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REMARKS ON

THE NEW MEDICAL ACT,

AS AFFECTING THE

CURRICULUM OF THE STUDENT:

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF

AN ADDRESS TO STUDENTS

DELIVERED AT THE

OPENING OF THE MEDICAL SESSION, 1861-62.

BY

GEORGE BUCHANAN, A.M., M.D.,

FELLOW OF THE FACULTY OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS;
LECTURER ON ANATOMY IN THE MEDICAL SCHOOL, ANDERSON'S UNIVERSITY;
SURGEON TO THE GLASGOW ROYAL INFIRMARY,
ETC. ETC.

GLASGOW:

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1861.

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TO THE STUDENTS

OF THE

ANDERSONIAN MEDICAL SCHOOL.

GENTLEMEN,

The Medical Session which is now commencing, is the first which will be influenced by the recent Medical Act, and as this Act will have a most important effect alike on Students and Practitioners of Medicine, it has seemed good to the Lecturers in this school, that a public address should be delivered on this subject, principally for the guidance of those now entering on their curriculum. My colleagues have done me the honour of requesting me to prepare the address, and though I could have wished it had fallen into abler hands, I trust I shall be able to point out clearly what will be required of you as Medical Students, and to show that though the requirements are somewhat more stringent than those exacted from students of former years, they will tend to elevate the profession to which you aspire, and yourselves as individual members of it.

I am, GENTLEMEN,

Yours faithfully,

GEORGE BUCHANAN.

TO THE STUDENTS

ANDREASONAL WEST BEFORE THE SCHOOL

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I am Gentremen,

Your lathfully,

ADDRESS TO MEDICAL STUDENTS.

GENTLEMEN,

In entering on any new course of conduct or business in life, it is of the utmost importance to have a clear view of the duties and responsibilities it involves, to understand fully the difficulties which may lie in the way, and to determine by persevering zeal to overcome all the obstacles to the attainment of the end in view. This general statement, which is common to all pursuits and all ranks in life, is especially applicable to the young man in the choice of a profession. And I take this opportunity at the very outset of your career, of arresting your attention, and of asking you calmly to consider the nature of the profession to which you aspire, and to resolve that no application shall be wanting on your part, to render yourselves qualified to enter the ranks of that army, whose mission is one of the most benevolent that can be undertaken by man.

I have no doubt that most of you have seriously pondered on the step you have taken in becoming students of medicine; but it may be useful for you to reflect with me on some of the aspects in which your future life may be viewed. Your success will depend almost entirely on your own efforts now and afterwards. There is no walk in life in which more depends on individual exertion. The influence of friends and the aid of money, will never make a man a skilful physician or an able surgeon; their qualities are from within, and not dependent to any great extent on external circumstances. Success in a business-point of view, may not always be rapid or corresponding to talent at first; but no one who is conscious of good abilities and fair medical attainments, with unflinching energy and attention to his duties, need doubt that he will ultimately rise to an honourable position. This is especially the case in the public services now. The system of conferring medical appointments in the Army, Navy, and Indian medical service by personal interest, is now abolished; and any student who has obtained his diploma may present himself as candidate for a Commission, without any other recommendation than his professional qualifications. But whatever be your future sphere of usefulness, at home or abroad, public or private, you can never hope to reach distinction or even have comfort in the exercise of your calling, unless you resolve to take full advantage of the opportunities you will enjoy, during your student life, of carefully cultivating your mind, and storing your memory with those elementary truths which are the groundwork of scientific medicine. In order that you may set about diligently preparing

yourselves for this, it is of importance to bear in mind the extent of the study on which you are about to enter.

Medical science includes a great variety of subjects, all of which you must master, to become successful practitioners of the healing art. I need not remind you that the great aim of all medical knowledge is the alleviation of suffering and the cure of disease; and in order that you may safely and confidently undertake this great philanthropic object, you must undergo a sustained course of study, extending over several years and embracing numerous branches of science, differing widely from each other, but bearing equally on one common end. Hence the subdivision of the study of medicine into so many different departments, and the arrangement of these, as elementary or fundamental, and dependent or practical.

