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44

1867-1876

1809. Tuberculosis

23

CHAPTER XLIII

TUBERCULOSIS

1809 Aetat.38

The crucial year of Brown's life was 1809 for in its last months we shall find him presenting some if not all of the symptoms of the disease that was to prove fatal. The last years of Linn's life in the biographical memoir which Brown wrote and prefixed to Valerian in 1805 may for us--as it did for Brown himself--prepare the way for ~~the presentation of~~ a death by pulmonary tuberculosis ~~but Brown's case has none of the~~ protracted harassing struggle ~~of Linn's~~. Commonly the story is a ~~one only of pain~~ to the reader as well as to the victim but in Brown's case it is ~~also~~ quite unusual in that it has some controversial ground surrounding it and the actual death has no little beauty, considerable bravery that appeals to our sympathy and an astonishing amount of dramatic ardor.

The early part of the year goes on with the quiet, even tenor of his literary life, while Robinson's directory still calls him a "merchant." The American Register having done with experiment had settled down to a pretty regular business. The prospectus of his Geography appears to have been issued in January. His last political pamphlet An Address to the Congress of the United States on the Utility and Justice of Restrictions upon Foreign Commerce with Reflections on Foreign Trade in general and the Future Prospects of America was also

published some time in January.

The next letter of Brown's is the second one to John Howard Payne and is taken from Dunlap.[1] It implies more correspondence with Payne but up to the present no other letters to that celebrity have been found. Like the former letter this is remarkable as containing no reference to the supposed escort by Brown of Payne to Union College. It reads:

To Mr. J.H.Payne.

Philadelphia,(Tuesday) Feb.22,1809.

My dear friend,

I have not forgotten you,nor ceased to feel a deep interest in your welfare,nor to make frequent inquiries about you,though our correspondence has so long been discontinued. The "Boston Mirror"[2] is a token of your remembrance,which comes duly to hand, and affords me some basis for conjecture,at least,as to your present situation and pursuits. Will you give me a more full account under your own hand. A great many

1 Vol.II,p.118 ff.
2 1808-9; not to be confused with Payne's various "Mirrors".

rumours have reached me, of the truth of which I am extremely anxious for an opportunity to judge.

Two years have passed away since I saw you; a period that seldom makes material alterations in the character or habits or destiny of a man past thirty, but they are big with fate at that unsettled and mutable age at which they have found my friend. Let me know from your own pen, with that candour and sincerity which were shining qualities in you, when I enjoyed your personal intercourse, how you fare, what two years have done for you.[1]

This is a large demand for one to make who has so few claims upon your esteem and confidence. Nothing emboldens me to make it, but the earnest regard I have for you; though you may reasonably demand more solid testimonies of that regard than this naked assurance of it.

Permit me, warmly to recommend to your acquaintance, my friend Mr. O[2] who will deliver you this. He is a man, if I am not much mistaken, after your own heart. His merits are those on which you are accustomed to set most value; and higher merits of that kind, I suspect, not even your imagination has ever hitherto set before you.

I am, affectionately, yours,

C. B. B.

When in Washington, 1850, Payne made a fourteen page note-book and on pages 10 and 11 he copied Brown's death-bed vision as told by Mrs. Brown. In the introductory paragraph he does not state or hint Brown was his friend. The passage "A few days..., circumstances," Duyckinck II, pp. 88-9.

1 There have never been offered any facts to show that Brown had any personal acquaintance with Payne other than the meeting of 1806 on board the sloop Swan.

2 Probably James Ogilvie the lecturer of 1808. There is no record indicating that Payne ever became acquainted with Ogilvie.

It was about the first half of this year that the Scribbler essays were published in the Port Folio but they were probably written at an earlier period of Brown's life.

With so many literary activities on hand it is no wonder that in the summer of this year Brown's health broke down or at least changed so much for the worse that with an idea of improving by change of air and travel he reluctantly abandoned his books and visited friends in New Jersey and New York. Who the friends were in New Jersey Dunlap[1] does not tell us but it is quite probable Dunlap himself was one of them. Also Dunlap does not give us any of Brown's letters of this year before the Hoboken one and even then he only gives a fragment sent to Mary Linn. Mary and Susan had evidently gone to New York so as to be absent when the stork should pay another visit to Brown's home.

