

NOTES FROM BOOKS

Materia Medica Botanica;  
in Qua Symptomata Variorum Morborum G. Knowles.

Londini:

Typis Guil. Bowyer: Prostant apud Guil. Lewis Bibliopolum in vico dicto Russel Street, Covent Garden. MDCCXXIII.

W. O.'s Note. (in back of book).

3 Grant Edin.

Portrait missing.

No biographical details in D.M.B. not in S.G.L. not in Bodley! It seems scarce. I have not seen an account before and I have been on the look out for several years.

Note on Fly leaf by W. O.

Very little known of Knowles. Pultenay on Hist. & Biogr. Sketches of the Progress of Botany 1790 I. 282 says "In our own country George (sic) Knowles described 400 plants of the materia medica in Latin verse, and didactically applied them to their use in medicine". Nichols in "Illustrations" of the Lit. Hist. of the 18th. cent. Vol. VIII gives the above quotation and adds from Noble's Granger III. 305 "I cannot discover any traces of this Botanist and Poet either in Cibber's "Lives of the Poets" or in Hutchinsons Biographica Medica, or indeed in any other of our biographical works. The name Knowles is known in Kent, but whether he was of that county I am unable to determine".

In Bodley. Letters to Thomas Hearne Vol. 7. p. 137 is:

Proposals for Printing by Subscription a Book entitled Materia Medica Botanica, in which the symptoms of the several diseases are given and the herbs proper for them both of foreign and of our own growth are set down. The foreign plants are described, being in number above four hundred. Several episodes are interwoven for the embellishment thereof. The whole work consists of about 8,000 Latin Hexameters.

This follows the quotation from Virgil which is on the



title page (Scire potestates Herbarum, usumque Medendi  
 Maluit & mutas agitare inglorious artes. )  
 Virg. Aeneid., 12. V.396.  
 and it is signed G. Knowles, and dated at the top, London; Oct.  
 10, 1710.

There are 8 large quarto leaves. On p.2. are three state-  
 ments about the publication: 1/2 guinea at time of subs. 1/2 at  
 time of delivery in sheets. Subscribers to six copies to have  
 a seventh. No more are to be printed than subscribed for. Names  
 of subscribers to be printed. Subs. to be taken by James Woodman,  
 Covent Garden.

On margins and bottom of p. 8 a p. letter to Hearne dated  
 Nov. 12th. 1720 in which he invites the honour of his subscription  
 and refers to H.'s edition of Gulieliums Nerburgenius "which makes  
 a glittering show" and says that many eminent physicians have  
 subscribed as Mead<sup>r</sup> and Freind. The ~~Prose~~<sup>Latin</sup> together with the  
Pestes section and the Epilogue are printed.

W. O.