

Instances of Longevity from Bacon Cambridge 3^d July 1811.
Medical Singula de nobis anni praedantur euntes Horace.

The subject of last Lecture (previously to the vacation) was, if you recollect, upon the changes w^{ch} our bodies naturally undergo, in the mere action of living; and without those attacks, or invasions w^{ch} we denomi-
-rate a disease. Our bodies grow like a plant, increasing gra-
-dually in size, & in beauty, till it attains its full bloom, its
-seed & its fruit, and then it as naturally wilts, fades, withers,
wrinkles, decays & dies just like a plant.

The construction of our bodies, & the palpitations & actions
of life, convince us, on the slightest view, that flesh & blood cannot
keep up ~~its~~ life a motion much above an hundred years. We have
indeed some well attested accounts of men & of women living to 150; but
the instances are so rare as to shew they are unnatural.

We have told you that life was a forced state; that life
appeared to be something acting on the fluids, & on the fibres, ab-
extra; and that this Stimulus to action wore the body out. - I
believe that we all admitted it, at our last lecture, as demon-
-strated that the body could not subsist ^{without} a perpetual absorp-
-tion of animal or vegetable matter, to replace the particles
w^{ch} were constantly wearing off, and passing out of our bodies
in the form of vapours, or of a more solid excrement; for
we told you that the most solid parts of our bodies, such
as the bones are incessantly renewed. The human body
is in fact a perpetual secretion; and the bones, & the tendons
& the membranes & muscles are incessantly passing off, and
as incessantly renewing; so that all these parts are as much
a secretion as the saliva that flows into, or from the mouth,
or the moisture that bedews the surface in the form of
perspiration. Is the body then identically the same to day, as yes-
-terday? -

Years following years, steal something every day, at last they steal us from ourselves away. Paper

We spoke of the seven periods of human life; and we said that some of them resembled those annual processes in birds called "moulting," and we described the natural decay, or deterioration, which commences at 45, & goes on to our dissolution. When we die from old age mere, each part dies in succession with palsy.

It would seem, speaking generally, that there is a certain quantum ^{of life;} or a certain degree of energy given to every animal at its first creation; and that this, abating accidents, is expended in a given time. Thus we find that the brute creation, the species live nearly ^{to} about the same period. It is said that Elephants will live 200 years. Lions live from 70 to an 100. many of them have been found toothless. The Camel is a lean sinewy creature, & will live from 60 to 100 years, and undergoes severe exercise & long fasting; whereas the Bear is a fat sluggish creature, very indolent & a great sleeper, and he is very short lived. The Dog seldom passes beyond 14 years. The Ox & Cow live seldom attain 15. Sheep but about 10. The Hog, who the Indian says is a Gentleman, because he eats much & never works ^{or punts for his food}, lives about 10 years.

Among Birds the Eagle is long lived. He has been known to attain to 100. Aquila fenectus, was a Roman proverb. The eagle lives so long as to cast or shed his beak. The Vulture has been known to live 100 years, & a tame hawk 30 years. The Swan has lived above 100 years, and I have known a Parrot above 50.

Among Fish, some live 50 years. We learn that the Murana in Cæsar's fish ponds lived to that age; and that the orator Craesus had been so long acquainted with one of these tame fish, as to lament its death in strains of eloquence!

We

We mention these instances among Beasts, Birds, & Fishes to shew that each kind generally attains, excepting accidently, nearly about the same period of existence.

I believe the natural age of man has been nearly about the same for, at least, three thousand years past. Before the flood, if we rightly understand the Hebrew numerals, men lived several hundred years; but none of the antediluvians attained a thousand. The posterity of Cain lived the longest. This great age however, was reduced one half immediately after the flood: for Noah who was born prior to it, arrived at the age of his father; and Shem lived to 600 years: but three generations after the flood, the life of man was reduced to about on fourth of the antediluvian standard, i. e. to about two hundred years.

From Lord Bacon on Life & Death

It does not appear that longivity depends on a particular mode of life, peculiarity of temper or any certain ^{and character are prominent} cast of character. ^{determinedly that we cast our eyes back upon those distinguished characters whose ages} Abraham lived 175 years; a courageous & prosperous man. Isaac lived to 180; a man of peace, and of a chaste life. Jacob, a man of troubles, and a numerous offspring, held out to 140; being patient, mild and subtle. Shmael, an active military man lived to 130. Sarah, the only woman whose age is mentioned, lived to 127, a woman of beauty & resolution, famous for her frankness & her duty. Joseph, a prudent, politic & chaste man, who suffered affliction in his youth, but afterwards saw great felicity, lived to 110 years. His brother Levi, an angry impatient & revengeful man lived to the age of 137.

