

The Evolution of Acupuncture in the U.S.A



Erasmus Darwin 1722- 1802

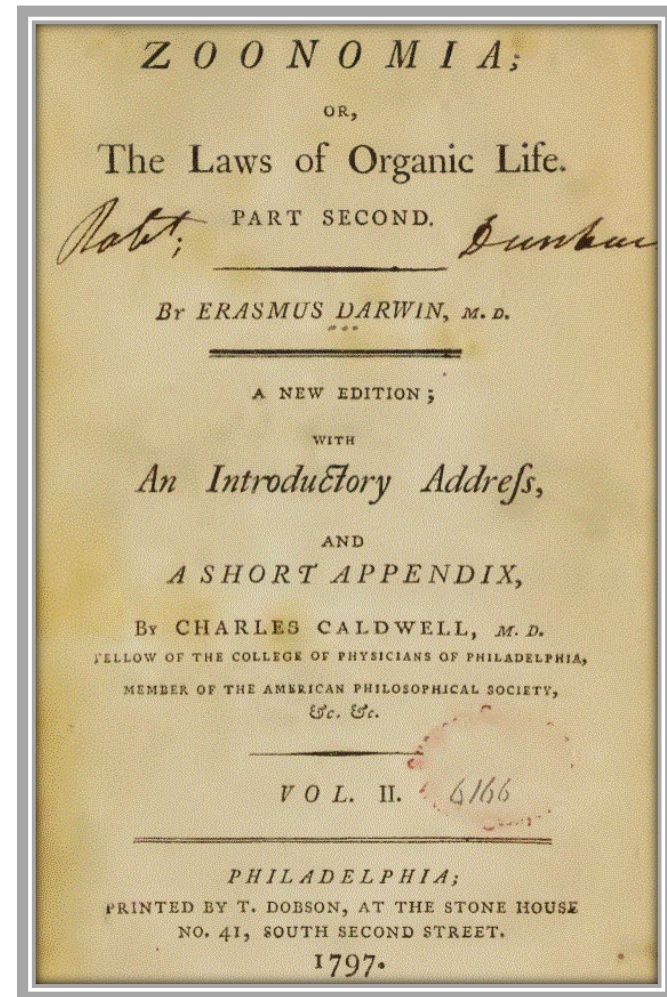
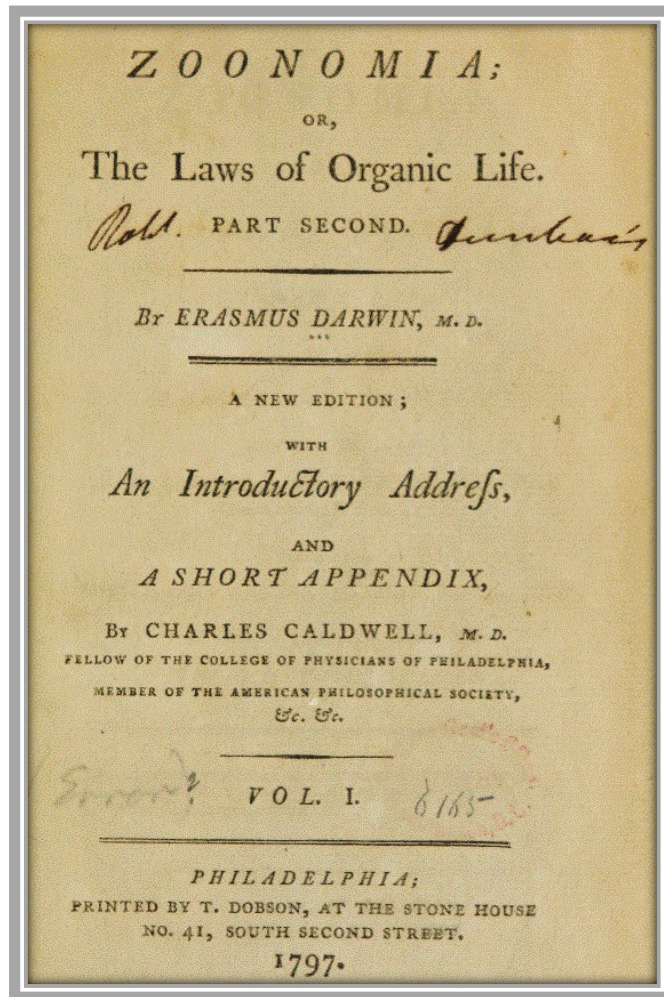
Erasmus Darwin, M.D. was an English physician and inventor of several devices. Darwin never patented any of his inventions because he believed this would damage his reputation as a doctor. However, he encouraged his friends to patent their own modifications of his designs. Darwin's most important scientific work, *Zoonomia* (or the Laws of Organic Life) 1794–1797, contains a system of pathology and a chapter on 'Generation.'

