

On the expediency of founding an Hospital for the diseases of children in Edinburgh, with notes on continental children's hospitals. [And Proposed hospital for sick children. A letter].

Contributors

Wilson, Charles, 1804-1883.
University of Glasgow. Library

Publication/Creation

Edinburgh, 1859.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/pgkdffxx>

Provider

University of Glasgow

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The University of Glasgow Library. The original may be consulted at The University of Glasgow Library. where the originals may be consulted. This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

To John Small Esq M. A.
with the Compts. of the Author

ON THE

EXPEDIENCY OF FOUNDING

AN

HOSPITAL FOR THE DISEASES OF CHILDREN
IN EDINBURGH,

WITH NOTES ON CONTINENTAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS.

BY

CHARLES WILSON, M.D.,

FELLOW OF ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF MEDICO-
CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH; CORRESPONDING FELLOW OF
LONDON MEDICAL SOCIETY; OF IMPERIAL AND ROYAL SOCIETY
OF PHYSICIANS OF VIENNA; SOCIETY OF SWEDISH
PHYSICIANS; NORWEGIAN MEDICAL
SOCIETY; ETC.

EDINBURGH: SUTHERLAND AND KNOX.

MDCCCLIX.

C

MURRAY AND GIBB, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.

ON
THE EXPEDIENCY
OF
FOUNDING AN HOSPITAL IN EDINBURGH
FOR
THE DISEASES OF CHILDREN.¹

THERE is a duty incumbent somewhere, with reference to our medical school, which, sooner or later, must be encountered with decision, if it be desired or expected, not only to advance, but even to preserve, its relative position among the kindred institutions of Europe. This, at least, is no period, if indeed a zealous spirit could recognise it at any time, in which to remain satisfied with pre-existing resources, or to rest upon the credit of former achievements. We cheerfully own our pride in the past history, as in the present distinction, of the medical department of our honoured University; and we are not insensible to the eminent merits of the extra-academical school which is associated with it in its labours. Could we have vindicated as thoroughly the unity and purity of doctrine in the one, as in the other, our satisfaction would have been unmingled; and we should have been saved from the consciousness of an anomaly which is looked upon by no sister school, whether at home or abroad, without surprise and sorrow. But such specks are

¹ The subjoined remarks, originally published in the department of Reviews of the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, for May, 1856, and March, 1858, were first offered with the design of inviting attention and concurrence among the members of the profession. As they related, however, to a subject of more than merely professional interest, and demanding much in addition to merely professional influence and support, it was thought advisable to give them a somewhat wider publicity at the time, and both papers were accordingly circulated, in separate impressions, among individuals judged likely to take an interest in their subject. With the prospect of this interest being awakened at present, and in the hope of lending aid to sustain it, they now appear in their second reprint.—EDINBURGH, *March* 1859.

insignificant amid the general lustre, and in a short time they will pass away and be forgotten. If they have an influence anywhere, it should be but to elevate the true lover of knowledge, and to excite him to renewed exertions in strengthening the foundations, and enlarging, consolidating, and adorning the structure of genuine science.

Our existing position would have been less advantageous, had there not been many points in which the directors and patrons of our University have shown continuously their anxiety, sometimes to lead the march of improvement, or at other times to follow promptly in its traces where these have been marked out elsewhere. But their power is not always adequate to the charge assigned to them; and a vast educational institution, taking a prominent part in the instruction of the world, in a department of science the most closely bound to humanity, and necessarily constrained to keep pace with the growth of cotemporary knowledge, must frequently demand fresh supports which they cannot supply, and be called into new competitions which they cannot further. Thus, neither the reflecting physician, nor the competently instructed friend of humanity, can hesitate to acknowledge, that, amid the precious combination of means of beneficence and instruction already provided for the great school of medicine established in this city, there is yet a flaw and a defect, liberally supplied in many other quarters, which cannot long be suffered to remain unremedied here, without a prejudicial reaction upon interests of a quality which can have no real seat with any special class of the community, if they be not eminently those of the general public also. The defect to which we allude, is in the appliances for affording substantial assistance, and practical instruction, in the diseases of childhood.

