

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

History of Medicine

It is sobering to realise that as recently as the year in which *On the Origin of Species* was published, learned opinion was that diseases such as typhus and cholera were spread by a 'miasma', and suggestions that doctors should wash their hands before examining patients were greeted with mockery by the profession. The Cambridge Library Collection reissues milestone publications in the history of Western medicine as well as studies of other medical traditions. Its coverage ranges from Galen on anatomical procedures to Florence Nightingale's common-sense advice to nurses, and includes early research into genetics and mental health, colonial reports on tropical diseases, documents on public health and military medicine, and publications on spa culture and medicinal plants.

The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.

A physician and medical reformer enthused by the scientific and cultural progress of the Enlightenment as it took hold in Britain, Thomas Percival (1740–1804) wrote on many topics, including public health and demography. His influential publication on medical ethics is considered the first modern formulation. In 1807, his son Edward published this four-volume collection of his father's diverse work. Some of the items here had never been published before, including a selection of Percival's private correspondence and a biographical account written by Edward. Volume 1 contains this biography and the full text of Percival's popular self-improvement book, *A Father's Instructions*, originally intended for his own children and then published in three parts between 1775 and 1800. His *Medical Ethics* (1803) and *Essays Medical and Experimental* (revised edition, 1772–3) have been reissued separately in this series.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Works,
Literary, Moral, and Medical,
of Thomas Percival, M.D.

*To which are Prefixed,
Memoirs of His Life and Writings,
and a Selection from
His Literary Correspondence*

VOLUME 1

THOMAS PERCIVAL



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge, CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108067331

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2014

This edition first published 1807

This digitally printed version 2014

ISBN 978-1-108-06733-1 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect
the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published
by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or
with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE
W O R K S
OF
THOMAS PERCIVAL, M.D.
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE
WORKS,
LITERARY, MORAL,
AND
MEDICAL,
OF
THOMAS PERCIVAL, M.D.

F. R. S. AND A. S.—F. R. S. AND R. M. S. EDIN.

LATE PRES. OF THE LIT. AND PHIL. SOC. AT MANCHESTER; MEMBER OF
THE ROYAL SOCIETIES OF PARIS AND OF LYONS, OF THE MEDICAL
SOCIETIES OF LONDON, AND OF AIX EN PROVENCE, OF THE
AMERIC. ACAD. OF ARTS, &c. AND OF THE AMERIC.
PHIL. SOC. AT PHILADELPHIA.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

MEMOIRS of his LIFE and WRITINGS,

AND A SELECTION FROM HIS

LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE.

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. I.

PRINTED BY RICHARD CRUTTWELL, ST. JAMES'S-STREET, BATH;
FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.

1807.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Public is, in these volumes, presented with an entire collection of the Literary, Moral, and Medical Writings of Dr. Percival. The parts which are now for the first time published, are chiefly the following; “An Inaugural Dissertation, De Frigore;”—some additional Notes and Amendments to the “Medical Ethics;”—a Biographical Tribute to the Memory of Thomas Butterworth Bayley, esq; of Hope-hall, near Manchester;—and a selection from the Literary Correspondence of Dr. Percival, incorporated with the Memoirs of his Life and Writings.

Agreeably to the judicious sentiment of Sir William Jones, that “the best monument which can be erected to a man of literary talents is a good edition of his works;” the Editor of the present publication is solicitous to perform this office of filial regard for the memory of a much-loved and respected parent; whilst he is little apprehensive for the fate of an entire collection, of which the distinct parts have already been honoured with general approbation.—To these Works he has ventured to prefix a Biographical Narrative, with the diffident hope of extending the reputation of an eminent writer, by a record of the transactions of his private

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

6

ADVERTISEMENT.