1 Vol.II,p.86.

1865

~~25 June~~ (~~4 August~~) (13 October)

Hobocken, Friday afternoon. 1

"My dearest Mary; instead of wandering about, and viewing more nearly a place that affords very pleasing landscapes, here am I, hovering over the images of wife, children and sisters. I want to write to you and home, and though unable to procure paper enough to form a letter, I cannot help saying something, even on this scrap.

"I am mortified to think how incurious and inactive a mind has fallen to my lot. I left home with reluctance. If I had not brought a beloved part of my home along with me, I should probably have not left it at all. At a distance from home, my enjoyments, my affections are beside you. If swayed by mere inclination, I should not be out of your company a quarter of an hour, between my parting and returning hour: but I have some mercy on you and Susan: and a due conviction of my want of power to beguile your vacant hour with amusement, or improve it by instruction. Even if I were ever so well, and if my spirits did not continually hover on the brink of dejection, my talk could only make you yawn, as things are, my company can only tend to create a gap, indeed.

When have I known that lightness and vivacity of mind which the divine flow of health, even in calamity, produces in some men? and would produce in me, no doubt; at least, when not soured by misfortune? never: scarcely ever: not longer than an half hour at a time, since I have called myself man: and not a moment since I left you on Wednesday morning. I then rose with such an head-ache as was likely to maintain its post for the rest of the week; and this circumstance deprived me of any prospect of enjoyment from my journey, while, at the same time, it determined me to go, because this would have made me a companion to you ten times duller than common, and absolutely unfitted me for any New York company.

"I crossed the river without any particular views at ten o'clock. I made inquiries about Amboy,[2] but found no stage that was going that way for many hours, and none that was going nearer than eight miles: and eight miles in this burning atmosphere,[3] was too much to walk; I could have found my way thither, indeed, by other means, but there was none going from the hook[4] immediately in that direction, while there was a stage just then starting for Belville.[5] To Belville, accordingly I went in two or three hours. 'Tis a pleasant village on the

Assisted by Dr. Pickett's notes in Brown's Register Vol. VI Chronicle p. 266

a choice of any one of a dozen.

1 Like the number of swallows, it takes many dates to make a summer so we have ~~no means of accurately dating this letter. The absurdity of such a dating would have been evident to Dunlap if he had said "some Friday afternoon in summer".~~

2 He probably was going to visit Dunlap.

~~3 This is~~ the nearest we can venture a date for the letter to ~~July or August, probably~~ the ~~Friday~~ one suggested, or the next day Saturday

4 Paulus Hook.

5 We found Brown stopping there in 1806. See our quotation of the Traveller's Letters dated Newark 21 August 1806.

Passaick, where I staid till next morning. Chance gave me, for companion, a well disposed, well informed Virginian, who has been acquainted with Ogilvie these fifteen years, with his wife and her family, and especially with Mrs. Ellis, of whom you recollect O. told us much. A great deal in fine, of most of those whom that oddity mentioned to us.

"Finding Passaic Falls to be only nine miles from Belville, I went thither, on Thursday. The weather was insupportably hot, and the fatigue of even those short walks which curiosity required, added to my inharmonious feelings, contributed to make the journey rather unprofitable. Glittering water-falls are but dim, and hanging rocks hardly more interesting than a sand moor, when viewed with misty eyes and aching brows.

"The afternoon was stormy, and the night and following morning cold. This morning I was set down at Bergen, and came hither to Hobocken, where I have a full view of New York, and can indulge my fancy in what is going forward there with more facility than twenty miles further off. How have you employed yourself since Wednesday? perhaps you are gone to Haarlem, and may stay till Monday. If so, I shall be disappointed: yet glad too, for my Mary's affectionate heart will be mortified at my precipitate return. And yet there is no spot more salubrious than Greenwich, within fifty miles of New York; and the leathern wings of a stage coach, do not carry healing under them.

