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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ENCOMIUM ARTIS MEDICAE ***

A few typographical errors have been corrected. They have been marked with [popups](#).



ENCOMIUM ARTIS MEDICÆ

DESIDERIO ERASMO ROTERODAMO AUTORE.

DE LOF DER GENEESKUNDE

VAN

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS.

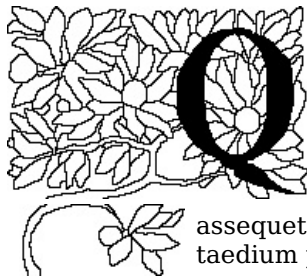
Nuper dum bibliothecam recenseo, doctissime Afini, venit in manus oratio quaedam olim mihi nihil non experienti, in laudem artis medicae declamata; continuo visum est orationem non optimam optimo dicare medico, ut vel tui nominis lenocinio studiosorum centuriis commendetur.

Erit hoc interim mei in te animi qualecunque documentum, dum dabitur aliud nostra necessitudine dignius.

Bene vale.

Lovanii tertio Idus Martias Anno MDXVIII.

DECLAMATIO ERASMI ROTERODAMI
IN LAUDEM ARTIS MEDICÆ.



uo saepius est ars medicinae, meditatatis et elaboratis orationibus, hoc ex loco, apud plerosque vestrum praedicata, idque a viris singulari facundia praeditis, auditores celeberrimi, hoc mihi sane minus est fiduciae, me vel tantae rei, vel aurium vestrarum expectationi satisfactorum. Neque enim rem prope divinam nostra facile assequetur infantia, neque vulgaris oratio de re toties audita taedium possit effugere.

Verumtamen ne salutari maiorum instituto videar deesse, qui solenni encomio juventutis animos ad huius praeclaræ scientiæ studium, admirationem, amorem, excitandos, accendendos, inflammandosque censuerunt, experiar et ipse pro mea virili (siquidem me dicentem adjuvabit vestra tum attentio, tum humanitas, favore candido prosequens, quem ad hoc muneris vestra adegit autoritas) medicae facultatis dignitatem, autoritatem, usum, necessitatem, non dicam explicare, quod prorsus infiniti fuerit negotii, sed summatim modo perstringere, ac veluti confertissimas locupletissimæ cujuspiam reginae opes, per transennam (ut aiunt) studiosorum exhibere conspectibus.

Cuius quidem ea vel praecipua laus est, primum quod nullis omnino praeconiis indiget, ipsa abunde per se vel utilitate, vel necessitate commendata mortalibus. Deinde quod toties iam a tam praeclaris ingeniis praedicata, semper tamen novam laudum suarum materiam, ingeniis etiam parum foecundis ex sese suppeditat, ut nihil necesse sit, eam vulgato more invidiosis illis contentionibus, non sine caeterarum disciplinarum contumelia depraedicare. Quin illud magis metuendum, ne domesticas illius dotes, ne germanam ac nativam amplitudinem, ne majestatem humana conditione maiorem, mortalis oratio non assequatur. Tantum abest, ut vel aliena contumelia, vel asciticiis Rhetorum fucis, aut amplificationum praestigiis sit attollenda. Mediocrium est formarum, deformiorum comparatione, aut cultus lenociniis commendari; res per se vereque praeclaras, satis est vel nudas oculis ostendisse.

Iam primum enim (ut ad rem festinemus) reliquae artes quoniam nulla non magnam aliquam vitae commoditatem attulit, summo quidem in pretio fuere. Verum medicinae quondam tam admirabilis fuit humano generi inventio, tam dulcis experientia, ut eius autores, aut plane pro diis habiti sint, velut Apollo, et huius filius Aesculapius, imo (quod ait Plinius) singula quosdam inventa deorum numero addiderunt, aut certe divinis honoribus digni sint existimati, velut Asclepiades, quem Illyrici numinis instar receptum Herculi in honoribus aequarunt. Non equidem probo quod fecit antiquitas, affectum sane ac iudicium laudo, quippe quae recte et senserit et declararit, docto fidoque medico nullum satis dignum praemium persolvi posse.

Etenim si quis secum reputet, quam multiplex in corporibus humanis diversitas, quanta ex aetatibus, sexu, regionibus, coelo, educatione, studiis, usu varietas, quam infinita in tot milibus herbarum (ne quid interim dicam de caeteris remediis) quae alibi aliae nascuntur, discrimina. Tum quot sint

Attentio.

Propositio.

*Laudandi ratio per
comparationem.*

gnômé.