Rocket Engine



Some of Darwin's inventions include a horizontal windmill, a canal lift for barges, a copying machine, and a carriage that would not tip over. Darwin made a sketch of a simple hydrogen-oxygen rocket engine with gas tanks connected by plumbing and pumps to an elongated combustion chamber and expansion nozzle; a concept not seen until one century later.

Zoonomia Volume I & II





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Copyright Zoonomia; or, The laws of organic life.

In two parts Zoonomia; or, the laws of organic life [electronic resource] : Part second. By Erasmus Darwin, M.D. ...

A new edition; with an introductory address, and a short appendix, / by Charles Caldwell, M.D. Fellow of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, member of the American Philosophical Society, &c. &c.

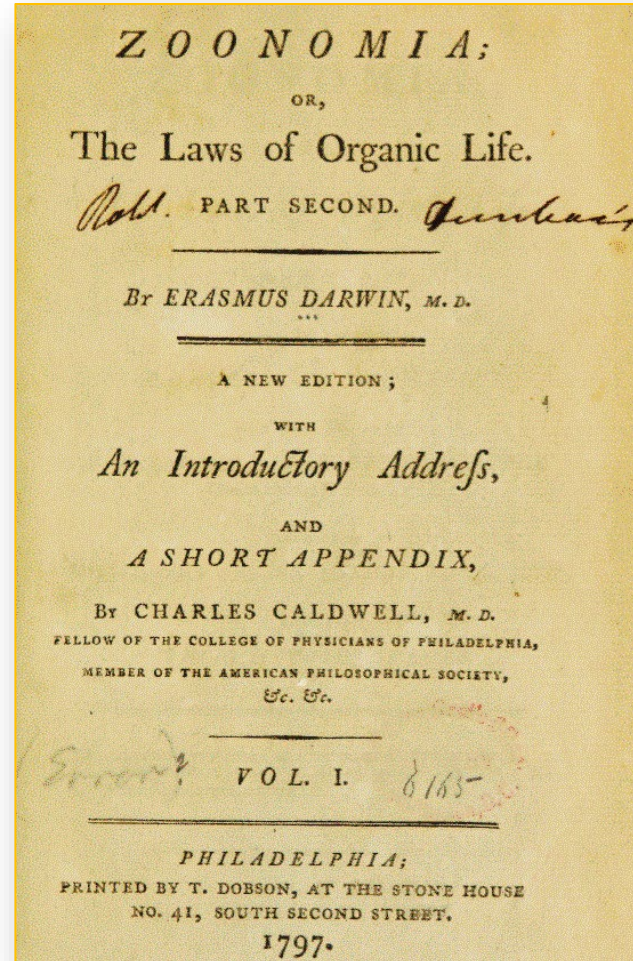
by Erasmus Darwin

Published 1797 by Printed by T. Dobson, at the stone house no. **41, South Second Street, Philadelphia**

Written in English. Edition Notes

Part I, edited by Samuel L. Mitchill, **was printed at New York** by T. & J. Swords **in 1796** (Evans 30312). Edition statement transposed; precedes "Vol. I." on title page.