Moses

Moses lived 120 years; a man of courage & unvaried perseverance, tho' of great meekness, & slow of speech. Yet Moses himself declares in his Psalm, that the life of man is but seventy years, and the halest constitution but 80, w.^c standard seems, in a great measure, to have been observed from that time down to the present. Aaron was three years older; a man of ready speech, easy behaviour, & somewhat variable. But Phineas, grandson to Aaron, is computed to have lived 300 years; if the Israelitish war against the tribe of Benjamin, in which Phineas was consulted, happened in the order of time as the history relates it. He was a man exceedingly zealous. Joshua, a military man, & a great general, & always successful, lived 110 years. Caleb, his cotemporary seems to have been his equal in age. Ehud the judge must have been 100; as after the victory over the Moabites, the Holy Land had 80 years rest under his government: He was a bold & daring man, devoting himself to the service of the people. Eli, the priest lived 98 years; a corpulent man, of an easy & indulgent temper. Elisha the prophet seems to have lived more than an hundred; as he continued 60 years after the assumption of Elyakim ^(or Elias), yet at the time of that assumption, the boys mocked him by the name of old bald head; he was a vehement man, severe, of an austere life, & a despiser of riches.

Isaiah must have lived to an 100, since he is found to have prophesied through the course of 70 years; but when he died is uncertain. He was a man of great eloquence & poetical fire.

Jobias the elder lived 158 years, and Jobias the younger 127. They were both men of a merciful & charitable disposition.

In the time of the captivity, many of the Jews who returned from Babylon, seem'd to have been long lived, as they remembered & bewailed the difference of the two Temples, at the distance of 70 years.

In passing from the old testament to the new we shall find some old people on record: Simeon was 90; a man full of Religion, hope & expectation. Anna the Prophetess lived to above an 100; for she lived a widow 84 years. She spent her days in the habit of fasting & prayer.

If we leave the sacred writings, & consult profane history, we find that Numa, King of the Romans lived to 80; a peaceable, contemplative man, devoted to religion. Marcus Valerius Corvinus lived to an 100, there being 46 years between his first & sixth consulship; a man of great valour & courage, courteous, popular, & always fortunate.

Solon, the Legislator of Athens, and one of the seven wise men, lived above 80; a man of spirit, yet popular, a lover of his country, very learned, yet no stranger to pleasure, and a soft life. Epimenides of Crete, is reported to have lived 157 years; but his history is dubious, for it is said that he lived 57 in a cave. Xenophanes lived 102, or more; for he left his native country at 25, & travelled abroad 77 years complete. He was a man of a wild & wandering mind, of a vast imagination, breathing nothing but infinity; hence he was called instead of Xenophanes Xenomanes. Anacreon the poet lived to above 80; a man of a rakish life, & addicted to wine. Pindar of Thebes lived to 80, a sublime poet, a singular genius, & a devout worshipper of the Gods. Sophocles arrived to the same age, a lofty tragic poet, wholly given up to writing, and regardless of his family affairs.

Artaxerxes, King of Persia lived 94 years; a man of little genius, vain glorious, & a lover of ease. At the same time Agésilans, King of Sparta, lived 84 years, a moderate man, a philosopher among princes, yet ambitious & a warrior; and no less active in business than in battle.

Gorgias, the rhetorician lived to 100, a boaster of his knowledge, and one who taught for profit. He was a great traveller, and a little before his death declared "he had no accusation to bring, against old age." Protagoras lived 90 years; he was also a rhetorician, & busied himself in political affairs, and was a great traveller, for that day, as well as Gorgias.

Isocrates of Athens lived to 90: he too was a rhetorician, a very modest man, who taught at home, & appeared not in public. Democritus of Abdera lived to 109; a great philosopher, & the best skilled in physics of all the Greeks; a great traveller, & profoundly skilled in the works of nature: he was a diligent experimenter, & pursued analogy rather than the rules of disputation. Diogenes of Sinope lived 90 years; a blunt rude man, tyrannizing over himself & others, of a sordid diet & a great sloven.

Plato a man of a directly opposite cast lived to 81; a man of courage; given to speculation; of sublime thought; a polite & well bred man; agreeable & majestic rather than cheerful, & a lover of quiet.