*Dignitas et
autoritas
medicinae.
Inventio artis.*

*Torquet exemplum
in suum
commodum.*

A difficultate.

morborem genera, quae trecenta nominatim fuisse prodita scribit Plinius, exceptis generum partibus, quarum omnium quam nullus sit numerus, facile perpendet, qui tantum norit, quot formas in se febris vocabulum complectatur, ut ex uno caetera aestimentur; exceptis his, qui quotidie novi accrescunt, neque secus accrescunt, quam si de composito cum arte nostra bellum suscepisse videantur. Exceptis venenorum plus mille periculis, quorum quot species sunt, tot sunt mortis genera, totidem remediorum differentias flagitantia. Exceptis casibus quotidianis lapsuum, ruinarum, ruptionum, adustionum, luxationum, vulnerum, atque his consimilium, quae prope cum ipso morborum agmine ex aequo certant. Denique qui cogitet, quanta sit in corporum coelestium observatione difficultas, quae nisi cognoris, saepenumero venenum erit, quod in remedium datur. Ne quid interim commemorem saepe fallaces morborum notas, sive coloris habitum spectes, sive lotii signa rimeris, sive pulsus harmoniam observes, velut hoc agentibus malis, ut hostem medicum fallant et imponant. Tantum undique sese offundit difficultatum, ut mihi difficile sit omnes vel oratione prosequi.

*Longum
hyperbaton.*

Sed ut dicere coeperam, has omnes rerum varietates studio persequi, obscuritates ingenio assequi, difficultates industria pervincere, ac penetratis terrae fibris, excussis undique totius naturae arcanis, ex omnibus herbis, fruticibus, arboribus, animantibus, gemmis, ex ipsis denique venenis, cunctis humanae vitae malis efficacia quaerere remedia, atque horum opportunum usum ex tot autoribus, tot disciplinis, imo et ab ipsis sideribus petere. Haec inquam, tam abdita rimari cura, tam ardua viribus animi adipisci, tam multa memoria complecti, tam necessaria ad salutem universi mortalium generis in commune proferre, nonne prorsus homine maius ac plane divinum quiddam fuisse videtur? Absit invidia verbis. Liceat id quod vero verius est ingenue praedicare. Non me jacto, sed artem ipsam effero. Etenim si dare vitam proprium dei munus est, certe datam tueri, jamque fugientem retinere, deo proximum fateamur oportet. Quamquam ne prius quidem illud, quod nos soli deo proprium esse volumus, medicorum arti detraxit antiquitas, ut credula, ita gratissima. Nam Aesculapii quidem ope Tyndaridam, et post eum complures ab Orco in lucem redisse credidit. Asclepiades hominem exanimatum, elatum, comploratumque ab rogo domum vivum reduxisse legitur. Xanthus historicus catulum leonis occisum, praeterea et hominem, quem Draco occiderat, vitae redditum fuisse, posteris prodidit, herba quam halin nominant. Ad haec Juba, in Africa quendam herba revocatum ad vitam, testis est. Neque vero laboraverim, si sint apud quos haec fide careant. Certe (quod agimus) admirationem artis tanto magis implent, quanto magis supra fidem veri sunt, et immensum esse fateri cogunt id quod vero supersit. Quamquam quantum ad eum attinet, qui vitae redditur, quid refert utrum anima denuo in artus relictos divinitus reponatur, an penitus in corpore sepulta, morbique victoris oppressa viribus, arte curaque medici suscitetur atque eliciatur, iamque certo migratura retineatur? An non pene paria sunt mortuum restituere, et mox moriturum servare? Atqui permultos nominatim recenset Plinius libro historiae mundanae septimo, qui iam elati partim in ipso rogo, partim post dies complusculos revixerint.

*Divina res
medicina.*

Laus ab effectu.