"Till here, I could not find books, which have, with my great efficacy in beguiling body of its pains, and thoughts of their melancholy, in relieving heads and hearts of their aches.

"Are there any letters lying for me from home? what may not have happened there in three long days. Death, funeral, interment, have room enough in that time. A thousand mishaps may take place within the compass of three long summer days. I am strongly tempted to cross immediately, and would if I could recross before night: for I am ashamed to present myself before you before the week is fairly gone. In a few hours I might receive letters, and meet you both. I am afraid when the next horn sounds I shall find the temptation irresistible."

The most obvious details of this trip is his need of some companion dear to him, the fact that he was worrying about his family, especially his wife and that he could not tear himself away from his books. No wonder his head and heart ached!

~~I Ogilvie certainly was an oddity~~.

Along with the mention of a divine flow of health goes the truth that Brown appears to be thinking too much for his sister-in-laws and too little for himself when of all times in his life he needed a little selfishness the most. Details aside,that fragmentary letter is important because it has too often been the cause of misrepresentation concerning Brown's general health.

It is clear that Brown was again depressed and his spirits out of order. We know from past instances that he could be the saddest of mortals when both dejections assailed him at once. The mention of his not being vivacious and of light mind for more than a half hour since he had called himself man is usually interpreted to mean he had bad health all his life;but any such idea is far from the truth for there are no facts to show that he had as much poor health as the average literary worker and there are no other actual references to his health except on rare occasions when they can be intelligently explained. The two most intimate

friends he had give no records of his being

seriously unwell. Bringhurst apparently had never drawn from him any expression of his physical condition though as we have seen he gave Brown too much opportunity to descant on his mental health. Smith's only record of any ailment he had was a temporary matter of digestion not of respiration. Miller's care of him when he is reported to have had a touch of the yellow fever was so slight it left no written record. Even when he here says never he felt the force of his own exaggeration and immediately qualified it by scarcely ever. That scarcely allows too much latitude of interpretation. Another detail that is not properly attended to by the careless reader is the clause "when not soured by misfortune". What he meant by that is clear to any one who has followed a literary career and it cannot be distorted into a reference to ill health.

In this particular instance we have a characteristic of his common method of description of his condition,the leaning to exaggerated statement. For instance,he speaks of the headache with which he arose on Wednesday and from his expression we are

lead to think he may have had former experiences with the ailment that might have lasted as long as the rest of the week. Because it is an important symptom of tuberculosis what we should like to know is how long it did last,

1868

and we are informed it was still with him on Thursday. Whether or not it was still with him on Friday is not noticed. Such being the case it hardly makes it the rest of the week, so that, after all, it is not so important as it at first appeared to be — probably he had caught cold, possibly he needed to wear glasses.

~~Here it is necessary for us to give some attention to the sub-~~

~~ject of~~ Brown's health as treated by Dunlap and Elizabeth Brown.[1] is deeper in Cimmerian darkness than any mystery Carlyle tried to clarify.

In the book on Brown, Dunlap makes the following elaborated statement, which he places immediately before the summer trip and presumably not much after the publication of the Embargo pamphlet so that ~~it~~ he intended it to be dated sometime between January and September.

(quote p. 85 "Consumption.... spring")

From what he did apparently his strength was tremendous.

(as Dunlap diary 29 March 1811 thought)

~~1 Vol. II, p. 85. Allen never got this fear~~

2 Brown's making Arthur Mervyn have a tendency toward consumption may be autobiographic but more probably it may not. Dunlap's expression is the cause of careless writers claiming Brown inherited tuberculosis ~~which is not only scientifically doubtful but his ancestors lived to old age and did not die of tuberculosis~~

x Vol. II, p. 85. Allen never ~~got~~ mentioned Brown's health.