Our attention has been particularly called to this topic, by a consideration of the several Reports¹ now before us; for the friendly communication of which we have to thank the distinguished physicians connected with the respective institutions. Reflecting upon their aims, and the means at their disposal, it was but by a close and unavoidable association, that we turned concernedly to the importance and amplitude of the want, as existent among ourselves,

¹ 1. *Jahres-Bericht des unter dem allerhöchsten Schutze Ihrer Majestät der Kaiserin Maria Anna stehenden ersten allgemeinen St. Annen-Kinderspitals, für 1852.* Wien, 1853.

Annual Report, for 1852, of the St. Anne's first general Hospital for Children, under the patronage of her Majesty the Empress Maria Anna. Vienna, 1853.

2. *Berättelse om Sjukvården vid Kronprinsessan Lovisas Vårdanstalt för Sjuka Barn, från d. 6 Febr. 1854 till och med d. 31 Dec. samma år; afgiven af Professor Gust. von Düben, andre Läkare vid Vårdanstalten.* Stockholm, 1855.

Medical Report of the Crown-Princess Louisa's Hospital for Sick Children from 6th Feb. to 31st Dec. 1854; by Professor Gust. von Düben, Assistant-Physician of the Hospital. Stockholm, 1855.

3. *Annual Reports of the Hospital for Sick Children, 49 Great Ormond Street. Patron—Her Majesty the Queen.* London, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856.

which such institutions are designed to obviate. Facts, of the most open and ordinary access, and of the easiest appreciation, proclaim to us the extensive suffering, and the grievous mortality, which press upon the tender years of childhood. The valuable Life Table, constructed by Mr Farr, as well as the other deductions elicited in the Reports of the Registrar General, and, indeed, the experience of statisticians everywhere, set these facts before us, in their broader numerical relations, with almost appalling distinctness. And let us recollect, that the materials for these statements are gathered, not from among the poor only, with their wide complexity of detriment, but among the universal population of all classes, from the hovel to the palace. In England, nearly 26 per cent. of all born perish before the end of the fifth year: in London, about 35 per cent. before the attainment of the tenth year. Or, referring rather to the recently begun system of returns in Scotland, and taking there the relative proportions of deaths, a less strict method of calculation, but accurate in as far as it extends, and presenting the results in a shape still more tangible for our purpose, we find that, in our own city, the mortality under five years of age, with reference to the general mortality, constitutes an average of upwards of 40 per cent. In Dundee, this proportion has risen to 60 per cent. In Liverpool, at the same early age, a generation is nearly half-exhausted.

Nor must it be forgotten, that this mortality has already been demonstrated, through the experience of our own times and the contrast with that of former eras, to be, in vast measure, a preventable destruction. While it has been ascertained that, of the wealthier classes, with their higher sanitary resources, from 25 to 30 per cent. of all born perish under ten years of age, this proportion, already strikingly great, becomes increased, in the labouring classes, to from 38 to 40, and, under unfavourable conditions, has risen even to from 60 to 70 per cent. Looking more especially to London, the annual deaths among all children living, under ten years of age, have been estimated at two per cent. from among the gentry; at 6 per cent. among the mercantile classes; and at from 26 to 28 per cent. among the poor. Of 14,450 boys, existing under five years of age, 2087 died in Liverpool in a single year: of 14,045 boys in the rural parts of Surrey, only 699 died in the same lapse of time. To ascertain farther the influence of the preventable causes of death, as illustrated by the proportions in different localities, inhabited by different classes of people, and presenting different sanitary conditions, we have only to proceed in our reference to realities as exhibited everywhere, and in a variety of forms, throughout the reports of the Registrar-General. We select but a single other aspect, in which to exhibit these important deductions, by adducing the estimate, that, while the probable duration of life in the rural parts of Surrey is 53 years, in the metropolis it is 40 years, and in Liverpool only 7 or 8 years. But the mean duration of life does not differ so enor-

mously. It is, however, 45 years in Surrey, 37 years in the metropolis, and only 26 years in Liverpool.