and literary Life. Although the uniform tenor of professional avocations, diversified only by the liberal and tranquil pursuit of letters, furnish few materials for personal biography; yet happily the vicissitudes of extraordinary fortune are not essential to illustrate the attributes of virtue, or the labours of science. To some it may not be uninteresting to pursue the progress of a Man of Letters through the simple incidents of a career, which afforded leisure for private occupation, and scope for conduct marked by the peculiarities of his genius; nor can it be wholly uninteresting to trace in the familiar actions of a grave and refined philosopher a conformity with the precepts contained in his moral writings. The image of Dr. Percival's mind, which is impressed on the more durable monuments of his fame, may, it is probable, have served rather to excite than to gratify the public curiosity respecting the passages of his life, and the features of his character; and the design of the following Memoirs will be fulfilled, if they serve to exhibit a pleasing assemblage of moral and intellectual endowments, a series of unwearied efforts in the cause of learning and humanity, and a life spent in active exertions for the public and domestic good, unblemished by a single circumstance which it would be painful to recite. The simple record of such a life, it is beautifully observed by a very distinguished writer, may derive an interest even from its uniformity; and, when contrasted with the turbulent events of the passing scene, may lead the thoughts to some views of human nature, on which it is not ungrateful to repose.*

* Professor Dugald Stewart: *Life of Reid.*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TO

JOHN HAYGARTH, M.D.

F. R. S. LOND.—F. R. S. AND R. M. S. EDIN. MEMBER
OF THE AMERIC. ACAD. OF ARTS AND
SCIENCES; AND OF THE LIT. AND
PHIL. SOC. OF MANCHESTER.

DEAR SIR,

PERMIT me to address to your protection these volumes of my Father's LITERARY, MORAL, and MEDICAL WRITINGS. To you I am prompted to offer them, not only from a sense of your talents and candour in estimating their various merit; but allow me to add, from the conviction that such an offering would have accorded most gratefully with the sentiments of their late venerated AUTHOR. Your friendship He valued among the earliest, the most durable, and the most affectionate which his life afforded. Nor did he esteem it a slight honour to enjoy, without interruption, an unreserved and liberal intercourse with one so eminently distinguished by professional skill and active philanthropy.

In addressing you, I need not explain the motives which dictated the works contained in the present publication. The circumstances of their origin, and

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

8

DEDICATION.

the purposes they were designed to fulfil, were commonly submitted to your consideration, before the works themselves were communicated to the Public. Their intrinsic utility was discussed with the freedom and zeal which are inestimable in the friendships of men of letters, whilst newlights were struck out, which contributed to their illustration or improvement.

In extending the protection of your Name to the Biographical Memoir prefixed to these volumes, I am not insensible that I seek at the same time the indulgence of your criticism, and your approbation of the fidelity of the narrative. But the former, I am persuaded, you will readily accord; nor can I withhold the pleasing though flattering assurance, that, in the following pages, your candour will recognize the faithfulness of the writer's design, even where his success has been least adequate to his wishes.

Permit me also to assure myself that you will receive this Address, as a testimony of the sincere respect and perfect esteem with which I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your most obliged friend,

And faithful servant,

EDWARD PERCIVAL.

Bath, Jan. 1807.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS.

ORIGIN and Family of Dr. Percival, p. i.—Account of his Grandfather, and paternal Uncle, Dr. Percival, *sen.* ii.—Birth and early Education, iv.—Warrington Academy, vii.—Studies, private Instruction, &c. viii.—Design of entering Oxford, x.—Removal to Edinburgh, Medical Studies, Society of Mr. Hume and Dr. Robertson, xi.—London, Lord Willoughby de Parham, Royal Society, xiv.—Leyden, *Thesis*, Graduation, xvi.—Dr. Percival's Marriage, Settlement at Manchester, xvii.—Publication of “*Essays Medical and Experimental*, Account of the Design, &c. of the Work, xviii.—Letter from Dr. Franklin, xxx.—Essays on Population, &c. on the Properties and Medical Uses of Coffee, xxxiv.—Dr. Percival's Services in the Support of Public Institutions, Manchester Infirmary, xxxvii.—Warrington Academy, xxxix.—Publication of “*Moral Tales, Fables, and Reflections*,” some Account of its Design, &c. xlii.—*Third* Volume of “*Essays Medical and Experimental*,” on the Fall of Rain, lvi.—On the Influence of Fixed Air on the Colours and Vegetation of Plants, lviii.—Dr. Percival experiences a Failure of his Eye-sight, lix.—*Second* Volume of “*Moral Tales, &c.*” Socratic Discourse on Truth and Faithfulness, Account of its Design, &c. lxii.

Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, lxvii.—College of Arts and Sciences, lxx.—“*Memoirs*” of Manchester Society,

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.: To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

lxxi.—“Speculations concerning the perceptive Power of Vegetables,” lxxiii.—On the Pursuits of Experimental Philosophy, lxxv.—Manchester Academy, lxxvii.

Miscellaneous Literary Correspondence, Preliminary Observations, lxxxiii.—Abolition of the Slave-Trade, Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, lxxxiv.—“Moral and Literary Dissertations,” Enquiry, &c. concerning “Taxation,” lxxxvii.—LETTERS. From Dr. Percival to Dr. Lettsom, on the Character of Dr. Fothergill, xc.—From Miss H. More to Dr. Percival, Criticisms on his Literary Writings, xciii.—From Dr. Aikin to the Same, on similar Subjects, xciv.—From Dr. Percival to his Son, on religious Studies, xcvi.—From the Same to Dr. Haygarth, Mr. Howard, &c. xcix.—From the Same to the Same, Dr. Priestley, &c. ci.—From the Same to the Same, ciii.—From Miss H. More to Dr. Percival, on his Literary Dissertations, civ.—From Dr. Percival to the Bishop of Landaff, on Religious Controversy, cv.—From Dr. Robertson to Dr. Percival, Manchester Academy, cvii.—From Dr. Percival to Dr. Haygarth, Scheme to exterminate Small-Pox, &c. cix.—From Dr. Beattie to Dr. Percival, cxi. (from Dr. Franklin to the Same, on Duelling.)—From Dr. Percival to ***, cxvi.—From the Same to Dr. Haygarth, cxviii.—From the Same to the Same, cxx.—From the Same to the Same, cxxi.—From the Same to Mr. ***.—Quakers, Corporation and Test Acts, cxxii.—From the Same to the Bishop of Landaff, cxxvi.—From Dr. Beattie to Dr. Percival, Slave-Trade, cxxviii.—From Dr. Percival to Dr. Beattie, ditto, cxxxii.—From Dr. Robertson to Dr. Percival, ditto, cxxxiv.—From Dr. Percival to Dr. Robertson, ditto, cxxxvii.—From Dr. Robertson to Dr. Percival, ditto, cxxxix.—From Dr. Percival to Dr. Haygarth, cxl.—From the Same to the Same, cxlii.—From the Same to the Same, cxliv.—From the Same to Dr. Paley, Religious Establishments, &c. cxlvi.—From Dr. Paley to Dr. Percival, on Subscription, cxlviii.—From Dr. Percival to Dr. Priestley, clii.—From the Bishop of Landaff to Dr. Percival, Essay on Taxation, cliii.—From the Rev. T. Burgess (now Bishop of St. David’s,) to Dr. Percival, Slave-Trade, &c. clv.—From Dr. Percival to Mr. Burgess, ditto, clvi.—From Madame Neckar to Dr. Percival, ditto, clix.—From Dr.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

11

Percival to Madame Neckar, ditto, clxi.—From Dr. Percival to the Rev. T. B. Percival, Corporation and Test Acts, clxiii.—From Dr. Percival to the Bishop of Landaff, clxvi.—From the Bishop of Landaff to Dr. Percival, clxix.—From Dr. Percival to ***, on the Death of a Friend, clxxii.—From Dr. Percival to Dr. Haygarth, British Constitution, clxxiv.—From the Same to the Same, on the Death of Mr. James Percival, *short Account of him*, clxxix.—“*Discourse on the Divine Permission of Evil, Physical and Moral.*”—“*Medical Jurisprudence.*”—From Dr. Heberden to Dr. Percival, on “Medical Ethics,” clxxxiii.—From the Same to the Same, on ditto, clxxxiv.—From Sir George Baker, bart. to the Same, on ditto, clxxxvi.—From the Rev. Samuel Parr, LL.D. to the Same, Discourse on Hospital Duties, clxxxviii.—From the Same to the Same, on “Medical Ethics,” cxci.

Continuation of the Narrative, cxciv.—Remarks on the Correspondence, and Domestic Habits of Dr. Percival, Conversation, Society, cxcv.—Manchester Board of Health, cxcix.—Death of the Rev. T. B. Percival, at St. Petersburg, ccii.—Publication of the *Third Part* of a Father’s Instructions, Remarks respecting the Theological Disquisitions, cciv.—Publication of “Medical Ethics,” Remarks, ccix.—Conclusion.—Monumental Inscription, ccxix.—Inscription on the Tablet of the Manchester Society, ccxx.