" Consumption, to which Mr. Brown appeared to have a constitutional tendency, had now made such fearful inroads upon his frame, as seriously alarmed his friends. His sedentary inclinations and habits, had assisted the insidious approaches of this disease, and though for more than two years before his death he had occasionally expectorated blood, he quieted his own alarms and those of his friends by persuading himself and them, that it did not come from the lungs. His friends had frequently and for a long time urged him to take a sea voyage, and by change of climate and employment, check if not repulse the enemy whose ravages they beheld with increased anxiety; but his reluctance to leave his home, for a time so long as is necessary to visit Europe, was so great, that he could not be prevailed upon. At length, like many other victims to this disease, he determined when too late on a voyage in pursuit of health. It was resolved that in the spring of 1810, he should visit his brother James, who resides in England; but he lived not to see that spring. "

When Elizabeth Brown came to write the memoir for the 1827 Boston edition of Wieland she told the story ~~in~~ essentially the same ~~words.~~ though in slightly condensed form. When Dunlap later came to write the brief National Portrait Gallery memoir he did not make the statement so positive either in the matter of the duration of the disease or in the disease as the only cause of his death.

The total absence of ~~the~~ details of a death by pulmonary tuberculosis ~~excites~~ is an evidence of her excellent literary judgment or else it warrants the suspicion that there were complications in his case like there were in that of Coleridge.

For these reasons ~~However, in essentials~~ we are compelled, in the absence ~~for want~~ of other testimony, to doubt the accuracy of the whole account. At least it should be read with caution and not entirely accepted.

The raising of blood possibly was true, though we have not even a suggestion of it from Brown himself, but so far as we know, and as far as Dunlap tells us, there was no attempt to learn the cause. ~~of it.~~ After a person has died ~~of consumption~~, it is very easy to claim he has ~~a~~ neglected ~~of~~ his health when warned by blood raising—but unfortunately for Dunlap's idea indefinite blood raising is not a sign only of consumption, so that Brown's interpretation ~~is~~ of that one detail is just as liable to be correct as Dunlap's. In this connection it should be noticed that the ~~Dunlap~~ suggests ion is made that Brown, assisted by three practising physicians, was not able to distinguish light-colored frothy blood from the lungs, from ~~other~~ blood-streaked sputum. Having no evidence one way or the other the incomplete statement that Brown had raised blood for more than two years, that is as far back as 1808, cannot be verified; in fact in 1808 there was no question of his health; in 1807 we found ~~we found~~ ~~that~~ he only expressed himself as doubtful of living until the <u>maturity</u> of the child just born—surely no sign of consumption or any other illness having laid hold of him. We can find no trace of a suggestion of ~~it~~ sickness in the years 1806 and 1805. In the former year Dunlap

visited Brown and wrote of him in his diary, but he did entered not a single detail of any lack of health of Brown's. In 1805 Brown wrote Dunlap that he could not be happier, and a consumptive would hardly have done that in those days and Brown of all consumptives would have been the last one to do so. In the 1804 letter to William Linn we found him wishing for a continuance of happiness the same as he did in 1807. ~~but quite a different interpretation has been placed by us on that.~~

The truth of this matter seems to be that Brown was of such a sensitive sympathising nature as to be immoderately affected by the ~~contemplation of a visit from the stork~~ expected arrival of ~~another~~ a baby, even when ~~it~~ was ~~did~~ not concern ed. his own wife. In 1805 he was depressed; in 1807 he had ~~the~~ a perfectly ~~same fear~~ reasonable anxiety for his sister-in-law Rebecca Linn Keese; and now in 1809 living under the same ~~sword~~ shadow of ~~Damocles~~ fear the same ~~depression~~ apprehension revisits him.

It is to-day ~~pretty~~ generally ~~believed~~ assumed by specialists that a consumptive parent is liable to have consumptive children. According to the theory of preventive medicine ~~In~~ We does not have to have them but to catch the disease in its earliest easily cured stage they ~~watch~~ make that the rule. In Brown's case we have not the evidence we wish we might have but so far as we know only one out of Brown's four children died of

~~that~~ the disease. That one, Eugene Linn, lived to be seventeen. In the other instances the twins passed ~~the~~ two score and ten ~~and~~ but Mary died at twenty. ~~But~~ more to the point however the two children who were born 1807 and 1809 respectively were the short-lived ones. Such negative evidence, if it is of value, also supports the idea that Brown did not actually have ~~incipient~~ a developed tuberculosis of the lungs earlier than 1806. So far as known there was no tuberculosis in Brown's ancestry. We know Elizabeth Linn's brother died of it.