*Ars medicorum et
mortuos excitare
credita est.*

Miraculum est, quod paucis dedit casus. Et non magis mirandum, quod quotidie multis largitur ars nostra? Etiam si hanc deo Opt. Max. debemus, cui nihil non debemus, ne quis haec a me putet arrogantius dicta quam verius. Complurium morborum ea vis est, ut certa mors sint, nisi praesens adsit medicus, veluti stupor is, qui mulieribus potissimum solet accidere, veluti syncopis profunda, paralysis, apoplexia. Neque desunt ulli vel seculo, vel genti sua in hanc rem exempla. Hic qui mortem ingruentem arte sua depellit, qui vitam subito oppressam revocat, nonne ceu numen quoddam dextrum ac propitium semper habendus est? Quot censes homines ante diem sepultos fuisse priusquam medicorum solertia morborum vires, et remediorum naturas deprehenderat? Quot hodie mortalium milia vivunt, valentque, qui ne nati quidem essent, nisi eadem haec ars, et tot nascendi discriminibus remedia, et obstetricandi rationem reperisset? Adeo statim in ipso vitae limine, et pariens simul et nascens salutarem medicorum opem miserabili voce implorat. Horum arti vitam debet, et qui nondum vitam accepit, dum per eam prohibentur abortus, dum mulieri seminis recipiendi retinendique vis confertur, dum pariendi facultas datur. Quod si vere dictum est illud Deus est juvare mortalem, profecto mea sententia aut nusquam locum habebit illud nobile Graecorum adagium ἀνθρώπος ἀνθρώπου δαίμονιον, aut in medico fido proboque locum habebit, qui non juvat modo verum etiam servat. An non igitur ingratitude ipsa videatur ingrator, ac ipse prope vita indignus, qui medicinam alteram secundum deum, vitae parentem, tutricem, servatricem, vindicem non amet, non honoret, non suspiciat, non veneretur? Cuius praesidiis nunquam ulli non est opus. Nam reliquis quidem artibus nec semper nec omnes egemus. Huius utilitate mortalium omnis vita constat. Nam fac abesse morbos, fac

*Initium vitae
medicis debetur.*

paroomia

*Ab utilitate
perpetua.*

omnibus prosperam adesse valetudinem, tamen hanc qui poterimus tueri, nisi medicus ciborum salutarium ac noxiorum discrimen, nisi totius victus, quam Graeci diaetam vocant, rationem doceat?

Grave mortalibus est onus senecta, quam non magis licet effugere quam mortem ipsam. Atque ea medicorum opera multis contingit, tum serius, tum multo etiam levior. Neque enim fabula est, quinta, quam vocant, essentia senio depulso hominem velut abjecto exuvio rejuvenescere, cum extent aliquot huius rei testes.

*Senectam
remoratur ars
medicorum.*

Neque vero corporis tantum, quae vilior hominis pars est, curam gerit, imo totius hominis curam agit, etiamsi Theologus ab animo, medicus a corpore sumat initium. Siquidem propter arctissimam amborum inter se cognationem et copulam, ut animi vitia redundant in corpus, ita vicissim corporis morbi animae vigorem aut impediunt, aut etiam extinguunt. Quis aequae pertinax suasor abstinentiae, sobrietatis, moderandae irae, fugiendae tristitiae, vitandae crapulae, amoris abjiciendi, temperandae Veneris, atque medicus? Quis efficacius suadet aegroto, ut si vivere velit, et salutarem experiri medici opem, prius animum a vitiorum colluvie repurget? Idem quoties vel diaetetica ratione, vel ope pharmaceutica bilem atram minuit, labantes cordis vires reficit, cerebri spiritus fulcit, mentis organa purgat, ingenium emendat, memoriae domicilium sarcit, totumque animi habitum commutat in melius, nonne per exteriorem, ut vocant, hominem, et interiorem servat? Qui phreneticum, lethargicum, maniacum, sideratum, lymphatum restituit, nonne totum restituit hominem? Theologus efficit ut homines a vitiis respiciant, at medicus efficit, ut sit qui possit respiscere. Frustra ille medicus sit animae, si jam fugerit anima, cui paratur antidotus. Cum impium hominem subito corripuit paralysis, apoplexia, aut alia quaedam praesentanea pestis, quae vitam prius adimat, quam vacet de castiganda cogitare vita, hunc qui restituit, alioquin infeliciter in suis sceleribus sepeliendum, nonne quodammodo tum corpus, tum animum ab inferis revocat? In eum certe locum reponit hominem, ut ei in manu jam sit, si velit, aeternam mortem fugere. Quid suadebit lethargico Theologus, qui suadentem non audiat? Quid movebit phreneticum, nisi medicus prius atram bilem repurget?

*Totum hominem
curat medicus.*

Pietas caeteraeque virtutes, quibus Christiana constat felicitas, ab animo potissimum pendent, haud infitior. Caeterum quoniam is corpori illigatus, corporeis organis velit nolit utitur, fit ut bona pars bonae mentis a corporis habitu pendeat. Permultos homines infelix corporis temperatura, quam Graeci modo krasin modo systēma vocant, velut invitos ac reclamantes, ad peccandum pertrahit, dum animus insessor frustra moderatur habenas, frustra subdit calcaria, sed equum ferocientem in praecipitium sequi cogitur. Animus videt, animus audit sed si oculos occuparit glaucoma, si aurium meatus crassus humor obsederit, frustra vim suam habet animus. Odit animus, irascitur animus, at vitiosus humor mentis organa obsidens in causa est, ut oderis, quem amore dignum iudices, irasceris cui nolis irasci. Philosophiae summam in hoc sitam esse fatetur Plato, si rationi pareant affectus, atque ad eam rem praecipuus est adiutor medicus, hoc agens ut ea pars hominis vigeat sapiatque, cuius arbitrio geruntur, quaecumque cum laude geruntur. Si hominis vocabulo censentur indigni, qui pecudum ritu rapiuntur cupiditatibus, huius nominis dignitatem bona ex parte debemus medicis.