Additional Remarks on the Character of Dr. Percival, ccxxi.—POSTSCRIPT, ccxxxix.—Latin Inscription designed for the Tablet of the Society at Manchester, ccxlii.—APPENDIX.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*A FATHER'S INSTRUCTIONS.*

[DEDICATION to the Right Hon. the COUNTESS OF STAMFORD,
p. 3.—The AUTHOR'S ADDRESS to his CHILDREN, p. 5.—
PREFACE, p. 7.]

PART THE FIRST.

IDLENESS and Irresolution, p. 11.—Cruelty to Insects, 12.—
Affection to Parents, 13.—Taking of Bird-Nests, 13.—On the
fame, 13.—Tenderness to Mothers, 14.—The Folly of Crying on
trifling Occasions, 14.—Intemperance, 15.—Cruelty punished, 15.—
Liberality, 16.—The Pert and the Ignorant prone to Ridicule, 16.—
Compassion to the Poor, 17.—Parental Affection, 18.—The Fallacy
of external Appearance, 20.—Selfish Sorrow reproved, 21.—Ho-
nesty and Generosity, 23.—A generous Return for an Injury, 23.—
We too often judge of Men by the Splendour, and not by the Merit
of their Actions, 24.—Silence and Reserve reproved, 25.—Cruelty
to Insects, 26.—The Honour and Advantage of a constant Adhe-
rence to Truth, 27.—Sloth contrasted with Industry, 28.—The
Folly and Odioufness of Affectation, 29.—The Passions should be
governed by Reason, 30.—Affection extended to inanimate Objects,
31.—A Tribute to Friendship; and a Pattern for Imitation, 33.—
Scepticism condemned, 35.—Self-Government, 36.—It is the Office
or Reason and Philosophy to moderate, not to suppress the Passions,
36.—The Love of Fame, 37.—Gratitude and Piety, 39.—Envy and
Discontent, 40.—Courage, 42.—False Ambition, 42.—The Bigot
and Visionary, 43.—Persecution, 48.—False Notions of Providence,
49.—Cruelty in Experiments, 50.—Foppery, 52.—Slander, 52.—
Praise when you may; be candid when you can, 56.—Circumspec

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.: To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his

Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS.

13

tion, 56.—The Weakness of Man, and the Wisdom of Divine Providence, 58.—The Character of the Merchant honourable, 61.—A Female Character, 62.—Cruelty to Horses, 62.—Positiveness, 67.—The Chameleon, 68.—Lying, 69.—Vigilant Observation, 72.—Maxims, 74.—Indian Gratitude; European Injustice, 76.—The African, 79.—An Eastern Allegory, 80.—Family Love and Harmony, 84.

PART THE SECOND.—The true Enjoyment of Life, 93.—A Winter Evening's Conversation, 96.—Sisterly Unity and Love, 104.—An Appearance in Nature explained and improved, 105.—The History of Joseph abridged, 107.—Good-natured Credulity, 114.—An easy and instructive Experiment, 116.—The Dog, 118.—Respect and Deference due to the Aged, 121.—Gaming, 121.—Rivalship without Enmity; Emulation without Envy, 125.—Virtuous Friendship extends beyond the Grave, 127.—Warmth in Argument, 132.—Habits of Sensuality may be formed in early Youth, 133.—The Glutton, 140.—The Ass, 141.—Pride and Pedantry, 145.—Vanity, 153.—Knowledge, 153.—Cowardice and Injustice; Courage and Generosity, 162.—A Conversation, 164.—The high Value of corporeal Endowments in the State of Nature, 171.—Inscissibility and false Honour, 172.—The Tiger and the Elephant, 174.—The Parasite Plant, 176.—Immortality, 176.—The Tame Geese and Wild Geese, 182.—Beauty and Deformity, 183.—Philosophical Attention and Sagacity, 185.—The Jolly Fellow, 189.—The Dung-hill Cock, 190.—Persecution, an ancient Fragment, 190.—Uniformity in Religion, 192.—The Pedlar and his Ass, 195.—The Bees, 196.—An Epitaph, 197.—Maternal Claims to Duty, 198.—Fraternal Affection, 201.—Immoderate Study, 204.—The Canary Bird and Red Linnet, 204.—An Experiment, 209.—The roving Fishes, 210.—The Historian and the Painter, 212.—The Rattle-Snake, 215.—An Ex-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