Zeno lived to 90; a man of lofty thoughts, great subtilty, & a despiser of opinions, yet not troublesome, but rather caught the mind than bound it. Theophrastus, of Eresus, lived to 85; a man of graceful eloquence, & a greatful variety of matter, who collected all that was pleasing in philosophy, without meddling with what was troublesome or disagreeable. Carnades

Carneades, of Cyrene, lived to 85, a man of ready eloquence, who delighted both himself & others with a pleasant & agreeable variety of thought. Orbilius, the grammarian, in Cicero's time lived to near 100; having been first a soldier, then a school-master; a sharp & austere man, both with his tongue & his pen, & no less severe to his scholars.

Lintus Fabius Maximus lived to above 80; for he continued augur 63 years: He was a prudent slow man, moderate in all the parts of life, and courteously severe. Mafissa, King of Numedia, lived 90 years, & had a son after 85: He was a bold man, that relied upon fortune, & experienced many vicissitudes of affairs in his youth, but afterwards enjoyed a continued run of felicity. Marcus Portius Cato lived to above 90; a man of a ^{very} hale constitution, both in body and mind; he was severe in speech, delighted in faction, took pleasure in agriculture, and was physician to himself and family.

Terentia, wife to Cicero, lived to 103; a woman who struggled with many calamities, beside that of having a man of genius for her husband; for Cicero was a Whig, while Terentia was a Tory. She was subject to what is very rare in a woman, fits of the gout; She was a lady of a noble & elevated mind; but differing in politics with her husband, they separated, & was married to a noble Roman, & attained the great age of 103!

Luceia must have lived much above an hundred years; for she is said to have acted upon the stage during a complete century; playing perhaps first the part of a child, & at last that of a decrepid old woman. Galeria Copiola, who was both a player & a dancer, was brought upon the stage again ninety nine years after her first appearance thereon! Not now indeed as an actress, but as a wonder,

awonder, at the dedication of the theatre by Pompey the great, and again also at the votive solemnities for the life of Augustus. There was another actress inferior to her in age, but superior in dignity ^{who} to live to almost 90, namely Livia Julia Augusta, Wife to Augustus Caesar, & mother to Tiberius, If the life of Augustus were a play, as he himself declared it to be; and therefore desired his friends to clap him when he died, this Livia was doubtless an excellent actress, who could so well suit a dissembled obedience to her husband, with her power & authority to her son: she was an affable, maternal, busy lady, fond of power & pleasure. Junia wife to Caius Cassius, & sister to Marcus Brutus lived to 90; for she survived the battle of Philippi 64 years: she was a woman of courage, wealthy, but afflicted with the calamities of a factious husband, & a long widowhood.

In the reign of Vespasian viz in the 70th year of the Christian era, there was a Taxation which produced a chronicle of long lives; w^{ch} gave authentic information as to the ages of men. This portion of Roman history informs us that in that part of Italy w^{ch} lies between the Appennines and the Po there were found 124 men of an hundred years old & upwards. viz

54 of an 100 — . 57 of 110; and 2 of 125; 4 of 130. Again 4 were found of 135, or 137; and 3 of 140 years old.

Beside these, Parma afforded five; three whereof were 120; and two 130 years old. Bruxella afforded one of 125; Placentia one of 131; Faentina one woman of 132; and a town called Velleia circum situated on the hills about Placentia, afforded ten, of whom six were

110; and four 120; Lastly Arminum afforded one aged 150: his name was Marcus Apornius.

Now whether mens manners, or dispositions, or fortunes have any relation to long life we may be able to judge, if we give as we have done, a short character of each.

Among all the Roman & Grecian Emperors, together with those of Gaul & Germany down to the 10.th century, containing a list of about two hundred Princes, there are found but 4 who arrived at the age of 80. The two first Emperors Augustus & Tiberius, the one attained 78, and the other 70; and both might have lived longer, but for Livia & Caligula. Augustus was a man of moderate temper, calm & serene; temperate in his diet; but not very chaste, yet happy in all things. Tiberius was a man of a different cast: Augustus called him a man of "slow jaws", but whether this referred to his eating, or speaking we know not: he was: a man of powerful speech, very cruel, & a hard drinker, yet was studious of his health, & called that man a fool who was not his own physician after 30. Gordianus the elder lived 80 years, & at last died a violent death; he was courageous, magnificent, learned & a Poet. The Emperor Valerian lived 70 years before he was taken prisoner by Sapor King of Persia; after his captivity he lived seven years, amidst reproaches, & at length died a violent death; a man of a moderate capacity, effeminate, & vain. Anastasius lived 88 years, a man of a peaceable mind, superstitious & timorous. Anicius Justinianus lived 83 years; a man desirous of glory, but too indolent to acquire by his own personal exertions. He was not his own master in the government, but led by others in the government, & hen pecked by his wife.