*Temperaturam
corporis emendat
medicus.*

A simili.

Plato.

Id cum maximum sit in singulis ac privatis, quanto praeclarius est beneficium, cum id praestatur in principe? Nulla fortuna magis est obnoxia malis huiusmodi, quam felicissimorum regum. Quos autem rerum tumultus ciet unius homunculi vitiatum cerebrum? Frustra reclamant qui sunt a consiliis, furis o princeps, ad te redi, ni medicus arte sua neque volenti, neque sentienti suam mentem reddiderit. Si Caligulae fidus adfuisset medicus, non usque ad pugionum ac venenorum scrinia in perniciem humani generis insanisset. Atque ob eam sane causam publica consuetudine receptum est apud omnes orbis nationes, ne princeps usquam gentium agat absque medicis. Proinde cordati principes nulli unquam arti plus honoris habuerunt, quam medicinae. Quandoquidem Erasistratus (ut reliquos taceam) Aristotelis ex filia nepos, ob Antiochum regem sanatum, centum talentis donatus est a Ptolemaeo huius filio. Quin et divinae literae jubent medico suum haberi honorem, non tantum ob utilitatem, verum etiam ob necessitatem, ut in caeteros benemeritos ingratitude sit, in medicum impietas, quippe qui tamquam beneficii divini adiutor, id arte sua tuetur, quod optimum nobis et carissimum largitus est deus, videlicet vitam.

*Principibus
maxime
necessarius
medicus.*

Ab exemplo.

*Honos habitus
medicinae.
Honora medicum.*

Parentibus nihil non debemus, quod per hos vitae munus accepisse quodammodo videmur. Plus mea sententia debetur medico, cui toties debemus, quod parentibus semel dumtaxat debemus, si tamen illis

A similibus.

debemus. Pietatem debemus ei, qui hostem a cervicibus depulit, et medico non magis debemus, qui pro nobis servandis cum tot capitalibus vitae hostibus quotidie depugnat? Reges ceu deos suspicimus, quia vitae necisque jus habere creduntur, qui tamen ut possint occidere, certe vitam non aliter dare possunt, nisi quatenus non eripiunt, quemadmodum servare dicuntur latrones, si quem non jugulent, nec aliam tamen vitam dare possunt, quam corporis. At quanto propius ad divinam benignitatem accedit medici beneficium, hominem iam inferis destinatum arte, ingenio, cura, fideque sua, velut ex ipsis mortis faucibus retrahentis? Aliis in rebus profuisse sit officium, caeterum in certo corporis animique periculo servasse, plus quam pietas est. Adde his quod quicquid in homine magnum est, eruditio, virtus, naturae dotes, aut si quid aliud, id omne medicorum arti acceptum feramus oportet, quatenus id servat, sine quo ne reliqua quidem queant subsistere. Si omnia propter hominem, et hominem ipsum servat medicus, nimirum omnium nomine gratia debetur medico.

Si non vivit, qui vivit morbis obnoxius, et vitam salubrem aut reddit aut tuetur medicus, an non convenit hunc ceu vitae parentem agnoscere? Si res exoptanda est immortalitas, hanc medicorum industria, quoad licet, meditatur, quae vitam in longum prorogat. Quid enim hic notissima referam exempla, Pythagoram, Chrysippum, Platonem, Catonem censorium, Antonium, Castorem, cumque his innumerabiles, quorum plerique medicinae observatione, vitam ab omni morbo liberam neque fatiscente ingenii vigore, neque concussa memoriae soliditate, neque fractis aut labefactatis sensibus, ultra centesimum annum prorogarunt? An non istuc est immortalitatis, quam speramus, hic iam nunc imaginem quandam exhibere? Christus ipse immortalitatis autor ac vindex unicus corpus assumpsit, mortale quidem illud, sed tamen nullis morbis obnoxium. Crucem non horruit, morbos horruit. An non pulcherrimum fuerit, nos principem nostrum in hoc quoque pro viribus imitari? Apostolos, quorum nemo fere non multam vixit aetatem, caesos legimus, interfectos legimus, aegrotasse non legimus. Quocunque pacto hoc illis contigit, certe praestat idem ars medicorum, quod illis praestitit sua felicitas. Nec enim audiendos arbitror, qui nobis non minus indocte, quam impudenter solent illud objicere: Virtus in infirmitate perficitur, somniantes Paulum gravi capitis dolori fuisse obnoxium, cum ille infirmitatem vel animi tentationem, vel quod vero propius est, improborum hominum molestam insectationem appellet. Atque idem ille Paulus, inter apostolicas dotes, donum curationis recensuit.