There is something, in the calm marshalling of these facts, which startles us from the contrast between the brevity of their expression, and the enormous mass of evils, and of suffering, which fills up the actuality. Looking upon them merely as the product of neglect, it would seem almost as if society had retained the privilege, while it had abrogated the law, which elsewhere, and at other periods, imposed upon it the cruelty of wilfully destroying the weaker offspring, to remove a burden from the community. To a certain class of minds, there might even now be some comfort in considering, that this fearful mortality was but designed as a providential check upon excess of population; and that therefore it was only prudence, in the calculating politician, to leave it to its natural course. The plea is one which, to any so constituted as to propose it seriously, might seem unanswerable, and we should not care to attempt to answer it. But, in fact, as it would be morally an inhuman proposition, so statistically it is utterly groundless. Those places and countries, in which the infantile deaths are the most numerous, are precisely those in which, from no obscure causes, the number of births is proportionately augmented; so that the misery of life, to which the misery of death was to be regarded as the appropriate check, becomes in reality, by a natural re-action, widened and intensified. Nor does this serve to express the whole of the truth. The conditions, which have proved promptly fatal to so many, have left others debilitated for the remainder of their existence: scrofula and consumption have sown their seeds, to appear at a later period, or to spread into generations: diseases of the brain have stamped the traces of mental annihilation on the puling imbecile: epidemics have been nourished into virulence, so as to have gained power over a more extended range of victims: and evils, largely preventable at first, have been thus suffered to develop themselves, till the lives of more than the feeble are everywhere endangered, and all interests are affected. And, if the diseases of this age present an immense accumulation of human distress, and source of human anxiety, it is not less obvious that they must constitute a proportionately large and interesting field of medical practice, exhibiting painfully its peculiar aspects to be studied, and its peculiar difficulties to be mastered. Yet it is precisely in this class of diseases that the practitioner, during the period of his pupilage, possesses no proportionately effective opportunities of obtaining a direct and practical instruction.

These are familiar facts: but no fact can be considered as adequately known, to which is not conceded its just influence. That they express a defect which has been acknowledged and responded to elsewhere, might be held as proved sufficiently by the existence of the institutions, the reports of which are now before us. Yet these institutions are but a limited sample of others which have been reared, and are flourishing, in numerous cities of the continent.

Paris, so often in the van in the march of science, had already, in 1802, changed a previously existing establishment into its celebrated Hôpital des Enfants Malades; to the teaching and the labours of which we are indebted for a body of literature on the diseases of childhood, so extensive and so valuable as to be wholly unapproached by all that has been attempted by our native physicians. But we now learn farther, that it has been resolved to found a second hospital, to contain 400 beds, in the same city. Germany, rich also in its literature of this interesting department of medicine, has not neglected to provide the opportunities demanded for its adequate study; and Berlin, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Munich, and Stuttgart, have associated themselves with Hamburg in a labour, the compensating results of which are manifesting themselves everywhere. Russia has its similar institutions at St Petersburg and Moscow; Denmark at Copenhagen; Belgium in Brussels; the Sardinian States at Turin; and even Turkey in Constantinople. Austria, well satisfied with the benefits that have accrued from that first established in Vienna, has founded two others in that city, together with a supplementary establishment at the adjacent watering-place of Baden; and has added, besides, those in Prague, Pesth, Grätz, Brünn, and Lemberg. Beyond all this, there is scarcely a town of even third-rate importance, on the Continent, in which the subordinate provision of dispensaries is not specially set apart for the relief of this description of suffering; and with singular advantage, from their united action, for its extensive and effectual investigation, as proved both by a permanent and a periodical body of literature. When we add that, in more than one school of medicine, and we may cite Vienna and Stockholm as proofs, instruction in the diseases of children is not left to the subsidiary position of being appended to the duties of some other chair, but constitutes the peculiar charge of an independent professorship, and the object of a separate course, we have shown sufficiently the great, and, beyond question, the reasonable importance which is felt, on so many grounds, to be attached to their consideration.

