

VIII. Account of a BOOK.

The History of Poland in several Letters to Persons of Quality, giving an Account of the Ancient, and Present State of that Kingdom, Historical, Geographical, Physick, Political and Ecclesiastical, &c. with several Letters relating to Physick. Vol. I. To which is added a new Map of Poland. By Bern. Connor, M. D. Fellow of the Royal Society, and Member of the Colledge of Physicians, &c. London Printed for Dan. Brown, &c. 1697. in 8vo.

IN this History of *Poland*, the Author gives an Account first of its Origine; that about the middle of the Sixth Century, it came to be a distinct Nation, when as yet it had no Cities, no Money, or written Laws; the first City was then Built by *Lechus* near the State of *Brandenburgh*, naming it *Guesna*; then treating of their Policy and Princes, which at first were called *Dukes*, he gives a particular History of all their *Dukes* and *Kings*, down to the present King *Frederic Augustus*. These he divides into Four *Classes*, the first beginning *An. 550.* ending *An. 830.* when the Government came into the Families of *Pirsius* and *Fagello*,

to

to the Year 1574. which he prosecutes through the Reigns of several Kings, down to *Sigismund II.* when the *Jagellonic* Race ended, which make the Second and Third *Classes*, casually making several Remarks on the the Government, Nature of the People, and the like; with the times and occasions of the Building of several of the chief *Towns* and *Cities*. The time of the *Teutonic* Knights Establishment in *Prussia*; how the Latin Tongue came to be so frequent in use, when the *Lutheran* Religion came to be there Propagated; the *Jocular* Common-wealth of *Babina*, when and how Instituted. The fourth *Classis* consists of mix'd Families, from the year 1574. to 1674. and here he observes when Courts of Judicature were first Erected, with the Original of the *Cossacks*, and extent of their Dominions; their Country, Character, Customs, Religion, &c. and in all these Reigns gives an Account of their Wars and Victories, Policies, &c. with a particular Relation of the famous Raising the Siege of *Vienna*, by *John Sobieski* late King of *Poland*; and gives an Account of a Dispute, he had himself in his Court with several Divines, in the King's presence, touching the seat of the Rational Soul in the Body, and cause of Death, not from the Separation of the Soul from the Body, but more properly from the Cessation of the Heart's Motion, the other being rather a Consequent thereof. Here he relates the Circumstances of the Princess's Marriage to the Duke of *Bavaria*, whom the Author attended as her Physician, in her Journey from *Poland*, the particulars whereof, with her Reception at *Brussels*, he relates, and gives some Account of the Election of the present King, which ends his History of their Kings.

Next he gives a *Geographical* Description of *Poland*, its extent, Provinces, Towns, Products, &c. As to the Towns, he says, the greatest part thereof are Timber built, and Thatch'd, the whole Number of Cities, Towns and Villages, amounts to near 170000, of which not above Twenty are Walled; gives a particular Account of the University at *Cracow*, its Colleges and Learning, with the Churches and Monasteries there, as likewise of the Salt Mine there, with the Manufacture and Revenue thereof, amounting to Eight hundred thousand *Polish* Florins yearly: 'Tis observeable, that in some places of the Mine, the Vapours will take Fire from a Candle, so that they dare not work there. He also tells us of a particular sort of *Manna*, gathered off the Ground, of which they make several sorts of Dishes for their common Food. Treating of *Prussia* he shews their way of making Glass: Speaking of the City of *Thorn*, he says, they have in a publick Library there, two of *Cicero's* Epistles written upon Tables of Wax. In the Province of *Red Russia*, on the Shoar of the River *San*, are found Trees Buried, very hard, and black as *Ebony*: Near the City *Kiow*, they shew the Bodies of Persons long since Dead, and Preserved in Caves of a Sandy dry Stone. There are several Observables touching the Liberality, and other particular Customs of the People, as the remains of Heathenish Superstition and Sacrifices still used, viz. by those of the Province of *Samogitia*, &c. for which we refer to the Book itself.