Sanitatis custos medicus.

Exempla.

Christus non aegrotavit.

Confutatio.

Donum curationis.

Iam auget et illud non levi argumento medicinae gloriam, quod et Caesarearum legum majestas, et pontificiarum autoritas sese ultro medicorum iudicio submittit, velut in quaestionibus pubertatum, partuum ac veneficiorum. Item in quaestionibus aliquot ad matrimonium facientibus. O nova dignitas medicinae. Agitur de capite hominis, et iudicis sententia pendet ex medici praeiudicio. Summi pontificis pietas, si quid indulget, in nonnullis non aliter indulget, nisi medicorum accedat calculus. Atque in decretis Romanus pontifex episcopum eum, qui delatus fuerat tamquam foedo immanique morbo obnoxius, ex medicae rei iudicio censet aut amovendum episcopatu, aut suo loco restituendum. Divus item Augustinus ex medicorum consilio fieri jubet, quod faciendum est, etiamsi nolit aegrotus. Idem honorem medico debitum, hoc est artis et industriae praemium, recte eripi scribit ab eo qui detinet, velut ab injusto possessore et quod alienum est mala fide occupante. Quin ii quoque, qui conceptis precaminibus, daemones impios e corporibus humanis exigunt, non raro in consilium adhibent, velut in his morbis, qui secretis rationibus quaedam sensuum organa spiritusque vitiant, et adeo daemoniacam speciem imitantur, ut nisi a peritissimis medicis discerni non queant, sive sunt crassiores aliqui daemones, ut fertur illorum varia natura, qui medicam etiam opem sentiant, sive morbus adeo penitus intimis animi recessibus insidet, ut a corpore videatur alienus. In cuius rei fidem, dum ex innumeris mihi compertum exemplum refero, quaeso ut me patienter audiat.

Panaceum celeberrimi nominis medicum adolescens colui, is me teste quendam restituit, nomine Phlyarium, patria Spoletanum, qui ex vermibus in novum maniae genus inciderat, ita ut in morbo probe teutonice loqueretur, quod (uti constabat) sanus nunquam potuerat. Quis imperitus rei medicae non hunc daemoniacum vel dejerasset etiam? At is hominem facili paratoque remedio menti reddidit. Redditus sibi, teutonice nec loquebatur, nec intelligebat. Quod si quis hunc vere daemoniacum fuisse contendat, ea sane res vel maxime medicorum illustrat artem, cui compertum est et daemones impios parere, quemadmodum in restituenda vita, ita et in exigendis spiritibus divinae virtutis tum ministrae, tum aemulae. Neque vero deerant, qui factum hoc magicis artibus tribuebant, quorum ego calumniam arti nostrae gloriae laudique verto, per quam ea

Exemplum.

Detorquet.

praestantur, quae vulgus hominum humanis viribus praestari posse non credit.