Another piece of negative evidence may be found in the letter to John Howard Payne just given. The reference to the "destiny of a man past thirty" gave him an opening which would ~~probably~~ have elicited a suggestion of his ill health. His silence is ominous.

That Brown's health was not good is clear, that he was not robust[1] at any time of his life is nothing unusual in the lives of literary workers, but that he was sick all the time and fought, in silence, the so-called white scourge, is ~~probably~~ an ex post facto invention.

~~So that,~~ On the whole, it appears that ~~one~~ we cannot accept without qualification the belief that Brown fought consumption for any length of time. Six months is the most, three is more probable. Of course we realize that if it were longer, ~~true~~ it would ~~undoubtedly~~ allow us to gloss over certain defects of our author

1 John E. Hall, Portfolio 1824, Vol. XVIII, p. 495 remembered his "attenuated figure"; but that probably was a memory of 1809.

with a veneer of mawkish sentiment such as many find in the usual accounts of the lives of other authors. In Brown's case we are only interested in what is true.

Viewed in the light of present-day medical science it is clear that Brown probably had had touches of incipient tuberculosis of the lungs at several times of his life--notably in 1793 when he first went to Connecticut and possibly in 1799.[1] But then that is not so uncommon as many believe. Post mortem examinations invariably show traces of walled-up bacilli even in the lungs of people who do not die of the disease. The day of panic in the matter is dead! All of us occasionally have the germs in us;in fact it is generally claimed by the specialists that 98% of all people have some form or degree of it. Evidently nature has instinctive means of counteracting it such as the patient feeling "out of sorts" and going off for a rest or vacation where he does by instinct just what will stop the process of disease development. Probably the best case of this kind is that of Shelley in the spring of 1815 when he travelled on the continent,lived in the country at Bishopsgate Heath and took a boating trip to the source of the Thames.

1 In 1796 he had a short breakdown at Dunlap's when exercise put him back on his feet and there is no hint of tuberculosis.

Lowered health, not the best of health and what you will of the ill that flesh is heir to ~~similar experiences~~ Brown went through several times before 1809. ~~At~~ either of ~~two different times~~ He may have died a suicide; any number of times he ran the risk of being murdered by Indians; he may have met with a fatal accident at the overhanging cliff of Higby's mountain or at East Rock New Haven in Connecticut; he might have ~~very near~~ died of yellow fever; ~~he may, for all we know, have died in a duel with Aaron Burr,~~ or any other cause of mortality may have suddenly snatched him off; any one of these chances were possible and if any one of them had proven to have been his fate it is still more than probable that he would have had ~~borne~~ in his lungs the proof of one or more arrested attacks of incipient tuberculosis. That he now finally found himself in such a set of circumstances as to be physically and mentally non-resistent is one of the mysteries of the ~~divine~~ order of human ~~Brown's~~ affairs. However it will soon appear that he, like his best friend Elihu Hubbard Smith, was to be a victim ~~offered on the alter~~ of the medical ignorance of those days which fortunately for us are in the past.[X] In Smith's death ~~case~~ we have seen it was total ignorance of the origin and treatment of yellow fever—in Brown's it was not in small part the lancet ~~knife~~ of a phlebotomist!

[X] The Literary Magazine for April 1806, p. 254 contains an article on the subject with advice (to parents) that is remarkably intelligent. If the treatment had been as wise as the diagnosis Brown might have survived.

Sometime in the fall of 1809 the fourth and last child Mary C.[1] was born.

What the initial of her name stood for is not known; it may be for the early ancestors the Claytons or the Churchmans. ~~However~~ We do not have to go far to find ~~the origin of~~ the ~~baby's first~~ Christian name. His mother had it ~~Though he~~ ~~does~~ Though not mentioned ~~it~~ in the letter which ~~he~~ Brown wrote to Mary Linn from Hoboken, ~~New Jersey,~~ it ~~seems clear that the name~~ could also come from his witty sister-in-law the Julia of the Literary Magazine portraits.[2] ~~The lack of mention of the matter was of course because the birth was not until later than that July or August letter; at least this accounts for his worry and his wish to remain at home. This child named Mary only lived until 1829.~~

So far as we know ~~she did~~ she died in 1829 but not ~~die~~ of consumption.