Next he comes to speak of the Origine and Extent of the great *Dutchy* of *Lithuania*, with the Description of its Towns, and Succession of its *Dukes*. In *Vilna* the chief

chief City thereof is a Bell, which requires above Twenty four strong Men to ring it; and here likewise he mentions several Idolatrous Customs and Rites formerly observed; and speaking of the Woods and Deserts of *Lithuania*, he gives the Relation of several Children that have been bred up and suckled by the Bears, with their Cubs, with Observables of their eating raw Flesh, wild Honey, and Crabs; with the Difficulty of making them go Upright, bringing them to Speak, and the like, which ends this Volume.

At the end of this Treatise the Doctor gives a Compendious *Plan* of the Body of Physick, or his *Corpus rationale Medicum*, being his *Chymical* and *Anatomical* Method; for understanding the *Oeconomia Animalis*, the Nature of Diseases, and the *Materia Medica*, as it was by him demonstrated at *Oxon*, *London* and *Cambridge*; first of the *Elements*, *Fabrick*, and *System* of the *World*; then of the *Elements* of *Terrestrial Bodies*, next the *Structure* and parts of the *Human Body*, in all its particulars; and lastly of the Union of the *Soul* and *Body*; coming to speak of the *Materia Medica*, he affirms, *All inward Diseases have their first Seat in the Mass of Blood*; that there are no *Specifick* Medicines for any particular part of the Body, and that outward Applications cannot avail much for inward Distempers. He divides all the *Materia Medica* into *Two Classes*, evacuating and altering Medicines; where he reduces the *Chymistry* and *Reason*, the Nature and Operations of Medicines; this, he says, he endeavoured to demonstrate at *Oxford*, &c. and here he gives hopes of his obliging the Publick in a few Years, with a Latin Treatise of the *Principles of Physick*, and of the *Oeconomia Animalis*; he subjoins a farther Explication and Vindication of the *Plan* of the

Animal Oeconomy; and here, in order to a general view of the Universe, he proposes *Matter* as the first general *Principle* of all Bodies; and conceives *Matter* to be the only thing we have any clear Notion of, its Properties are *divisibility* and *impenetrability*, one part of *Matter* differs from another only in bulk, motion, or figure, and according as it differs from others in one or more of these Qualities, they will constitute different Bodies; and he requires but these three Qualities, to give a general Account of the different parts of the World, as the *Stars*, the *Ætherial Fluid*, and *Terrestrial Bodies*: The *Atoms* of the first *Matter* have a less *Bulk* and more *Motion*, the *Atoms* of the Second *Matter* are properly *Spherical*, have as little *Bulk* but less *Motion*; the *Atoms* of the third *Matter* are of an *irregular Figure*, and *none*, or a *slower Motion* than the rest; the *Stars* consist of the first, the *Ætherial Fluid* of the Second, *Planets* and *Terrestrial Bodies* of the third: The two first are exterior Agents, and rather influence a *Motion* into the *Terrestrial Bodies*, than enter into their *Composition*. These then are his *Principles* by which he explains the *Phenomena* of *Nature*.

The last Letter is an Account of a Latin Treatise lately Publish'd by the Author, called *Evangelium Medici, seu Medicina Mystica de suspensis Naturæ legibus*; in which he compares *supernatural Effects* Philosophically, with *Natural* ones, and explains them by the Principles of *Physick*; and first he gives the reason of his Attempt, which was to Answer those that denied the Being of *Supernatural Effects*, because they could not apprehend them; in order to prosecute his Design, he lays down for a *Basis*, the Structure of the Human Body,

Body, as far as it is discoverable by *Anatomy, Microscopes* and *Chymistry*; next the *Cause, Nature, and Laws of Motion*, which is the only true Cause of all natural *Phænomena*; and the Suspensions of these Laws of *Motion*, are the only Causes of all *Supernatural Effects*: Three ways these Laws may be suspended, and by one or more of those ways of Suspension, he conceives all *Supernatural Effects* may be solved. By *Suspension* he does not understand a changing or abrogating the Laws, only their Course being stopt for a time, while the Effect is produced. For a fuller Explication of this curious, and difficult Subject, we refer to the Learned Doctor's Letter, or rather to the Treatise it self, of which this Letter is but a short Abstract.

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