In former days, it was the practice for the medical pupil to receive all the instruction he got, at the hands of the master to whom he was apprenticed. Medicine in those days was a much more mechanical art than now, and surgery was an appendage to the barber's basin; but as facts and observations were accumulated and recorded, the science took a determinate form, and was studied with more care and regularity. The topics which are presented for your consideration during your course of study, are so numerous and varied, that you will do well to remember at the outset, that it is no light task you have undertaken. You have a hard and arduous labour in prospect, and

you must nerve yourselves to encounter many difficulties, which can only be overcome by the most patient investigation. But let this be your encouragement, that your present studies are not only full of the most vivid interest, but are of the utmost importance to your future success; and the more earnestly you have to strive in overcoming any difficulty, the more firmly will the fact be rooted in your memory, and the more readily will it be recalled afterwards. And this is not the least important view of your student life, that the impediments with which you meet in the acquisition of knowledge, discipline the mental powers, and render them, at each recurrence of the strife, more able to have the mastery. I need hardly remind you, that in the practice of your profession you should have, besides a well-stored mind, a clear head and a prompt judgment. How often would the life of a fellow-creature be at stake by indecision on the part of his medical man? How often has the promptitude of the surgeon earned for him a priceless reward by snatching a fellowsufferer from the gates of death? This decision and energy of mind, natural in some men, may be acquired in many, increased in all, by the very means to which I have been alluding; and this ought to cheer you in any difficulty, that patient and repeated attempts are sure to issue in victory, and that the very effort put forth has had such a wholesome effect on your mental strength, that the next and the next obstacle will be the more easily mastered, till what at first seemed an irksome and uninviting labour, at last becomes a pursuit full of pleasant investigation and agreeable reflection.

I shall now for a short time consider the question of chief concern to the medical student when setting out on his career—What will be required of me before I can get my Licence to practise, and how shall I direct my studies so that I may worthily present myself as candidate for a Diploma? And first, with regard to the period of study. In this, as in all other points, we must refer to the resolutions of the Medical Council as the governing body of the profession, and we find that it has enacted "that four years of professional study be required;" in other words, that no student can obtain his diploma until after the termination of four years of medical study. By the commencement of medical study is meant, commencing studies at a medical school. It must be remarked, however, that the licensing Boards allow one of these four years to be spent away from the medical school, if the student produce a certificate of having been engaged in acquiring a knowledge of his profession, as assistant to a medical practitioner. This plan of substituting a year of practice for a year of study, although permitted, is not to be encouraged. Four years are short enough for the diligent study of all the branches of medical knowledge, and for the careful observation of the applied science as seen in hospital practice. But undoubtedly it would be exceedingly beneficial for the student to spend a fifth year, either after his third session or after he has taken his Diploma, as assistant to a practitioner, and thus learn to apply his knowledge before entering on practice on his own account.

Next, as to the arrangement of the subjects of study during the four years of the curriculum. In this you must be guided by the order in which you will be required to pass your examinations before the licensing Boards. I believe there is an erroneous impression abroad, that in future the examinations will be more difficult than formerly. This, I am sure, is quite a mistake. The examinations will be more formal, rather than more difficult, and for this purpose they will be divided into three sections—the Preliminary, the first Professional, and the second Professional.

With regard to the Preliminary examination there is no doubt that it will be more formal and more stringent than formerly; and it must be admitted that many used to enrol themselves as medical students without sufficient previous attention to general education, which is of so much importance to all who desire to enter a learned profession. It will be exacted of all who come forward for the medical profession, that they prepare themselves to pass the examination on the preliminary branches before they enter on their medical studies. I believe that arrangements will shortly be made by which students in different parts of the country will be enabled to pass this examination before

^{*} As the enactments of the Medical Council are not retrospective, the Royal College of Surgeons of London has announced that it will admit under the former regulations, all who commenced medical study by an apprenticeship previous to October, 1861; and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Edinburgh, and the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, will act on the same principle.

they come to Glasgow, and thus be saved a great deal of inconvenience. When the preliminary examination has been passed, the next step is for the student to enter his name in the register to be kept at the Faculty Hall, for it is enjoined by the Medical Council that all students be registered according to a required form, and that the registration book be closed within fifteen days from the commencement of the session; certain exceptions being allowed in the case of illness or detention by some other unavoidable cause.