The St Anne's Hospital for sick children, in Vienna, had its origin from a private institution, primarily founded by the benevolent Professor Mauthner, at his personal charges; but gradually attracting so much attention, from the beneficence and efficiency of its operations, as to procure for it the notice of the Empress Maria Anna, and of other members of the Imperial Court, who afterwards took the lead in forming an association of subscribers for its regular maintenance, and finally assured for it a conspicuous place among the public institutions of Vienna. The association is headed by the Empress, as patroness; and is governed by a committee, chiefly of ladies, as the closest in their sympathies to the tender age habitually committed to their charge. Many of these are of distinguished rank, and are aided by one or two of the principal clergy, and by several members of the legal profession, or individuals practised in matters

of finance. The hospital, a recent and an admirable construction, contains at present upwards of fifty beds : and such has been the energy of its management, and the appreciation of its usefulness, that, from the original foundation in 1837, to 1852, not fewer than 62,665 cases of infantile disease have been received under its charge ; either as patients within its walls, or as out-patients enjoying the benefits of a polyclinic, or dispensary, which constitutes an important part of the arrangements. Of the whole number of beds, eighteen have been founded by ten several benefactors, of whom nine, including the patroness, are titled ladies, who have bestowed sums of money for the purpose ; or, in other words, who have subscribed such an amount of funds in perpetuity as will suffice to maintain eighteen patients constantly in the hospital. These beds are inscribed in the wards with the names of the founders, in honourable commemoration of their benevolence.

The annual income, collected by subscription, or arising from interest of funded capital, etc., amounted in 1852, the first year of occupation of the new edifice, to about L.1050 ; and the whole expenditure, for every department of outlay, was about L.860 : leaving, what is rarely to be boasted of, in similar cases, as a result of even Scottish management, a balance of about L.190 in favour of the institution. The whole of the items of charge, from the salaries of the officials to the toys of the sick children, are now before us, as well as the whole of the benefactions. Among the latter, independent of the pecuniary contributions, it is pleasing to observe the offerings of not a few of the tradesmen, and others of the capital. A cutler sharpens gratuitously the surgical instruments ; a draper sends a piece of linen ; an ironmonger, an oven ; a hosier, two pounds of worsted ; a straw-hat manufacturer, a dozen of hats ; a lady, 60 lb. of rice, and cake and biscuit for the Emperor's birthday ; a dealer in mineral waters, a quantity of his commodity ; a tinsmith, spoons and dishes, plates and basins ; a dentist not only draws teeth gratuitously, but consoles one of his little patients with a *silberzwanziger* ; a butcher contributes 10 lb. of hog's lard ; a grocer, different kinds of tea ; numerous ladies, eunonymous and anonymous, send articles of clothing ; and Herr Karl Most (we should be glad of his acquaintance), house-proprietor and city-tradesman, opens his garden as a place of recreation for the convalescent children. And these acts of good will, which are but the samples of a host of others, as they are generously intended, so they are minutely and gratefully recorded. The kind-hearted Viennese, not unaddicted to luxury, is keenly sensitive, not the less, to the sufferings of others ; and a visitor soon learns to appreciate the warm and active benevolence which gives a genial stamp to the prevailing character.

The Hospital at Stockholm was opened for the reception of patients in the month of February, 1854 ; and it is of its operations till the close of that year that we have now an account by its able and zealous resident physician, Professor von Düben. Founded

chiefly through the exertions of Professor Huss, a name familiar in this country, an endowment of about L.700 by Dr Pehr Elmstedt has formed the nucleus around which its subscriptions have subsequently gathered. The management is directed by a committee of ladies, of whom the Crown-Princess Louisa is the president; and it will be observed that the institution bears her name, as well as profits by her direction. Among the other members, we gladly notice also the honoured name of Fredrika Bremer, and names of female representatives of the historical families of Brahe, Eriksson, and Piper. A polyclinic, or dispensary, constitutes part of the establishment; and the benefits distributed by both departments appear to have been already keenly appreciated by the poor mothers of Stockholm, the number of beds hitherto provided having been kept constantly occupied. The medical details communicated by Professor von Düben are full of interest, and will deserve our more full attention at an after opportunity.