Hellenus

Hellena Britannica, mother of Constantine, lived to 80, a woman who intermeddled little in civic affairs, neither in the reign of her husband, nor of her son, but wholly devoted to religion; of a great mind, & always happy. The Empress Theodora; a woman of business, that delighted in governing, lived to above 80 -

Let us now leave secular Princes & turn our attention to the Heads of the Christian Church. And first of S^t. John the Apostle & beloved disciple. This holy man lived 93 years, and has been denoted by the emblem of the eagle, i. e. breathing the ethereal region & appearing like a winged seraph, rising by his fervent charity above the mists of this world.

S^t. Luke the Evangelist, lived 84 years, an eloquent man, and a traveller, and a physician.

Simeon, the son of Cleophas, & Bishop of Jerusalem lived 120 years, and even then his life cut short by martyrdom: he was a courageous, constant man, & full of good works. Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostles, & Bishop of Smirna, lived about 100 years, tho' cut off by martyrdom; a man of a great soul, heroic patience, and indefatigable diligence. Dionysius, the Ariopagite, who was cotemporary with S^t. Paul, seems to have lived 90 years: he was called "the Bird of heaven", from the lofty flights of his contemplations. Aquila & Priscilla, lived together in happy and memorable wedlock, to the age, of at least an 100; for they were living under Rustus the 1st. Paul the hermit, died at 113: He lived in a cave upon such simple & coarse diet, as should seem scarcely sufficient to support life: he had the reputation of spending his whole time in religious contemplation. S^t. Anthony, the first founder,

founder, or as some say, the restorer of the order of Monks, lived to 105: He was a devout, contemplative man, yet well versed in civil affairs: his kind of life was hard & austere, tho' he lived not without some sway, having his monks under his direction, and receiving the visits & the homage of distinguished characters, both christians & philosphers. St. Athanasius lived to above 80; a man of invincible fortitude, never yielding to adversity: He was a great master in party disputes, in which he engaged with great heat & vigour: this celebrated theologian was very fond of popularity. St. Jerom lived to above 90: he was a fine writer, & of manly eloquence, skilled in the languages & sciences: he was also, in the early part of his life a traveller; but lived austerely in his old age, bearing a noble spirit, & shining like a bright star in a dark hemisphere.

From their first establishment down to the 10th cent^y. there were 241 Popes; of which number only five are found to have lived 80 years. John the 23^d Pope lived 90 years; a man of a restless spirit, studious of novelties & innovations, & greedy of wealth. Gregory VIIth created pope in a violent scism lived to 90; but the shortness of his reign leaves us no traces of his character. Paul 3^d lived 81 years; a man of a calm mind, & deep knowledge; tho' an astrologer, he was learned, and had a great regard to his health; but was like old Eli over indulgent to his family. Paul 4th lived 83 years; a man of a rough & austere temper, of a high imperious spirit, passionate, but eloquent & ready of speech. Gregory 13th also lived to 83; a truly good man, sound both in mind & body, politic, temperate, & full of good works & charity.

The Essenes, a sect among the Jews, who used a very simple diet, according to the rules of Pythagoras, are commonly said to live above an 100. Appolonius Tyaneus lived more yr. a 100 years. He was a Pythagorean in his diet, & a great traveller, & his grandfather is said to have lived to 130.

From what has been said it appears that the succession of ages, & of the generations of men, seems no way to shorten human life; since the age of man down from the time of Moses to the present, has stood at about eighty years. without gradually declining as has been generally supposed: neither does it appear that longevity is the reward of any particular temperament, occupation, or peculiar cast of mind; for we have given instances of longevity in persons of every different tempers, habits, & stations of life.

It is ^{commonly} generally believed among the best observers of human life, that the inhabitants of Islands are generally longer lived yr. the inhabitants of continents: and that lofty situations are more conducive to longevity yr. low ones: but rather on high lands yr. high mountains, as in Arcadia in Greece. It is an undoubted fact, that salt marshes, w^{ch} at certain seasons, are overflowed with sea water, are more unwholesome yr. fresh marshes.

The countries most celebrated for long lived inhabitants, are Arcadia; Aetolia, India, near the banks of the Ganges; Brazil; Ceylon, Britain; the Orkneys & the western Islands of Britain. This holds up ^{the} idea more in favour of warm climates yr. cold ones: yet we have accounts of many very old people in Russia; many above an 100, and several above 120. Whence we conclude, that the period of human life throughout the globe is like human happiness, more on a level, yr. prejudice is willing to allow of