

all speak of the scarcity of material at their disposal concerning his life. The history of the seventeenth century is much clouded, and the life of Sydenham, like that of other contemporaries, could stand a genuine outburst of sunshine to bring out clearly the many little details that give color to the picture which the historian, not through any fault of his own, paints so poorly and imperfectly. Wynford Eagle is a hamlet and chapelry about eight miles from Dorchester. In the famous old Domesday Book it is called "Wynfort." The house in which Sydenham was born is an old gray, ivy-grown structure and stands to-day, a well-preserved building. "It lies," says one, "in a hollow, sheltered by the downs and upland pastures, and is a pleasing specimen of a seventeenth century manor-house. The front is composed as usual of three parts, each surmounted by a gable. The whole building is very solidly constructed of stone and flint." Even to this day one of the fields near the old home goes by the name of "Sydenham's."

Thomas Sydenham was the fifth son of William Sydenham—out of a family of seven sons and three daughters. His mother, a woman of pious mind, was a Mary Jeffery, daughter of Sir John Jeffery, of Catherston. Tracing the genealogy of the Sydenhams backward into the Middle Ages, we find that the family contributed some distinguished names to current history. One, Richard Sydenham, was a judge in the reign of Richard II.; another was a bishop in the reign of Henry V. A daughter of a Sydenham married Sir Francis Drake in Queen Elizabeth's reign. Then there were numerous members of Parliament, sheriffs and knights. Very little is known of the early life of Sydenham except that he was under the care and guidance of honest and conscientious parents. It is thought that his early education began at the grammar school in his native village or at Dorchester. Others, again, state as probable that, like many families of his day, he was instructed by the regular tutor living in the same house, or that the local clergyman, as was customary, instructed him in Latin.

At eighteen, Sydenham was sent to Oxford—the college selected for him being Magdalen Hall. Here he matriculated on May 20th, 1642. A turn in political events, however, soon put a stop to his academic career, which could not have exceeded a few months. The old, old struggle between the King and the Parliament was firecely raging. They were stormy times. There was much fighting, much bloodshed. Think of the influences they would bring to bear upon the life of Sydenham,