It was not likely that wealthy and liberal England was to remain long indifferent, not only to these examples of charity, but to the stimulus of a necessary and fairly measured competition with this rapidly advancing department of the medical science of the continent. Accordingly, so early as 1850, preliminary steps were taken towards the establishment of an Hospital for sick children, in London; Dr West, the eminent writer on Infantile diseases, standing prominently forward as one of its advocates, among whom were numbered also the distinguished names of Locock, Clark, Forbes, Watson, Burrows, and Ferguson. Its cause was urged by all these gentlemen with so much fervour and success, that in 1852 the institution was opened, in an appropriate building; though at first with only twenty beds, which have since been increased to thirty, a hundred, we believe, being the number contemplated, when the funds shall have increased to a sufficient extent. At the commencement, the applications for the admission of patients were rare and hesitating: but confidence grew rapidly, and ere long mothers were found anxiously waiting for vacancies; while many sufferers were necessarily denied entrance, through the want of means for extending the charity. Still, at the end of the three first years, the aggregate number of in-patients had amounted to 584; and no fewer than 12,222 out-patients had received the benefits of the attached Dispensary. In the fourth year alone, the number of out-patients rose to 8087, the accommodation for the in-patients remaining restricted as before. It was part of the plan of the founders, to render this institution subservient to the important purposes of clinical instruction for medical practitioners, and of training and experience for a body of female nurses; both of whom would thus carry into the bosom of every family that practical skill which must otherwise, to a large extent, have been first sought to be acquired, if ever by the latter, in any proper sense, acquired at all, among those upon whom they were solicited, and should have been previously prepared,

to bestow its ripe benefits. But it does not yet appear that the arrangements have been carried fully to this point of efficiency, especially with regard to the system of clinical instruction. We learn, however, from the report newly published, that difficulties as to the plan of training nurses have latterly been overcome; and ladies who may desire to send a nursery-maid to the hospital, for purposes of instruction, are now invited to apply to the matron. That the institution may speedily reach the fullest scope of its design, under the able guidance of its physicians, Dr West and Dr Jenner, is a wish which, on every score, we feel anxious to record.

There is thus, in the meantime, evidently still space for us, in as far as our native Schools of Medicine are concerned, to assume a leading position, in point of efficiency if not of date, in this interesting sphere of labour. Doubtless the cultivated physicians of Edinburgh will be found eager, on this point, to ratify the opinions already brought into action elsewhere, and would be willing to give the project the indispensable support of their sanction and assistance. But into what distinct form is it possible to shape our prospects, when we take into nearer view the existing condition of the great medical charities already established amongst us? With our excellent Infirmary, especially, the centre of so much active charity, and the source of so much admirable instruction, involved in uneasy struggles to prevent the curtailment of its usefulness, how can we contemplate bringing another institution into the field, to be its ally, indeed, and complement in the province of science, but its rival in demands upon the public bounty? Assuredly, if we could discern no means of advancing the one, unless such as must necessarily prejudice the other, we should hesitate long before urging the project, however important its aims, and however apparent its necessity. Meanwhile, to set apart wards for children in the Infirmary itself would, even if admissible otherwise, be no adequate provision, and similar arrangements have been found inexpedient elsewhere. But to judge fairly of our prospects of success, in establishing a separate Hospital for the Diseases of Children, in Edinburgh, we must mark more definitely the extent of the demands which it is likely to entail upon us, and show more distinctly the nature of the benefits which it may be moulded to produce, and the mechanism required for their development.