Optimo igitur jure priscis seculis, cum nondum sordidi quaestus et spurcae voluptates vitiassent omnia, medendi ars inter omnes una divinis ac summatibus viris, opulentissimis regibus, clarissimis senatoribus praecipue cordi fuit, nec alia mortalium generi gratior. Siquidem Moses ille magnus, non alia ratione quam artis medicae, cibos suos distinxisse creditur. Orpheus, Graecorum vetustissimus, de viribus herbarum nonnulla prodidisse legitur. Homerus ipse, citra controversiam, unicus ingeniorum fons, plurimus est et in herbarum commemoratione, et in laude medicorum. Is et Moly nobis depinxit, herbarum omnium (teste Plinio) laudatissimam, efficacem adversus veneficia, cuius inventionem Mercurio tribuit, hac Ulyssem suum adversus Circes pocula praemuniens. Idem nepenthes indicat in conviviis adhibendum, quod moerorem tristitiamque discutiat. Porro Machaonem, Paeonem, Chironem, Podalirium, ut hac arte praestantes, saepicule non sine honore commemorat, quorum arte non solum heroibus, verum ipsis etiam diis subventum esse fingit, illud videlicet subindicans, summis etiam principibus medicorum praesidiis opus esse, atque horum vitam medicis in manu esse, qui in caeteros omnes jus vitae ac necis habere videntur. Quid quod idem Poeta libro Iliados undecimo, huius artis professionem longe pulcherrimo nobilitavit elogio, cum ait: Unum medicum pluris habendum, quam caeterorum hominum permultos. Rursum alibi medicum ita notat, ut dicat eum eruditum in omnibus, palam testans id quod res est, hanc artem non una aut altera disciplina, sed omnium artium cognitione circuloque, tum praeter exactum ingenium, multo etiam rerum usu constare. Pythagoras ille Samius, cui divinitatem quandam tribuebat antiquitas, de naturis herbarum nobile volumen reliquisse legitur. Atque ut Platonem, Aristotelem, Theophrastum, Chrysippum, Catonem censorium, Varronem praeteream, quibus studio fuit hanc artem suis vel studiis, vel negotiis admiscere, Mithridatem Ponti regem, non perinde regnum, alioqui locupletissimum, non tam unius et viginti linguarum miraculum, quam rei medicae peritia nobilitavit, vereque magnum virum declaravit, qui artis huius commentationes, et exemplaria, effectusque in arcanis reliquit, ut autor est Plinius. Cuius et hodie nobile theriacae genus nomine celebratur. Nunc fere regium habetur, aleam ludere, venari, nugas agere. At olim populi Romani principibus nihil magis erat curae, quam ut ex longinquo novis importandis herbis, rem medicam adjuvarent, neque populo illi tum orbis domino aliud erat munus gratius.

*Quibus culta
medicina.*

*Moses.
Orpheus.*

*Homerus.
Moly.*

*Nepenthes.
Machaon.
Paeon.
Chiron.*

*iatros gar anêr
pollôn antaxios
allôn*

Quid quod Christus ipse, disciplinarum omnium et autor et princeps, sese non Iureconsultum, non Rhetorem, non Philosophum, sed Medicum professus est, dum de se loquens negat opus esse medico iis, qui bene habeant, dum Samaritanus vulneribus oleum ac vinum infundit, dum sputum terrae mixtum illinit oculis caeci. Quid quod idem hac potissimum commendatione, cum adhuc orbi esset ignotus, sese paulatim in animos atque affectus hominum insinuavit, non auro, non imperiis, sed morborum remediis? Quod ille nutu fecit, nempe deus, hoc medicus pro virili sua cura imitatur. Neque deest his quoque divina vis, nimirum medendi viribus in hunc usum rebus a deo inditis. Nec alio viatico magis instruxit Apostolos, mandans ut hoc protinus officio sibi devincirent hospitem, medentes inquit, morbis illorum, et ungentes oleo. Paulus ille magnus dum Timetheo suo modicum vini praescribit usum, ad fulciendam stomachi imbecillitatem, nonne palam medici partibus utitur? Sed quid hoc mirum in Apostolo, cum Raphael angelus Tobiae caecitati medicans hinc nomen etiam invenerit apud arcanarum rerum studiosos? O coelestem vereque sacram disciplinam, cuius cognomento divinae illae mentes insigniuntur.

*Christus ipse
medicus.*

Paulus medicus.

Raphael.

Inter mortales alii alias artes vel discunt, vel profitentur, hanc unam oportebat ab omnibus disci, quae nulli non est necessaria. Sed o heu perversissima hominum iudicia.

Nemo nescire sustinet, quis nummus legitimus sit, quis adulterinus, ne quid fallatur in re vilissima, nec scire studio est, quibus modis id quod habet optimum tueatur. In numismate non credit alienis oculis, in negotio vitae ac sanitatis, clausis quod dicitur oculis, sequitur alienum iudicium. Quod si totius artis absoluta cognitio non potest nisi paucis contingere, qui totam vitam huic uni studio dedicarunt, certe partem eam, quae ad tuendam valetudinem pertinet, non conveniebat quemquam nescire. Etiam si bona pars difficultatis, non ab ipsa arte, sed ab improborum medicorum vel inscitia, vel ambitione proficiscatur.

