

XXVIII. *Two Medical Observations by Dr. Joseph Benevuti, Physician at Lucca; communicated to the late President of the Royal Society, by Dr. Ch. Allioni of Turin, F. R. S. and translated from the Latin by Daniel Peter Layard, M. D. Physician to her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales, Member of the Royal College of Physicians in London, and of the Royal Societies of London and Göttingen.*

I. *Of a sick Man surprizingly recovered from a Fever.*

Read June 9, 1768. **A** MAN forty years of age, named Angelus Amadei, of a plethoric constitution, and of a low size, having a malignant fever, began on the ninth day to grow delirious, and continued so during the tenth night; when, several bad symptoms appearing, it was thought he must die soon. Early on the eleventh day in the morning, he bid the by-standers quit his room, and expressed a desire of going to sleep; his friends were unwilling to withdraw, unless they first stripped him of his shirt, and dried him of the sweat he was in. But the patient refusing, and at last growing angry, they were obliged to yield to his will. About an hour after, a woman went into the bed-room, and not finding

finding the man, she called the servants, who searched the house, and the well, into which they feared he had thrown himself; but to no purpose. In the mean time a rumour spread, as is usual in such cases, that this had happened, either by the interposition of the devil, or by a miracle.

The keeper of the baths at Lucca gave orders for every body to make a diligent search; and on the third day the sick man was at last found in a vineyard, about two miles from his house, hidden in a hut, where, he said, that the day before, he with great astonishment found himself, without at all knowing how he came there. It seemed to me, that he must have got down by the window of the bed-chamber, which was not far from the ground. What seems most extraordinary is, that, in order to quench his thirst, this man swallowed a large quantity of snow (with which the earth was covered, it being in the winter); and that neither this sort of drink, nor the cold air, did in the least affect him; for though he had gone away from home all in a sweat, and with no other covering than his shirt, yet he was freed from his fever, and is now restored to his former health.

## II. *Of an extraordinary great Head.*

Not long since, I went to Benabii, a town situated in the territory of Lucca, to see a man, whose head, I had heard, was much larger than is usual. The same curiosity procured me the honour of attending at the same place on Princess Lambertini, niece to Pope Benedict the XIVth, whose health I had the care of, while she drank the water of our baths.

I saw

I saw a man, thirty years of age, and yet of the size of a boy seven years old, who was sitting on a couch seat, with his head (which indeed was quite out of size) inclined on the right side, and resting on a pillow; which, when he wanted to move, he supported with his hands, as it lay on a very small neck. This man had enjoyed a good health till he was six years old; he then had a diarrhœa, which lasted nine months, and, upon its stopping, his lower extremities were seized with the palsy, and lost their motion, but their feeling remained. From that time his head increased yearly, together with his face, nose, ears, eyes, mouth, &c. but the remainder of his body did not grow at all. The circumference of his scalp measured thirty seven inches, and eight lines, English measure. The length of his face was twelve inches and three lines. These measures were taken by the said princess and several of her attendants. This man eats greedily, sleeps well, but discharges his *faces* and his urine involuntarily. The strength which he has in his hands is very surprizing, being such, that it is difficult for any person to get loose from him, when once he holds fast. He is besides quick as to his understanding, he talks, and has a good memory; seldom or never forgetting what he may have read in books.