periment, 215.—True Elevation of Mind displayed in Condescension and Humanity, 216.—Robinson Crusoe, 217.—Criticism, 220.—Illustration of the various Degrees, Energies, and Modifications of Instinct, 223.—The same Subject continued, 229.—The same Subject continued, 245.—The Swallows, 235.—Speculation and Practice, 247.

PART THE THIRD.—The Ways of Providence, a Fragment, 257.—Of the Divine Permission of Evil, natural and moral. Physical Evil, Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Storms, Inundations, Deserts, 260.—The same Subject continued. Structure of the human Frame, multiplied Relations of the present Life, Childhood, Youth, Manhood, Old Age, 267.—The same Subject continued. Labour, its Advantages, Bodily Pain, Sickness, its Advantages, Decays of Age, Death, 274.—The same Subject continued. Renewal of virtuous Friendship hereafter, Sources of mental Depravity, Appetites, Imagination, Passions and Affections, Avarice, Envy, Malice, Revenge, 284.—Miscellaneous Communications to a Young Clergyman. Study, Pulpit Discourses, Mode of Composition, Adoption of Scripture Language, Dangers incidental to the Clerical Profession, Sunday-Schools, Instruction of the Poor, 299.—Sketch of a Discourse on the Use and Abuse of the Appetites, 322.—Communications to the same. Evidences of Christianity, David Hume, Love of Truth, Religious Controversy, 327.—Communications to the same. Particular Providence, Prayer, 350.—Communications to the same. Education, public and private, 358.—Maxims, ironical and ludicrous, 363.—Piety, and Consummation of Morality, 368.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:

To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his

Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS PERCIVAL, M.D.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SELECTION FROM HIS

LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

“ Hic liber, professione pietatis, aut laudatus erit aut excusatus.”

TACIT.

*“ Mihi quidem, quanquam est subito ereptus, vivit tamen semperque
vivet. Virtutem enim amavi illius viri quæ extincta non est;
nec mihi soli versatur ante oculos, sed etiam posteris erit clara
et insignis.”*

CICERO.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D.



THOMAS PERCIVAL, the subject of these
Memoirs, descended from a family of respectable
condition, formerly resident at Thelwall, in the
county of Chester. His remote ancestors were occu-
pied in the cultivation of the patrimonial estate; a
farm of moderate extent, which has been lineally
transmitted to the present generation. The slender
fortunes of his line were compensated by intellec-
tual endowments, and hereditary worth. His more
immediate predecessors applied with diligence and
success to the study of science; and the fame which
they acquired by the exercise of a liberal and lucra-
tive profession, appears to have awakened his early
ambition of literary eminence.

VOL. I.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ii MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

His grandfather, Peter Percival, was the first who quitted the patrimonial habitation. Destined by birth to the scanty inheritance of a younger son, he was induced to seek a more ample fortune by embracing the profession of physic; and accordingly devoted himself to the usual methods of preparatory study. With the view to a more extended sphere of practice than his native village afforded, he fixed his residence at Warrington, in Lancashire; where he lived with decent hospitality and creditable fame. The lady also whom he married, (Martha Worsley, the daughter of Mr. Worsley, of Sutton, in the same county,) appears to have been remarkable for the attainments of her understanding, and the exemplary virtue of her life. Her sister, Mrs. Mather, is known by the correspondence which she held on theological subjects with the celebrated Bishop Burnet, by whom she was greatly esteemed.