Semper apud efferas etiam ac barbaras nationes sanctum ac venerabile fuit amicitiae nomen. Atque is egregius habetur amicus, qui se fortunae utriusque comitem sociumque praebeat, quod vulgus amicorum velut

A simili.

hirundines aestate, rebus secundis adsunt, rebus adversis, quemadmodum illae ingruente bruma devolant. At quanto sincerior amicus medicus, qui Seleucidum avium exemplo, quas narrant nusquam a Casii montis incolis conspici, nisi cum illarum praesidio est opus, adversus vim locustarum fruges vastantium, rebus integris ac laetis nusquam sese ingerit, in periculis, in his casibus, in quibus uxor ac liberi saepe deserunt hominem, velut in phrenesi, phthiriasi, in peste solus medicus constanter adest, et adest non inutili officio, quemadmodum plerique caeterorum, sed adest opitulaturus, adest pro capite periclitantis cum morbo dimicans, nonnunquam suo quoque periculo. Et o plus quam ingratos, qui talis amici officio servati, jam depulso periculo medicum odisse possunt, ac non potius parentis vice colunt ac venerantur. Vulgarem amicum, qui subinde salutem obvium, ad coenam rogant, qui latus claudit, officio pensant, et talem amicum ubi desierint egere, aversantur? Et ob hoc ipsum aversantur, quod intelligant illius officio nullam meritis parem gratiam rependi posse.

Seleucides.

Quod si is optimus vir est, qui maxime prodest Reipublicae, ars haec optimo cuique viro discenda est.

[Siquidem inter munia profani magistratus non minima portio est, et haud scio an praecipua, dare operam, ut corpora civium bene habeant. Quid prodest depulisse hostem a moenibus, si pestilentia intus grassans, plures tollit quam sublaturus erat gladius? Quid refert curasse ne cui pereat census, si perit prospera corporis valetudo? Prisci qui bonorum ordines digesserunt, primas tribuunt bonae valetudini. Quid enim prodest incolumis possessio, nisi valet possessor? Proinde leges priscorum, cum nondum quaestus et ambitio corrupisset omnia, potissimum huc spectabant, ut corpora civium essent valida, robusta, beneque temperata. Ea res partim pendet a nativitate, partim ab educatione, partim ab exercitamentis, et victus ratione, nonnihil etiam ab aedificiorum modo. Nimirum medici fungebantur officio, qui bene temperata corpora jungebant matrimonio, qui nutrices adhibebant integrae valetudinis, qui balnea publica, qui publica gymnasmata instituebant, qui ferebant leges sumptuarias, qui mutatis aedificiis, qui siccatis paludibus pestilentiam excludebant, qui in hoc vigilabant, ne quid esculentum aut poculentum venderetur, quod laederet corporum incolumitatem. Et hodie principes fere nihil ad se pertinere credunt, si pro vinis vendantur venena, si tritico vitiatum, si putribus piscibus tot morbi invehantur in publicum.]

Adeo nulla vitae pars est, quae citra medicinae praesidia recte possit administrari.]

Iam vero si qui sint, qui rerum pretia malint utilitate quaestuque metiri (licet haec ars divinius est, quam ut huiusmodi rationibus sit aestimanda) ne hac quidem parte cuiquam aliarum cedit artium. Neque enim ulla magis fuit frugifera, et ad rem subito parandam aequae praesentanea. Erasistratus cuius ante memini, a rege Ptolemaeo, Critobolus ab Alexandro magno, praemiis ingentibus ac vix credendis donati leguntur. Quamquam quod tandem praemium non exiguum videatur, repensum servatori capitis, pro cuius unius salute tot hominum millia depugnabant? Quid ego nunc commemorem Cassios, Carpitanos, Aruncios, Albutios, quibus Romae tum apud principem, tum apud populum immodicum quaestum fuisse refert Plinius? Quamquam quid nos haec ex priscis aetatibus repetimus, quasi non hodie cuique complures succurrant, quos haec ars ad Croesi opes evexerit?

A quaestu.

Rhetorica aut Poetica non alit nisi insignem. Musicus ni praecellat, esurit. Iureconsulto tenuis proventus est, ni sit eximius. Sola medicina quomodocunque doctum alit ac tuetur. Innumeris disciplinis, infinita rerum cognitione constat res medica, et tamen frequenter unum aut alterum remedium alit idiotam. Tantum abest, ut haec ars sterilitatis damnari possit.

Adde quod caeterarum artium non ubique paratus est quaestus. Rhetor frigebit apud Sarmatas, juris Caesarei peritus apud Britannos. Medicum quoquo terrarum sese contulerit suos comitatur honos, suum sequitur viaticum, ut in nullam disciplinam verius competat vulgatissimum illud Graecorum proverbium, το τεχνιον η̄ πασα γ̄ε τρεπhei.

Sed hoc ipsum indignatur Plinius, aut certe apud hunc alii, quaestum esse medicinae professionem. Maior est, fateor, haec facultas quam ut quaestui lucroque serviat, sordidarum id est artium. Sed nimis ingratum est, eam solam sua fraudare gratia, cui nulla par gratia rependitur. Egregius medicus ceu numen quoddam, servat gratis, servat et invitos. Sed impietas est, non agnoscere numinis beneficium. Nihil ille moratur mercedem, tu tamen dignus qui legibus mulcteris ob insignem ingratitudinem.