Let us imagine, in the first place, the possession of a well-considered plan, the joint production of a physician who has seen, or will examine, the best establishments of the same description existing elsewhere, and of an architect, sufficiently master of his art to be able to associate beauty of design with fitness of parts. The latter must be one who can keep in view, that there ought to be one architecture for the palace, with its pomp and majesty, and another for the hospital, with its grace and meekness; and that each may have its appropriate charm, the one as the expression of power, and the other of charity. He will, therefore, not cumber his building with excrescences, of which, as we cannot divine the use, we are con-

strained to feel the incongruity, and thus, in the best æsthetical sense, and in a structure so devoted, the extravagance and the deformity. He will shun as much a flaunting and costly picturesque on the one hand, as a bald and meagre severity on the other. The aspect of an hospital must be that of a sober, chastened cheerfulness, but never of gloom. Just as little should we read in its general air, and in that of its adjuncts, as actually inscribed over its portal, the

“*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate!*”

It is evident that a building, constructed on such principles, will distinguish itself more by the elegance and simplicity of its outline, than by the sumptuousness of its ornament; and may gratify even an uneducated eye, by its unpretending union of grace and congruity. Openly situated, surrounded by trees and parterres for evergreens and flowers, secluded yet not sombre, not more than two stories in height, and with ample windows, it will silently impress the broken spirit of the sufferer, and place him in the midst of the most favourable influences, mental as well as bodily, for the recovery of his health.

Accommodation for about sixty patients, whose ages should be within the limits of from two to eight years, would suffice for the purposes of medical education in such an establishment; with the essential addition, however, of proper provision for the requirements of a Dispensary, with its ambulatory clinic, to constitute an integrant part of the design: the practice of the latter including patients of the tenderest age, such as could not prudently be separated from the mother, and thus supplementing the special description of instruction which can alone be given with success within the walls of an hospital, while presenting opportunities, at the same time, for bringing the student into more early and direct contact with current diseases, and with the more ordinary conditions and influences affecting their treatment, in the way in which he must be prepared to encounter them in his subsequent practice. The wards of the hospital might, with us also, afford valuable facilities for the education of a body of pupil-nurses, whose services subsequently might be eagerly acceptable in the families of the wealthy, or generally among the community, where the want of properly instructed females of this class has been severely felt. To administer duly to all these objects, the building should contain three physician's general wards, besides two seclusion wards for contagious diseases; a surgical ward; a convalescents' ward, and convalescents' day-room; a set of dispensary apartments, with separate access, consisting of patients' waiting-room, with laboratory and surgery, and consulting-rooms for physicians and surgeon; a room for museum and library; a pupil-nurses' ward; bath rooms; a children's clothes store; a pathological-room; dead-room; rooms for resident physician, and for house-keeper; kitchen and washing-department; and heating and ventilating apparatus, with reference to which we may suggest that the method carried into execution by

Léon-Duvoir, for the Neckar Hospital in Paris, would appear to deserve attentive consideration. The whole of the wards should be of ample dimensions, so as to afford at least a thousand cubic feet of space for each of the inmates: and the complete appurtenances, including the amenities of garden and play-ground, should correspond to the fullest requirements for such an institution, according to the most recent and enlightened notions, that we may have a model of efficiency, whether for treatment or for tuition. The cost of such a building, under the hands of a designer such as we have imagined, ought not, from what we know has been executed elsewhere, to exceed about six thousand pounds. The ordinary annual expenses, for every department of outlay, judging from data also before us, and reckoning upon an average of fifty beds occupied, should be within the limits of about twelve hundred pounds. We could have willingly enlarged here on the staff of physicians, surgeon, clinical assistants, clinical students, nurses, and servants, with the arrangement of their duties, necessary to give effect to the scheme, and value to its results, but our space, for the present, precludes the attempt.

