AN UNRECOGNISED MEDICAL PERIODICAL—
COLLECTANEA HIBERNICA MEDICA.

By J. D. H. Widness.

HITHERTO it has been assumed by medical bibliographers that
the *Dublin Medical and Physical Essays*, a quarterly published in
Dublin, 1807-8, was the first Irish medical periodical. (Vide Kirk-
Hopkins Press, 1938).

Some time ago, the writer happened to examine a publication entitled
*Collectanea Hibernica Medical*, printed in Dublin in 1783, which is
contained in a collection of pamphlets in the Library of the Royal
College of Surgeons in Ireland. Its existence had not entirely escaped
attention, for Cameron included it among medical books printed in
Ireland, and listed by him in his history of the above College, (p. 52,
Edition of 1916). But he dismissed it with the words: "This work,
which is written in a somewhat didactic style, contains articles on the
pathology of general diseases, malformations, etc."

Inspection of the title-page indicates that the author, Richard Harris,
intended his publication to be a periodical, which he would edit—"A
collection of, and repository for, papers of advice, discussion, and
research, in all departments of medicine. Intended not only to hand to
posterity, in abstract pieces of disquisition, the result of our improve-
ments in that line, but also to excite a spirit of medical and physico-
medical enquiry through this Kingdom." This first number, produced
as an experiment, was written entirely by Harris, but he hoped that
"those papers will in future be collected, and published in subsequent
numbers." The work, which is of octavo size, contains 113 pages, and
consists of contents table, dedication, preface, and four papers, "On the
Pathology of General Disease," "On the Acquired and Hereditary Right
of Chronic Disposition," "A Deficiency of parts in the Foetus; or, a
malformation of them thought to be the most frequent causes (sic) of
Abortion," and "On the Chin-Cough." No subsequent numbers can be
traced.

The *Collectanea* is dedicated to Earl Temple, Lord Lieutenant of
Ireland. In the Preface, Harris states clearly the reasons for its publica-
tion, and his intentions for its future. He modestly admits his being
but a private practitioner, anticipating what the critics may say—
"What! a private physician, neither a professor of a college, nor a
teacher of medicine in a large city, pretend to propose opinions and to
expound science!" But he explains that "the opinions of private
physicians are generally more pure and chaste than those who declaim
to the public the rant, often, of phrenetic hypotheses; practice is the basis
of their conclusions, and neither venality or ostentation are offered to
warp them from the direct line of truth and of reality."

With an apology "for mentioning the share, which the author of the
entire present number, shall in future take in this work," he then states
that "he will give it that support which a long, laborious, and attentive
experience may be presumed to enable him to give." He hoped to write
frequently in the future, but not unless it were to "to establish something new, to corroborate the opinion of others, or to render points that are doubtful more sure or consistent."

COLLECTANEA

HIBERNICA MEDICA.

BEING

A COLLECTION of, and REPOSITORY for,

PAPERS of ADVICE, DISCUSSION, and RESEARCH, in all DEPARTMENTS of MEDICINE.

INTENDED

Not only to hand to Posterity, in abstract Pieces of Disquisition, the Result of our Improvements in that Line, but also to excite a Spirit of Medical and Physico-Medical Enquiry through this Kingdom.

NUMBER I.

Written ENTIRELY—as an Experiment of Public Taste, as well as to make a Beginning.

As those PAPERS will in future be collected, and published in subsequent Numbers,

By RICHARD HARRIS, M.D.

PHYSICIAN at CLONMELL.

— Quid tentare nocebit ?

OVID.

— Funger vice cotis, acutum
Reddere quae ferrum valet, exors ipsa secundi.

HOR.

DUBLIN:

Printed by J. EXSHAW, No. 98, Grafton Street

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The portion of Harris's preface which follows must be quoted in full, because it fully justifies his effort being regarded as the first attempt to establish a medical periodical in Ireland. He wrote:—

"But it is from the numerous and learned gentlemen of this kingdom in particular (not despising the communications of all nations) that he expects his great support and undoubted success. His confidence in them and his diffidence of himself, have been, perhaps, the causes of this number's appearing not much better, and indeed it is intended for little else than an advertisement."