

## PHYSICIANS EMINENT IN OTHER FIELDS

### *Peter Mark Roget* (1779-1869)

LEXICOGRAPHER, NATURALIST, PHYSICIST, EDUCATOR,  
PHILOSOPHER, INVENTOR AND PHYSICIAN

In 1805 Peter Roget began to compile a dictionary of synonyms, antonyms, idioms, metaphors, phrases, similes, colloquialisms, foreign expressions and quotations, all grouped according to ideas. For almost fifty years he gathered material and finally in 1852 published his monumental work under the name "Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases, Classified and Arranged so as to Facilitate the Expression of Ideas and to Assist in Literary Composition." At the age of 90 he was still collecting words and phrases for his 28th edition, and at his death his son John L. Roget continued the work. • Peter Roget was a colossus of learning. Born in London, he graduated from the University of Edinburgh when 19. He lectured in medicine at the Manchester Infirmary, did research on consumption and nitrous oxide, and was consulting physician to Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital. At the government's request he studied the water supply of London and was consulted by Jeremy Bentham on the disposal of London's sewage. He served as the first John Fuller professor of physiology at the Royal Institute, was secretary to the Royal Society of Physicians for 21 years, and edited the Royal Society's *Proceedings*. He was acquainted with the principles of the voltaic cell as early as 1829. He wrote books on animal and plant physiology, electricity, galvanism and phrenology, and contributed to encyclopedias. He invented a slide rule, a balance and a calculating machine, and solved intricate chess problems.