Confutatio.

Iam haudquaquam me fugit, hanc egregiam artem et olim apud veteres

audisse male, et hodie apud indoctos quosdam male audire. Catoni non placuit, non quod rem damnaret, sed quod ambitiosam Graecorum professionem non ferret homo mere Romanus. Isque tantum tribuit experientiae, ut artem esse noluerit, sed idem universam Graecorum philosophiam ex urbe pellendam censuit. Existimabat homo durus, ad purgandum hominis corpus sufficere brassicam et crebros vomitus, et tamen ille ipse medicorum hostis observatione medicinae, in extremam usque senectutem robur infractum tutatus scribitur.

Solis, inquit, medicis summa occidendi impunitas est. At hoc nomine magis suspiciendi boni medici, quibus cum in manu sit, non solum impune, verum etiam mercede occidere, tamen servare malunt. Quod possunt facultatis est, quod nolunt probitatis. Decantatur iam passim inter pocula temulentorum adagium, Qui medice vivit, misere vivit. Quasi vero felicitas sit, distindi crapula, rumpi Venere, turgescere cervisia, sepeliri somno. Sed istos Sycophantas quid opus est oratione refellere, cum ipsi petulantiae suae satis magnas poenas dant arti, mox podagra contorti, paralysi stupidi, desipiscentes ante tempus, caecutientes ante senectutem, iamque prius vituperatae medicinae, exemplo Stesichori, seram canunt palinodiam miseri. Et tamen his licet indignissimis, artis bonitas non gravatur esse praesidio, quantum licet. Sunt qui, mutuato ex vetere comoedia scommate, vocent medicos skatophagous. Quasi vero non isto nomine vel praecipue laudari mereantur, qui quo subveniant hominum calamitatibus, ex illa sua sublimitate sese ad haec sordida dejiciant. Quod si medicis tantum esset supercilii, quantum istis est procacitatis, liceret passim impune mori. Verum habet hoc ars nostra cum bonis regibus commune, ut bene faciat ac male audiat.

Ex Aristophane.

Quod si maxime sunt, ut sunt in hoc ordine, qui se pro medicis gerunt, cum nihil minus sint quam medici. Si sunt qui pro remediis venena ministrant, si sunt qui ob quaestum et ambitionem aegrotis male consulunt, quid iniquius est, quam hominum vitia in artis calumniam detorquere? Sunt et inter sacerdotes adulteri, inter monachos homicidae ac piratae, sed quid hoc ad religionem per se optimam? Nulla tam sancta professio est, quae non alat sceleratos aliquot. Votis quidem omnibus optandum, omnes principes eiusmodi esse, cuiusmodi decet esse, qui censeantur hoc digni nomine. Nec tamen ideo damnandus est principatus, quod nonnulli sub eo titulo praedones rei publicae hostes agant. Optarim et ipse medicos omnes vere medicos esse, nec in his locum dari Graecorum proverbio, polloi boukentai pauroi de te gês arotêres. Optarim ab omnibus eam praestari sanctimoniam, quam Hippocrates sacramento verbis solennibus concepto a professoribus exigit. Neque tamen huc non enitendum est nobis, si id a plerisque negligi conspicimus.

Proverbium.

Sed quoniam huius argumenti tanta est ubertas, viri praestantissimi, ut difficillimum sit in eo dicendi finem invenire, ne non praestem quod initio sum pollicitus, tempestivum arbitror, universas eius laudes summatim complecti.

Etenim si permultas res sola commendat antiquitas, hanc artem primam omnium reperit necessitas. Si scientiam autores illustrant, huius inventio semper diis attributa est. Si quid autoritatis addit honos, non alia tam passim ac tam diu divinos honores meruit. Si magni fiunt, quae summis viris probantur, haec summos reges, haec primates non solum delectavit, verum etiam illustravit. Si difficilia quae sunt, ea sunt et pulchra, nihil hac operosius, quae tot disciplinis, tantarum rerum perinvestigatione usuque constat. Si dignitate rem aestimamus, quid excellentius, quam ad dei benignitatem proxime accedere? Si facultate, quid potentius aut efficacius quam totum hominem certo exitio periturum sibi posse restituere? Si necessitate, quid aequae necessarium atque id sine quo nec vivere, nec nasci licet? Si virtute, quid honestius, quam servare genus humanum? Si utilitate, nullius usus neque maior est, neque latius patet. Si compendio, aut haec in primis frugifera sit oportet, aut ingratissimi mortales.

Epilogus.

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