctrines of Gall and Spurzheim were analysed.

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## REFERENCES

1. Copies at Royal College of Physicians, Royal Society of Medicine, Manchester University Medical Library. Hereafter referred to as *A1* and *A2*.
2. The fact that second editions of nos. 1, 2, and 3 were announced for the summer of 1818 suggests that these first issues were sold completely; cf. *A2*, p. 484.
3. Yet *A1*, p. 240, refers to a 'Committee of Editors'.
4. *Edin. med. surg. J.*, 1851, 76, 144n.
5. A recent biographer of Elliotson. See his *Doctors Differ*, 1946.
6. E.g. *Med. Chir. Trans.*, 1818, 9, 474 (a blood sample); *ibid.*, 1819, 10, 390 (ammonium urate calculus).
7. W. Prout, *Chemistry, Meteorology and the Function of Digestion*, 1834, p. 100n. On Prout, see my forthcoming article, 'Life and Work of William Prout'.
8. *A1*, pp. 129-30.
9. *Annals of Philosophy*, 1819, 14, 233.
10. 'On the efficacy of vaccination against distemper in dogs', *A2*, pp. 1-2. Also, at *A2*, p. 112, 'Editors return thanks to Dr. Elliotson' for his communication.
11. *A1*, pp. 10-26, 133-57, 277-89.
12. *Op. cit.*, 1819, 13, 12-25, 265-79.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 13. Yet at *A2*, p. 158, the editorial reviewer says 'as our Work is very extensively circulated. . . .' In another review, it was remarked that Magendie had evidently not seen Prout's articles in Vol. I.
14. *A1*, p. 412. The missing part was read to the Royal Society in 1822, *Phil. Trans.*, 1822, 377-400.
15. *A1*, pp. 367-84.
16. *A2*, pp. 440-53.
17. *A1*, pp. 46-53, a review of *Med. Chir. Trans.*, 1815, 6, 618.
18. *A1*, p. 52, my italics.
19. *A1*, pp. 144-5, my italics.

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*The Royal College of Physicians of London. Portraits*, edited by GORDON WOLSTENHOLME, the portraits described by DAVID PIPER, London, J. & A. Churchill, Ltd., 1964, illus., pp. 468, 75s.

The long editorial experience of Gordon Wolstenholme, Director of the Ciba Foundation, London, has been most felicitously directed towards the production of