1 Egle: Pennsylvania Geneologies, Harrisburg, Pa., p.327.
2 Vol.II, p.9.

The memoir by his wife ~~in the Boston 1827 Wieland~~ though somewhat confused makes clear that Brown ended his literary work in the autumn — probably November — of this year. That means his published works and others that he left unfinished, which Some of ~~this arrested work~~ had been started ~~at an early date,~~ as early as 1804.

Besides the Geography, Mrs, Brown mentions[1] a work Rome during the Age of the Antonines which Brown is said to have hoped to take to England and publish there. The general plan of it was also represented as similar to Anacharsis, ~~Travels in Greece.~~

What is commonly known by the name ~~as Anacharsis' Travels in Greece~~ is the Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grece ~~par~~ by Jean-Jacques Barthelemy,[2] which had been translated and issued in 1804 at Philadelphia in four volumes, ~~as Travels of Anacharsis the Younger in Greece~~. For Brown to construct a history of Rome under two particular rulers according to the scheme of Barthelemy's ~~work~~ would have needed only slight rebuilding for ~~it~~ the is ~~an~~ excellent model. Whether ~~the work~~ he would have followed the French edition and opened with an account of the author is ~~very much to be~~ doubtful for Brown never gave any account of his own

1 Dunlap and Allen do not mention it.
2 The first edition 7 vols. in 8° and one in 4° was published by Didot 1788. The French edition used is the fourth, 1799.

life in any publication he made--he was too extremely modest to do any such thing. If it was to be published in England it is possible his brother James would have been the one to oversee the publication and he might have planned to have Brown's wife or some friend supply such an account for the work. The preface or "advertisement" is usual and would have been followed by Brown. The chronological table of the history also could have been followed. To have imitated Barthelemy in his first volume and give any abridgment of the Roman mythology and history preceding the age of the Antonines was not Brown's usual method in any of his works--he probably would have followed his custom and confined any such setting or preparation to foot-notes. The part of the extended study of the arts,such as the drama and music,was a detail of especial interest to Brown and would undoubtedly have found a place in his work. The eighth volume of plates would appeal to Brown in any year of his life but it was not given with the translation issued at Philadelphia,it infringed on his projected geography in the matter of the maps and the views and it is clear the American publisher did not intend to go to the expense of having

any plates engraved. The tables of volume eight would have proved a very useful part of his work if he had used them. In Barthelemy's case they were not made by the author--assistance for them was acknowledged in the introduction Vol.I,p.vi. In Brown's case we know he himself would have patiently supplied such a detail. The geography of volume eight was not used in the translation issued at Philadelphia and it is improbable he would have repeated what more properly would have made a part of his geography as projected in 1809. Some of the dialogues of volumes seven and eight may have made some impression on Brown but it is certain they had no influence on any of his published dialogues and may not have become a part of this work. We know he had given up this type of literary presentation some years earlier than this work could have been planned.

How Brown happened on the model is evident for there were a number of editions in French and the English translation[1] which was also issued at Philadelphia[2] in four volumes made it unnecessary for him to have used the French original. His interest in Cicero and his knowledge of Latin were a part of his Proud school education and his Thessalonica and Death of

1 Travels of Anacharsis the Younger in Greece during the middle of the Fourth Century before the Christian Aera, translated from the French of Abbe Barthelemy by William Beaumont, 7 vols, 8vo, London 1791.

2 By Jacob Johnson who may have been the same J.Johnson who issued Volney's View at London in 1805.

Cicero are enough to indicate that he had no short acquaintance with Roman history.

The selection[1] of Barthelemy's great work, which is a wonderful storehouse of Greek life and history derived from the usual classical sources, is characteristic of Brown's excellence as an author. He never took mean works as models even in his fictions; so that this projected history of the Antonines of Rome promised exceedingly well.

