SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION
Honour School of History
Honour School of History and Politics

FURTHER SUBJECT 15:
Medicine, Empire and Improvement, 1720-1820

TRINITY TERM 2019

Monday 27 May 2019, 9.30 am - 12.30 pm

Candidates must answer THREE questions, and COMPLETE all their answers. They should illustrate their answers, as far as possible, by reference to the prescribed authorities, and must complete AT LEAST ONE answer from BOTH Section A and Section B.

Do not turn over until told that you may do so
Further Subject (15)

MEDICINE, EMPIRE AND IMPROVEMENT, 1720-1820

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SECTION A

1. ‘It is very much to be regretted, that luxury has in some degree extended its influence to all ranks of the community; by which the bodies of the most useful members of it, the middling and lower ranks, are more enervated than those of their ancestors’ (JOHN ADAIR, 1790). Was Adair’s statement a medical or a moral judgement?

2. ‘There are certain eras favourable to the views of cunning and self-interested men, and though quackery has been fashionable in this city in all periods, the present seems peculiarly adapted to promote its success’ (JOHN COAKLEY LETTSOM, 1776). Explain the context of Lettsom’s concerns.

3. ‘Such a body of people as we now are in this nation, may, once in sixty or seventy years, be reprieved from destruction, and consequently, the number of people in the kingdom, in that time, may be doubled, and many millions of the sick may be recovered from their beds and couches, in half the time that they usually are now. Every able industrious labourer, that is capable to have children, who so untimely dies, may be accounted two hundred pound loss to the kingdom’ (JOHN BELLERS, 1714). How characteristic were such concerns in the foundation of voluntary hospitals?

4. ‘Only clinical teaching can spread knowledge of the healing art in a uniform manner and restore the rigorous, oft-neglected principles of observation’ (PHILIPPE PINEL, 1793). Why did Pinel take this view?

5. ‘I shall propose nothing dictated merely from theory’ (JAMES LIND, 1753). How revolutionary was Lind’s resolution?

6. ‘The human frame acquires by habit a power of resisting noxious causes... Hence Europeans, after remaining some time in the West Indies, are less liable to be affected by the cause of fevers than on their first arrival’ (JOHN HUNTER, 1788). What factors shaped Hunter’s enthusiasm for the theory of acclimatization?
7. ‘Unfortunately the country remained burdened with these expensive, pernicious, contradictory, and ridiculous quarantine regulations which are now in force throughout the British dominions’ (CHARLES MACLEAN, 1824). Why was the practice of quarantine so controversial?

8. ‘I have been frequently consulted by persons whose appetite and digestion have been much disturbed by a long residence in tropical climates’ (WILLIAM SAUNDERS, 1795). What explains interest in late eighteenth-century Britain in the effects of tropical climates?

SECTION B

9. How far did the eighteenth-century medical marketplace empower patients?

10. In what ways did imperialism shape British perceptions of health in tropical climates?

11. What fuelled the growing controversy about contagion during the early nineteenth century?

12. How far do economic concerns explain efforts to improve health in Britain’s army and navy in the eighteenth-century?

13. To what extent did medical practices in Paris impact upon those in Britain?

14. How did medical authors of the era understand, and advocate for, the pursuit of medical truth?

15. Should ‘quackery’ in the eighteenth century be considered ‘fringe’ medicine?