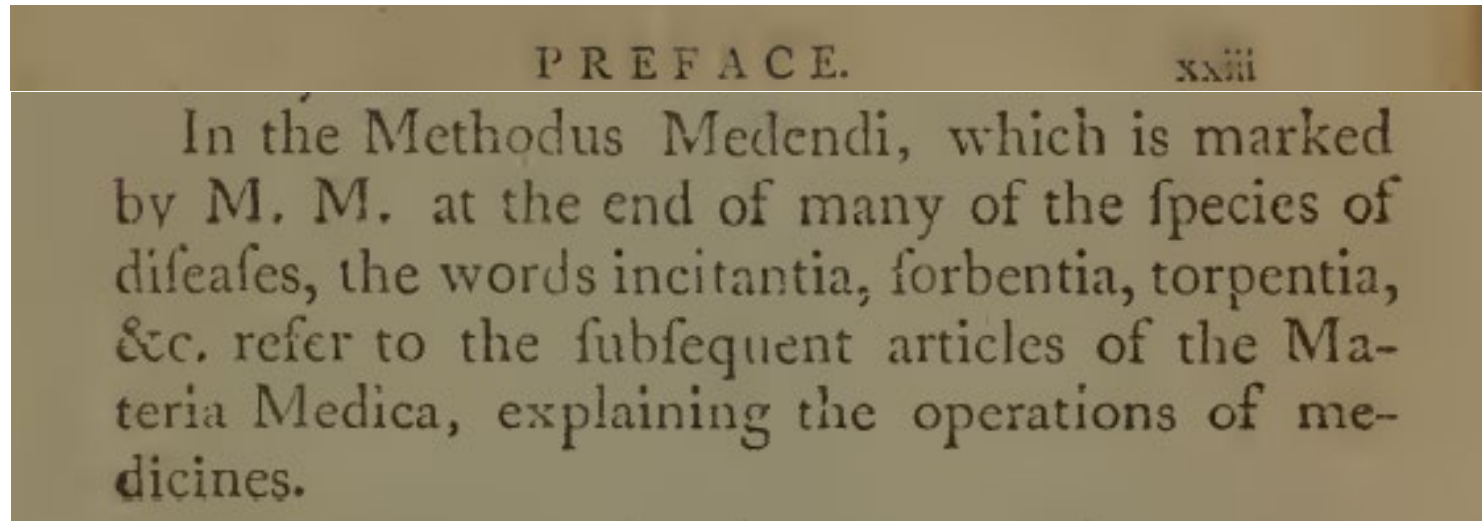
Zoonomia Volume I



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Acupuncture Appears in the USA For the First Time

Defemination and Explanation of Terms



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In the Methodus Medendi, which is marked by **M. M.** at the end of many of the species of diseases, the words incitantia, sorbentia, torpentia, &c. refer to the subsequent articles of the Materia Medica, explaining the operations of medicines.

From Page 195

CLASS I. 3. 1.]

OF IRRITATION.

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Where the disease is owing to strangulated hernia, the part should be sprinkled with cold water, or iced water, or salt and water recently mixed, or moistened with ether. In cases of strangulated hernia, could acupuncture, or puncture with a capillary trocar, be used with safety and advantage to give exit to air contained in the strangulated bowel? Or to stimulate it into action? It is not uncommon for bashful men to conceal their being afflicted with a small hernia, which is the cause of their death; this circumstance should therefore always be enquired into. Is the seat or cause of the ileus always below the valve of the colon, and that of the cholera above it? See Class II. 1. 2. 11.

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From Page 419

Considering the great resemblance between this kind of painful epilepsy and the colic of Japan, as described by Kemfer ; and that that disease was said to be cured by acupuncture, or the prick of a needle ; I directed some very thin steel needles to be made about three inches long, and of such a temper, that they would bend double rather than break ; and wrapped wax thread over about half an inch of the blunt end for a handle. One of these needles, when the pain occurred, was pushed about an inch into the painful part, and the pain instantly ceased ; but I was not certain, whether the fear of the patient, or the stimulus of the puncture, occasioned the cessation of pain ; and

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DISEASES

[CLASS III. I. I.]

as the paroxysm had continued some weeks, and was then declining, the experiment was not tried again.

→ The disease is said to be very frequent in Japan, and its seat to be in the bowels, and that the acupuncture eliminates the air, which is supposed to distend the bowel. But though the aperture thus made is too small to admit of the eduction of air; yet as the stimulus of so small a puncture may either excite a torpid part into action, or cause a spasmodic one to cease to act; and lastly, as no injury could be likely to ensue from so small a perforation, I should be inclined at some future time to give this a fairer trial in similar circumstances.

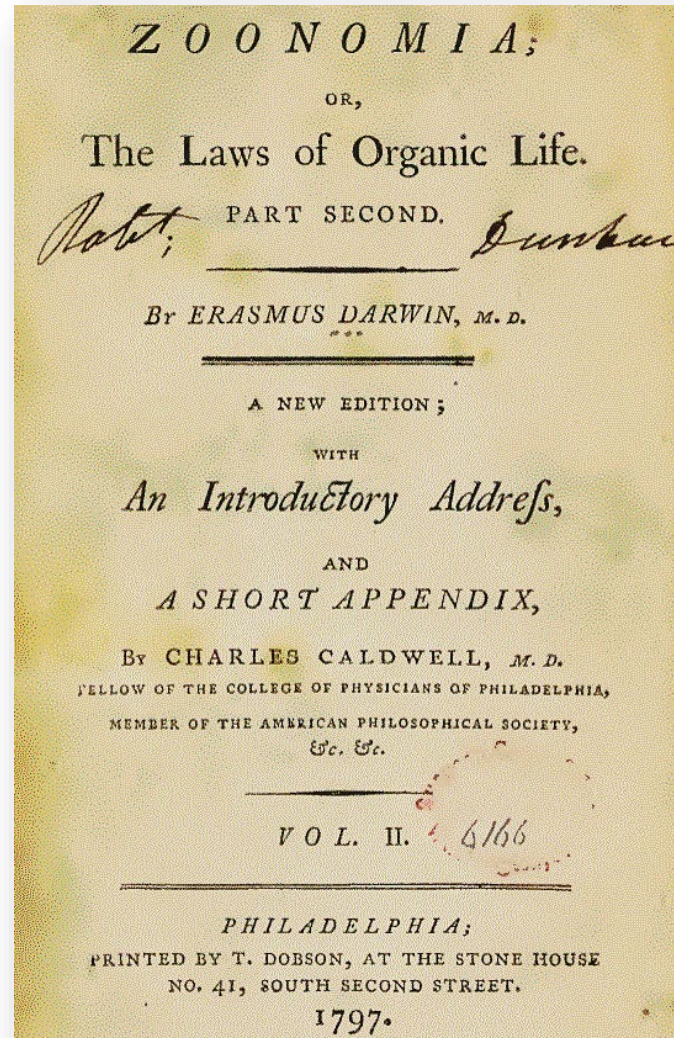
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From Page 421