The selection out of all Roman history of that particular age of the Antonines is peculiarly valuable as characteristic of our author. Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius were the fourth and fifth of the good emperors of Rome. Their reigns, 138-161 A.D. and 161-180 A.D., are immortally famous for domestic tranquillity. Gibbon cites them as the happiest on earth when the only object of government was the felicity and prosperity of the people. Though the emperor's lives were devoted to the Stoic philosophy of virtue as the only good, their wives, Faustina the mother and Faustina the daughter, are represented as most profligate, as if

1 The influence of Barthelemy's work in the United States was not confined to Brown. James McHenry also wrote a work based on the Travels of Anacharsis about 1810. Cf. F. J. Brown: Sketch of the Life, Baltimore (Maryland Historical Society) 1877, p. 42.

the old idea that opposites attract were true of those two great rulers.

If we assume that Brown's work would have confined itself to the title given by Mrs.Brown we cannot fail to notice that within those confines Brown would have found many of the topics of powerful appeal to him. The immorality and faithlessness of the Faustinas,together with their contrast to their husbands, the theatre with its amazing picturesqueness, the plague in the army and at Rome, the mystery surrounding the death of Marcus Aurelius, the nobility and dramatic power of his acts and sayings and the occasional introduction of the Christians:: would all afford Brown a field of action wherein he had proved himself a master. Probably no other forty-two years of any history would better illustrate the penchant of his interests.

In contrast to Barthelemy's work which covered the entire interesting information of the older empire of Greece, Brown selected the happiest short period of the history of the Roman republic. It was a supremely intelligent selection of a time that not only appealed to him but could not help but have an interest for all humanity for all time in a republican country. His work could not have been so full as Barthelemy because if Brown had had the time to study such a formidable list as four hundred and sixty authorities he would not have had the inclination. We have not a single work of his life that shows any continuous patient scholarly research such as Barthelemy pursued. His Geography promised something but he only completed a part of it. The American Register with its research at best took no longer than six months sustained effort to produce a volume. Among his other works the Dialogue on Music and Painting and Alcuin are very fair examples of his limited powers for literary research! To have done anything approaching Barthelemy would have demanded an ability Brown never showed himself to have had.

The unsatisfactory record of the character and existence of this work of Brown's is to be regretted by any one who has followed his career. The complete disappearance of the manuscript can only be considered as a real loss.

From the Collections[1] of the New York Historical Society we learn that on the 4th. of September Brown was elected an honorary member of that excellent institution. Whether he attended the elaborate

1 New York, 1814, Vol. II, p. xviii. Kelby's account of the society (N.Y., 1905, p. 95) gives the date as 1810.

dinner at that meeting of the society is not known but is doubtful. Likewise we are not sure of the date when he returned to Philadelphia.

It has been said that about this time he was accustomed to wander along Independence Square, with his hands behind his back and his head bowed down. Of all the absurd ways of holding his hands, behind his back is the least characteristic of Brown. He might have held them listlessly at his sides but hardly at his back. The same account says no one knew him and he "burned the midnight oil". Alas, poor Yorick! Where are all the well-known fellows now? Where are the social and business men of his day? We may have heard of them once since their death but they hardly are the cause of one essay almost every year for more than a hundred years. But such a statement does not accord with the facts--

Brown certainly was known by many--his circle was a large one and he was prominent in it. Another writer, who shall be unnamed, has made the silly incomplete statement that Brown took walks with his wife Elizabeth just before his death, but why at least some of the four children were not taken along, is not mentioned.

~~According to Scharf and Westcott~~[1] Sully the painter gave another ~~theatrical picture~~ dramatic exaggeration of Brown to that unreliable genius John Neal, ~~The passage was given by Neal~~ who in turn inserted it in Blackwood's Magazine for October 1824, ~~and reads like the journalist's account of an innocent beauty accused of murder.~~

~~1 History of Philadelphia, Vol. III, p. 1931.~~

> "I saw him a little before his death. I had never known him--never heard of him--never read any of his works. He was in a deep decline. It was the month of November,--our Indian summer,--when the air is full of smoke. Passing a window,one day--I was caught by the sight of a man--with remarkable physiognomy--writing,at a table,in a dark room. The sun shone directly upon his head. I shall never forget it. The dead leaves were falling then. It was Charles Brockden Brown."

