

The Medical Chronicle.

LICET OMNIBUS, LICET NOBIS DIGNITATEM ARTIS MEDICÆ TUERI.

MARINE AND EMIGRANT HOSPITAL.

The noble edifices, erected and set apart for the reception of the houseless and friendless sick, which are now found in nearly every city throughout civilization, are in the highest degree creditable to our common nature, and may be regarded as so many monuments of the humane tendencies of the times we live in. Hospitals were unknown to the ancients. Egypt had her magnificent mausoleums for the reception of the dead, and carried to perfection the art of embalming the bodies of the departed. Greece and Pagan Rome embellished their cities with stately structures, dedicated to the worship of their mythological deities, and to the gratification of the senses, the architectural beauties of which, even as exhibited by their ruins, has commanded the admiration and astonishment of all succeeding ages. Their sages and philosophers reasoned acutely on the nature and destinies of man, and occasionally inculcated sublime lessons of virtue; but we look in vain in their works for those higher teachings which place man in his proper relations to his fellows; nor do we detect the results of the operation of such teachings on their mind, in their public buildings. No edifice, unpretending or otherwise, for the shelter of the helpless victim of disease, can be discerned amidst the profusion of temples and palaces—no asylum for the aged, decrepid, or weak. To the humanizing influences of Christianity alone, are we, at this day, indebted for this sight. To the revolution effected in our natural feelings, by her pure unselfish teachings, must we attribute the pleasure which we experience in the erection and sustentation of various charitable institutions.

The first Hospitals established for the benefit of poor and sick persons, was in Rome, in the early part of the fourth century. Fabiola, a pious Roman lady, was among the first to erect an institution for such a purpose. When Christianity had triumphed over Paganism in the empire, the emperors at Constantinople built numerous asylums for strangers—helpless infants and orphans—infirm old persons, &c. So numerous were those institutions when Julian assumed the imperial purple, this apostate attributed the rapid spread of Christianity to their influence, and recommended their erection to those who seconded his efforts to re-establish Paganism.

At no period, however, in the history of the world, were there so many or such vast and imposing Hospitals as are now open for the reception of diseased humanity. And at no other time did they excite so much attention in the public mind. Many have been established, and are sup-