METHODS: The “Handbook of Doctors, 1831” is published in two volumes. The first Volume, beginning with the Hippocratic Oath, contains a description of illnesses with direct citation of the Aphorisms of Hippocrates and analytical reports of human Physiology and Anatomy. The second Volume contains an extensive list (resembling a lexicon according to the author) of medical prescriptions. We studied all the nephrology related illnesses, drugs and prescriptions included. All the nephrology related illnesses, the respective cited Hippocrates Aphorisms and the nephrology related drugs and prescriptions (the ingredients, the preparation and the treatment indications) were recorded and analysed. For comparison, we sought and recorded characteristics of the herbal prescriptions in “de Materia Medica”. The findings are given by plain descriptive statistics.

RESULTS: In all Pyrros describes 362 illnesses and 650 prescriptions. Among these illnesses 27 (7.45%) were related to the kidneys and in respect to them 24 Aphorisms of Hippocrates were cited. Among the 650 treatment prescriptions, of which 150 with merely herbal ingredients, there were 99 (15.2%) of nephrological interest (67 with chemical and herbal mixtures and 34 with mere natural ingredients). The nephrological illnesses to treat by these prescriptions included dropy (oedema) in 28.4% - compared with a mere 10% in the Materia Medica -, dysuria or nephritic pain (29.8%), lithiass (all forms; 14.6%), urination disturbances (11.5%), polyuria and polydipsia (7.9%), podagra (8.9%) and hematuria (6.8%). Most prescriptions with natural ingredients (25 out of 34) were also found with the same indication in “de Materia Medica” by Dioscorides.

CONCLUSIONS: Pyrros is a characteristic example of a polymath scholar of the 19th century. He is considered the prototype of the Balkan Enlightenment, who in contrast with the European ones was a devoted Christian. The “Handbook of Doctors, 1831”, being the first compendium in Medicine written in vulgar Greek, is an important medical work. The Hippocratic Oath and the Hippocratic Aphorisms included underlie for the early 19th century a still existing significance of ancient medicine, at least in the Greek medical bibliography. However, from the 36 nephrology oriented Aphorisms, only 24 are mentioned by Pyrros. This is probably due to the still lacking medical knowledge. Drugs of nephrological interest cover about 15.2% of the total number of remedies described. In addition, we noticed a clear change towards an increasing importance of diseases with oedema for the clinical practice. The “Handbook of Doctors, 1831” is the hybrid product in style, content, language of the transient period when Greece tried to balance between the Western, the Ancient and the Oriental medical traditions.