The first Professional examination takes place after the second winter session. It includes Chemistry, Anatomy, and Physiology, and these are the subjects which ought principally to engage the attention of the student during the first two years. Botany ought to be studied during the first summer session, and those who have acquired some knowledge of drugs during apprenticeship, may include Materia Medica in their second winter, without encroaching too much on the time necessary for the branches before mentioned. But I cannot sufficiently impress on your minds the necessity of working hard, during the early part of your curriculum, at Chemistry and Anatomy, the two fundamental sciences on which all the rest depend. It is a remark no less true than common, that if a student wishes to have confidence in himself, either as a physician or surgeon, he must be much in the dissecting room during the whole course of his study; but as the practical branches press on his attention during the third and fourth years, he must be well grounded in Anatomy before this. Take

advantage, then, of your opportunities during the first two years, and strive to master the details of Anatomy before other subjects demand your attention.

The remaining sessions are to be occupied with the practical branches—Surgery, Practice of Medicine, Midwifery, and Medical Jurisprudence; and the second Professional examination, which is entirely on these subjects, takes place at the end of the fourth year.

With regard to hospital practice there is no doubt that the longer a student frequents the wards, the more insight will he have into the nature of disease and the methods of cure. Still, unless he has previously acquired some knowledge at least of Anatomy, the information he can get will be but obscure and pointless; and I would recommend to all who intend to take the full curriculum of four years, to delay joining the hospital till the beginning of the first summer session or second winter. Those who have been apprentices may attend with advantage during the whole period of study. While on this subject let me give you one word of advice. Do not be erratic in your attendance, wandering about from ward to ward and from the practice of one physician or surgeon to another, shiftless and unobserving. Very often it is not from striking and well marked cases, which are most attractive to students,

^{*} Students who have pursued their studies in Scotch schools of medicine will be allowed as heretofore, to present themselves at the Royal College of Surgeons of London, for both professional examinations on the completion of their curricula, and consequently, need not present themselves for the primary or anatomical examination on the completion of their second session of study.

that you will learn the most, but by patiently watching from day to day a certain limited number, during their whole progress. But this matter will be fully explained to you when you commence attendance at the Infirmary.

There is sometimes a little difficulty on the part of the student or his friends in deciding what qualification to practice he should apply for. This is of less importance at the present day, since the Medical Act has equalized all Diplomas. The Diploma of Glasgow is of as much value as that of London, Dublin, or Edinburgh. The curriculum and order of examinations are the same, and its holders are eligible for the same posts in the Army, Navy, or any public service. But if anything should occur to make it desirable for you to take your qualification elsewhere, you will be received as candidates by any of the Royal Colleges. Recent regulations in most of the public services make it advisable that you should have what is known as the double qualification; that is, a Licence in medicine, as well as a Diploma in surgery. But for the ordinary private practice of your profession in any of its branches, a single qualification, as the Diploma in surgery, is quite sufficient. Those who desire to have the double qualification may obtain it in Glasgow-the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh having appointed an examining Board to sit in Glasgow along with that of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, so that a candidate may undergo a series of simultaneous examinations, and if successful, will obtain a Diploma in Surgery and a Licence in Medicine

from the College of Physicians, and thus enter on practice a legally constituted Physician and Surgeon.

Most of you will be aware that, since last session, the Scottish University Commissioners have issued their ordinances. With the changes which these have effected in university graduation we have little to do, except in so far as they affect the students of this school. Hitherto the University of St. Andrews presented a striking contrast to the other Universities of Scotland, which excluded from their degrees all except those who received their education, or at least the greater part of it, within the academic walls. St. Andrews was more liberal with its honours, throwing open its portals to all who could give evidence of having received a sound medical education, according to the regulations of any of the Royal Colleges of this country; but the examinations, general as well as professional, for its degrees, were as stringent as those of any other This honourable course the University of University. St. Andrews has pursued for a great length of time, when now, against the wish of the Senate and of all who are more immediately linked with that ancient seat of learning, the Commissioners have ordained that all future candidates for graduation must have received the principal part of their education in some other University than St. Andrews, there being only two medical Chairs in it. The number of candidates who will find their way from other Universities will be very small, and this restrictive policy will practically altogether shut up the graduation at St. Andrews, unless

the Privy Council can be brought to see the impolicy of the proposal, reverse the resolutions of the Commissioners, and leave at least one University which will grant its degrees to any well-informed and well-tested candidate, who can produce certificates of having been educated in accordance with the requirements of the General Council of Education under the Medical Act. With regard to other Universities, I am confident that a more liberal policy would be to their own benefit; for I believe that the restrictions at present in force will have the effect of diminishing the number of their graduations, rather than of increasing the number of their students.