M. M. Venesection. An emetic. A cathartic. Warm bath. Opium a grain every half hour. Wine. Spirit of wine. If the patient becomes intoxicated by the above means, the fit ceases, and violent vomitings and debility succeed on the subsequent day, and prevent a return. Blisters or sinapisms on the small of the leg, taken off when they give much pain, are of use in slighter convulsions. Acupuncture. Electricity. Asperision with cold water on the painful part.

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Zoonomia Volume II



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Darwin States the Following on Page 143

M. M. Detect and extract the diseased tooth. Cut the affected nerve, or stimulate the diseased membrane by acupuncture. Venesection to six ounces by the lancet or by leeches. A strong emetic and a subsequent cathartic; and then an opiate and the bark. Pass small electric shocks through the pained membrane, and through the teeth on the same side. Apply vitriolic ether externally, and a grain of opium with camphor internally, to the cheek on the affected side, where a diseased tooth may be suspected.

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M.M. Detect and extract the diseased tooth. Cut the affected nerve, or stimulate the diseased membrane by acupuncture.

From Page 154

Where the disease is owing to strangulated hernia, the part should be sprinkled with cold water, or iced water, or salt and water recently mixed, or moistened with ether. In cases of strangulated hernia, could **acupuncture**, or puncture with a capillary trocar, be used with safety and advantage to give exit to air contained in the strangulated bowel? Or to stimulate it into action? It is not uncommon for bashful men to conceal their being afflicted with a small hernia, which is the cause of their death; this circumstance should therefore always be enquired into. Is the seat or cause of the ileus always below the valve of the colon, and that of the cholera above it? See Class II. 1. 2. 11.

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From Page 335

CLASS III. I. I. DISEASES OF VOLITION.

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Considering the great resemblance between this kind of painful epilepsy and the colic of Japan, as described by Kemfer; and that that disease was said to be cured by **acupuncture**, or the prick of a needle; I directed some very thin steel needles to be made about three inches long, and of such a temper, that they would bend double rather than break; and wrapped wax thread over about half an inch of the blunt end for a handle. One of these needles, when the pain occurred, was pushed about an inch into the painful part, and the pain instantly ceased; but I was not certain, whether the fear of the patient, or the stimulus of the puncture, occasioned the cessation of pain; and as the paroxysm had continued some weeks, and was then declining, the experiment was not tried again. The disease is said to be very frequent in Japan, and its seat to be in the bowels, and that the **acupuncture** eliminates the air, which is supposed to distend the bowel. But though the aperture thus made is too small to admit of the eduction of air; yet as the stimulus of so small a puncture may either excite a torpid part into action, or cause a spasmodic one to cease to act; and lastly, as no injury could be likely to ensue from so small a perforation, I should be inclined at some future time to give this a fairer trial in similar circumstances.

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From Page 336

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DISEASES OF VOLITION. CLASS III. 1. 1.

M. M. Venesection. An emetic. A cathartic. Warm bath. Opium a grain every half hour. Wine. Spirit of wine. If the patient becomes intoxicated by the above means, the fit ceases, and violent vomitings and debility succeed on the subsequent day, and prevent a return. Blisters or sinapisms on the small of the leg, taken off when they give much pain, are of use in lighter convulsions. **Acupuncture.** Electricity. Asperision with cold water on the painful part.

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Acupuncture, Expertise and Cross-Cultural Medicine

By R. Bivins, 2000

Page 221

3 Sharpening the Needle

- 1 Anon, *The Modern Part of the Universal History*, Vol. 4 (London, 1759), 647.
- 2 Erasmus Darwin actually used the term 'acupuncture' in 1794. In Darwin, *Zoonomia; or the laws of organic life*, 3rd edn, Vol. 3 (London, 1801), 254, he asked: 'In cases of strangulated hernia, could acupuncture, or puncture with a capillary trocar be used with safety and advantage to give exit to air contained in the strangulated bowel? Or to stimulate it into action?'