In the year 1701, Peter Percival died, leaving an issue of four sons and one daughter. Of these, the eldest son, Thomas Percival, adopted the profession of his father; and by his superior talents augmented the reputation of his name. The following sketch, from the pen of his successor, describes his worth and accomplishments: “ He received his classical educa-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)OF THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D. iii

“ tion at the free grammar school of Warrington;
 “ an institution well endowed, formerly much reforted
 “ to and held in great estimation. From this semi-
 “ nary he removed to Leyden; where he became
 “ the pupil of the celebrated Boerhaave; and com-
 “ bined with his medical pursuits the study of various
 “ other branches of knowledge. Following the steps
 “ of his great master, he directed his attention to Na-
 “ tural History, Chemistry, Ethics, and Theology. At
 “ the expiration of the usual period, he was honoured
 “ with the degree of Doctor of Physic, A. D. 1720.
 “ His inaugural dissertation, ‘ De Phthisi Pulmonali,’
 “ is written with elegance, perspicuity, and much infor-
 “ mation. The love of learned ease contracted the
 “ sphere of his professional exertions; and his practice
 “ was confined to Warrington, and a small surround-
 “ ing district. But his talents and skill were acknow-
 “ ledged by able judges; and his situation afforded
 “ him a field sufficiently ample for the display of
 “ probity, humanity, and disinterestedness.”

Joseph, the third* son of Peter Percival, was born
 in the year 1694. Like the rest of his family, he

* James Percival, the second son, removed from Warrington to
 Liverpool; where he followed the profession of a merchant, during
 the course of a long life, with honour and reputation.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

iv MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

received the benefit of a prudent and liberal education. But his native disposition was averse from the pursuits of fame or fortune; and he appears to have sought his happiness in the tranquil enjoyment of an easy and respectable station. At different periods, however, he engaged in various branches of commerce; and transmitted to his posterity, in the example of upright and benevolent conduct, the fairest portion of his inheritance. By his union with Margaret Orred, a lady of reputable family in Cheshire, he had seven children, of whom three died at an early age. THOMAS PERCIVAL, the subject of the present narrative, was the youngest, and only surviving son; born September 29, N. S. 1740.

During the period of infancy, his health was feeble and precarious, requiring all the offices of tender assiduity to preserve and invigorate his frame. His youth, nevertheless, was carefully devoted to intellectual improvement, aided by the opportunities of instruction which are rarely provincial towns afforded. The individuals of his family who had gained distinction by their literary attainments, had excited a taste for knowledge, and even a relish for studious pursuits, among the other members of his domestic circle; so that those who guided his juvenile conduct, were well

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)OF THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D. v

fitted by their acquisitions to form and cultivate his mind. At the age of three years, however, he suffered the singular misfortune of losing both his parents by decease at the same time; the death of his mother happening a few hours only after that of his father, whose health had been gradually undermined by the sorrow which her long and painful illness occasioned.

But the loss of parental instruction was supplied to their son by the able and affectionate care of his eldest sister, Elizabeth Percival, the real mother of his understanding and manners. The excellent qualities of this lady, a rare benevolence of temper, and undissembled probity of mind, were in no common degree congenial to the character which she was destined to unfold; whilst the image of her virtues seemed to be reflected in the youthful dispositions of her charge. The purity of her moral precepts, no less than the warmth of her affection, inspired his mind with the indelible sentiment of filial regard; and to the latest hour of his life few reflections afforded him more grateful pleasure, than those associated with the memory of her kindness.*

* This lady had the happiness of witnessing, during the course of a long life, the fruits of her maternal care. She died, at an advanced age, a few years only before the subject of this memoir;

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

After passing through the usual forms of elementary instruction, at a respectable private seminary in the neighbourhood of Warrington, Mr. Percival was entered, in the tenth year of his age, at the free grammar-school of that town. Under the care of the Rev. Mr. Hayward, (a teacher of considerable fame,) he laid the chief foundation of his acquaintance with the Latin and Greek languages; and by early proficiency recommended himself to the esteem of a rigorous master. His industry and success were conspicuously superior to his years; the zeal of his application so far exceeding the bounds which a delicate constitution prescribed, as to render it expedient, some time afterwards, to remove him to another school, where his labours might be less severe. But the faithful regard of Mr. Hayward followed him to this

who has testified his affectionate esteem for his “foster parent,” by recording her virtues, and his own obligations, in a pathetic inscription to her memory.—Possessed of an understanding of more than usual energy, her thoughts were often and deeply conversant with subjects relating to religion; and her judgment in these matters was fortified and improved by theological study. Her favourite recurrence to topics of serious meditation had even contributed to cast over her mind a shade of solicitude, which was sometimes observed to mingle with the deeper colouring of despondency. But her active duties were cheerfully and assiduously performed; and the warmth of her piety was infused into the early sentiments of her charge.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

OF THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D. vii

new situation, and at length, through earnest entreaty, procured his return to the free grammar-school, where he remained during several years.