Are we to believe that the establishment of such an institution, occupying a position in reference at once to our civic charities, and our medical school, so beneficent in its immediate objects, and so comprehensive in its remoter aims, is to be regarded, in the present conjuncture at least, as something too visionary for serious contemplation? We venture to hope not. Why should we admit, that what has been done by an Empress in Austria, or a Crown-Princess in Sweden, may not be accomplished by a Queen in this country, or by a Princess Royal looking tenderly back at the age which she has so recently left; and that in behalf of the ancient capital of those kings from whom they derive their nearest descent, and which can now profit so little by the direct presence of royalty and a court? Why should the female aristocracy of talent and of wealth be known to have zeal and sensibility enough for such a work abroad, and be supposed to be hopelessly deficient in them here? It is no part of our faith to assent to this; although we profess to have neither power nor credit to set the necessary machinery in movement, or to make a successful appeal. But, laying aside this, have we no other accessible resources? Could the class of institutions, so amply, if not redundantly, provided for in this city, whose object is the education and maintenance of the children of the poorer citizens, not find themselves justified, either all jointly, or one or more according to their means, in considering whether, under this head of maintenance, the health and life of those whom we have seen to be subjected to such destructive influences might not be held as included under their care; and that beyond the fortunate few immediately sheltered under their roofs, just as, with reference to the associated department of education, which can but rank as the embellishment, their utility has been expanded by such deviations from the original plans as the Heriot Foundation Schools? Or could any portion of the Fettes

fund, still only prospectively appropriated, be devoted to this form of charity, of all others the least questionable, and the least susceptible of abuse? Or perhaps the honour of supplying the want, for the supply of a real want to science and humanity infers honour, may be reserved for the trustees of a late millionaire, Mr Fergusson of Cairnbrock, who is said to have placed L.50,000 at their disposal for charitable uses; which they may not be unwilling to consecrate to an object, the benefits of which must thus extend so far beyond its original application, and redound to the advantage, not only of a wide class of sufferers, but of an educational establishment which stands as our most conspicuous monument among foreign countries, and of the value of those lessons which it is its privilege to diffuse. A system of hospital tuition, which serves as the foundation of a great medical school, preparing practitioners for our domestic and public service, and attracting pupils from the remotest of our dependencies, is not merely a local, or even a national, but an imperial institution.

There remains still another benefaction, that of Chalmers, the management of which has been intrusted to a body so eminently intelligent, that we may confidently anticipate that, in its special allotment, the most prudent regard will be manifested towards the more clamant wants of the time, or of coming times, in as far as provision for these can be rendered strictly accordant with the design of the donor. To ordinary interpretation, a bequest for the erection and endowment of an hospital "for the sick and hurt," infers no limitation as to the particular age of the objects of its bounty; and may as easily be restricted to the youthful as to the adult periods of life, if the best, and least occupied, sphere for its activity can be shown in the one direction rather than in the other. Assuredly, a Chalmers' Hospital for the diseases of adults, as an independent institution, might come into disagreeable, and even sometimes, were it only incidentally, into injurious collision with our Royal Infirmary, in which, not the less, it would be injustice to its founder to merge it; yet it could never rise into rivalry with the older and more extensive charity, in its double capacity, and must thus bear continually the mark of subordination and inferiority. But a Chalmers' Hospital for Sick Children would secure at once the stamp of a peculiar identity, would fill a void effectively instead of competing hurtfully, and would assume a foremost and signal rank as a commemoration of its founder. Whether these motives ought to weigh with the Faculty of Advocates, so as to induce them to found an institution for which the funds at their disposal appear to be sufficiently ample, or whether the conditions of the bequest confided to them limit more absolutely its destination, are points which, under their consideration, will receive a competent decision.

Meanwhile, the question can be one only of time. We cannot, in the cause of science and humanity, fall behind the rest of the world, and not suffer from the neglect. Humanity has its urgent plea with us, as with other cities, as shown by our statistics: science

has its equal plea everywhere, and to become insensible to it is to resign our pre-eminence. All recent changes in medical education have taken the proper direction: not to induce a congress of students by slighter studies and easier honours, but to raise the value of a degree by higher requirements and severer tests. Whether we interpret the signs of the period, or its necessities, the establishment of a better system of investigation and instruction for the diseases of children is now a matter in which, in this country, we must either aspire to lead, or be constrained to follow.