With so defective a knowledge of him it would be interesting to us to be told just how Sully was able to recognise Brown. As we shall learn later from Brown's wife, before Brown was writing he was not deep in decline; in fact it must have been early in November if Sully saw him at all. So far as we can learn Brown's study was on the second floor so that it would seem to be impossible for him to see Brown as described. According to the Life and Works[1] Sully must have been a magician of unusual telescopic vision for he was in England in November, having sailed 10 June and did not return until a month after Brown had died. On the whole that Sully picture appears more like a painting by John Neal.

1 Life and Works of Thomas Sully, Philadelphia 1921. The Register Vol. VI Chronicle p. 266 records there was little if any Indian summer that year.

George Lippard practically went insane over that picture of supernatural exaggeration and when he came to rave against the public he represented Brown to have died of a broken heart--a suggestion which is as untrue as Keats' supposed death by a similar cause.

Probably the wretchedest and unfairest picture ever given of Brown is that in the Rambler's Magazine for 1809-10 by the unidentified "Perambulator".[1] Whether the author would have changed his journalistic smartness had he known the facts is improbable for even while writing it the magazine had a Damoclean Fate hanging over it and did not survive its brilliancy dying with a sort of a puerperal fever in the act of parturition.

The picture reads:

> "During my short stay in Pennsylvania, I had a violent inclination to pay a visit to Arthur Mervyn[2] Brown, to observe how far his genius was exalted or debased by

1 He probably belonged to the Irving-Paulding group.
2 If we must do this sort of labelling it would be better to select a more widely known work of his--Wieland.

frosts or fogs;but I learned that he secluded himself altogether from society,for the completion of a voluminous work,1 proving beyond contradiction that human nature is very miserable;that it never was more happy than it now is,and never will be;and that the most delightful thing on earth is conjuring up ideas of wretchedness,and wetting at least three napkins every night with the tears which refined sentiment and philanthrophy must naturally excite. It gave me satisfaction however to hear,inadvertently,that Mr.B's genius is completely defended from the effects of the atmosphere by a dense vapor eternally floating between the skull and the pericranium,which becomes heavier and more tenacious whenever his fingers come in contact with a goose-quill."

According to Dunlap[4]

"On the tenth of November 1809,he was attacked by a violent pain in his side,for which he was bled,and retired to his chamber to be nursed as he thought for a few days."

But the illness was more serious than he realized and he was kept in bed day after day.

"During this long confinement he scarcely ever enjoyed ease,and sometimes suffered greatly,yet he never uttered a murmur or impatient exclamation,and scarcely a complaint.

Such is the testimony of one who witnessed with the tenderest anxiety his protracted sufferings,his beloved companion,his nurse,his wife."

1 The great work of his geography.

~~2 We know that the 1801 sentimentality was long ere this dead,the ignorant author and evidently not followed Brown's work.~~

~~3 Brown's work is immortal while this author's lighter work is forgotten with other ephemeral pleasantries.~~

~~4 Vol.II,p.88.~~

H Anyone who has followed Brown's ~~work~~ ~~and~~ life with any attention will easily be able to surmise what remains to be told. The account he wrote of Lincoln's last days may prepare us but it is not to be accepted as a model ~~for~~ because in Brown's case it is only in a few details and those ~~the~~ most obvious ones that there is any similarity. It is the exceptional that are of greatest interest to us.

H Apparently Brown caught cold either at New York or after he had returned to Philadelphia; he tried to fight it off but could not; on the tenth of November what Dunlap* calls a violent pain in his side — but which we should identify as pleurisy — ~~pest~~ attacked him ~~in bed~~; some unidentified doctor bled him and with his wife attending ~~him~~ as nurse he ~~stayed~~ passed the remainder of the year in bed.

* Vol. II, p. 88.