

ministry at Edinburgh, but after two years abandoned theology for medicine. Proceeding to Leyden, in 1741, he pursued his medical studies at that university, from which he received his doctor's degree in 1744.

It was apparently during his residence in the Netherlands that he composed his most familiar poem on "The Pleasures of Imagination," perhaps consoling himself therewith for the realistic drudgery of his professional education. The piece was published in 1744, the year of Akenside's graduation, by Dodsley, who paid the author £100 for it. It made an immediate success, and went through several editions within few years. To our modern taste, it is a rather frigid effort in conventional blank verse, but was then considered a masterpiece of style and thought. There is little of medical interest in its text; indeed, Akenside's tastes and point of view seem to have been chiefly philosophic and classical. One is reminded of his professional affiliation only by occasional passages such as that describing a convalescent:

"Fair is the face of Spring
To every eye; but how much more to his
Round whom the bed of sickness long diffus'd
Its melancholy gloom!"

On first returning to England from Holland, Dr. Akenside settled in practice at Northampton, where he published, in 1745, a volume of odes, which were on the whole of inferior quality, and met with little success. In 1746 he removed to Hampstead and in 1748 to London. Whether discouraged by the reception of the odes, Akenside seems from thenceforth largely to have given up writing verse, except for revising his previous work, and devoted himself almost exclusively to medicine.

At first his professional success was small, and he was forced to depend on an annual subsidy of £300 from Mr. Jeremiah Dyson. He turned his attention to medical composition, and wrote in prose on dysentery, the lymphatics, and white swelling of the joints. Finally he was appointed physician to St. Thomas' Hospital, where he delivered a series of Goulstonian lectures on anatomy, and in 1759 the Harveian Oration. His fame as a consultant rapidly spread, and in 1761 he was appointed physician to the Queen. For nine years he lived to enjoy his popularity, but in 1770 died of a "putrid fever."

Akenside was one of those probably with more taste for letters than for medicine, with little real genius for either, yet with sufficient talent to succeed better than the average at both. Like Gray, he is in literature a man of a single poem, yet unlike Gray that one was not of the first excellence. It is interesting to-day to remember him not as a great poet, but as an able physician to whom literary diversions brought increased reputation and doubtless much contentment and solace.—*Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*.