In the autumn of 1757, the Warrington Academy was opened; when the name of Mr. Percival was the first enrolled on a numerous and respectable list of pupils. At this institution, whose celebrity is not unknown to men of letters, he pursued with unabating diligence the classical studies in which he had already made considerable progress. The Latin compositions, in particular, which he executed about this time, display the extent not less than the accuracy of his attainments. In the subsequent and far greater part of his life, the failure of his eye-sight precluding him from the perusal of works in such languages as are not made fluently intelligible by a reader, his intercourse with the writings of antiquity was in great measure relinquished; but he proved the value of his present labours, by manifesting his taste and his skill in composition even at an advanced age.

It does not appear that Mr. Percival applied with much assiduity at any period to the cultivation of mathematical science; nor did his acquirements in that department extend beyond the limited instructions he received during his residence at the War-

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

rington Academy. The study of Ethics, however, which formed an important branch of academical discipline, attracted his early curiosity. Guided by an able master, he explored the various and fascinating regions of moral science; and imbibed a partiality for these pursuits, which, while it prompted his immediate industry, furnished a source of the most grateful occupations of his riper leisure. To ethical he united theological reading; and by observing the salutary custom of devoting the sabbath to these studies exclusively, his acquaintance with them soon became familiar, and even extensive. His relish for enquiries of this kind might, perhaps, be associated with the singular purity or integrity of sentiment which characterised his moral nature. But his labours were encouraged by the assistance and example of a private instructor, to whom he has acknowledged the deepest obligations. This friendly assistant was the Rev. JOHN SEDDON; who had been recently appointed minister of a congregation of Protestant Dissenters, and whose abilities raised him to the office of *Rector Academiæ*, or head of the Institution, at Warrington. It may be added, that the reputation of this divine extended widely beyond the sphere of his pastoral connections; whilst his private virtues

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

OF THOMAS PERCIVAL, M. D. ix

adorned and animated a numerous society. The influence, in the mean time, which he acquired over his young pupil, was carefully exerted for the improvement of the latter, in the various branches of knowledge suited to his capacity; but chiefly, as it appears, in directing his ambition or his taste to those liberal studies of philosophy, in which he afterwards delighted to excel. Nor was Mr. Percival insensible to the attributes of piety and benevolence which dignified the character of his guide. The assemblage of virtues which he afterwards ascribed to Mr. Seddon, in a tributary record, seems to have excited in a lively manner his respect and admiration; nor is it unworthy of remark, that the faithful picture of his friend is characterized by features bearing a striking resemblance to his own.*—It may be related in this place, (as the circumstance influenced the early education, and probably the future views, of the subject of this memoir,) that soon after the period of Mr. Seddon's establishment in Warrington, the family of Mr. Percival was induced to quit communion with the church of England, and to espouse the tenets of Protestant Dissent. The sacred studies in which the older part of its members had deeply

* See vol. i. page 33.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06733-1 - The Works, Literary, Moral, and Medical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.:
To which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his
Literary Correspondence: Volume 1

Thomas Percival

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

X MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

engaged, seem to have wrought a change in their religious opinions, accompanied with corresponding sentiments in those around them. The motives of their conversion were unquestionably sincere; and the period of declaration might be produced, or hastened, by a rational preference for the discourses of a liberal divine of Arian persuasion.

In connection with this circumstance, another fact may be recorded, which displays the characteristic integrity of Mr. Percival's mind. Previous to his removal from the Warrington Academy, he had for some time indulged the wish of entering the university of Oxford; but he hesitated concerning the subscription to the thirty-nine Articles of Faith which is required, by *statute*, on matriculation. This diffidence, encouraged perhaps by the suggestions of his friends, induced him, even at thus early a period, to examine the validity of each Article of belief, with all the pains he was able to command. His leisure, he has frequently declared, was for a considerable time occupied by the study of the best doctrinal interpreters, whose writings he perused with diligent zeal. The result of his enquiry, however, served rather to confirm than to remove his scruples; and he at length resolved, with reluctance, to abandon his scheme of