Indeed the ordinances of the Commissioners evidently contemplate some relaxation of University exclusiveness. For one of the clauses provides that candidates for graduation may, to the extent of four out of the departments of medical study required, attend, in such year or years as may be most convenient to them, the Lectures of teachers of Medicine in extra-university schools. Again one entire session out of the four required, may be taken in certain recognized extra-university schools; and lastly, attendance during at least six months on the Medical or Surgical Practice of a General Hospital, and during the same period on a Course of Practical Anatomy, may be reckoned as one session. The carrying out of the details of the Ordinances is committed to the University court, which also has the power of recognizing the lectures in extra-university schools-and

accordingly the Lecturers in this school have made such application, and ere long I expect that certificates of attendance on our lectures will be recognized as qualifying for graduation to the extent just mentioned. Thus students who are looking forward to graduation, will not be compelled to take all their classes within the University, but may to the extent of two sessions of the curriculum, and four departments of Medical Science, take them in an extra-university school, if it in any way suits their convenience.

But though I for one would loudly demand, in behalf of all extra-university students, that the ancient usage of the University of St. Andrews be not abolished without good cause shown, yet, truth to tell, the boon to our students would be but small. For consider that you have in your power a medical and surgical qualification, which I am sure you will deem far superior to what the Universities can grant as a title. By the new ordinances no student can leave any University with the degree of Doctor of Medicine. At the end of his four years' study he may obtain the title of Bachelor of Medicine, and if he choose to pay the additional fee he may also get the Mastership in Surgery. But before he can become a Doctor of Medicine he must spend two additional years in hospital or private practice, after which he is eligible for another examination for the degree. How few of those who leave their studies at the end of four years could conveniently find their way back here, after two years, for this purpose! They go to the Army or Navy, to the Colonies, or to

practise in the country; and I believe that by far the greater number of students would desire to have the full medical qualification which they aim at, before they leave their studies and enter on practice. And I would ask, which of you would prefer the junior qualifications of the Universities to those of the Medical and Surgical Corporations? If the Universities retain for their own students the titles of Bachelor in Medicine and the Mastership in Surgery -it is open to you to obtain from the medical and surgical Corporations those of Physician and Surgeon. And I would beg you to observe, that these University titles which they guard for their own pupils with such jealous care, are denied to you in common with the students of all the schools in England, with the exception of two in London. The education of the hospitals which have derived their renown from the teaching of Sir Astley Cooper, Abernethy, Sir Benjamin Brodie, is, forsooth, unacknowledged! The students of schools from which have emanated many of the principles and much of the knowledge which guide our practice at the present day, are not considered qualified to stand as candidates for the degree, until they have passed through the refining process which is to be obtained within the hallowed walls of some University, which mayhap derives a part of its fame from the doctrines of a homeopathic medical professor! But to leave this subject, I repeat that the titles of Physician and Surgeon, with the Diplomas of the Corporations I have named, are what I would advise you to aim at; and if at any future

time you should wish to rise a step above this—to take a higher grade—the Fellowship of these Corporations is open to all, and I am confident will be much more solicited than formerly.

But whatever qualification you may fix on as your legal title to practice, undoubtedly the grand object you should have in view is, to store your minds with that sort of knowledge which will avail you most in practice. In the two great essentials of a good school, viz., hospital practice and abundant opportunity for dissection, all medical students in Glasgow are on an equal footing; and in these respects it is no idle boast to say that this city is unexcelled by any other. I have only to ask you to visit our hospital and to examine its statistics, to convince you that a wider field for acquiring a knowledge of medicine and surgery could not be offered to you. Situated as we are in the midst of a population of artisans and mechanics, engaged in all sorts of employments involving danger to life or limb—the accidents and injuries which are inseparable from these occupations furnish most instructive examples of every variety of surgical lesion. Indeed the student will find illustrations of all classes of those diseases, acute and chronic, which have been explained to him in a systematic way in the lecture-room. At the bedside and in the clinical lecture-room he will have a commentary on the cases in the hospital-not confined to the practice of one physician or one surgeon, but of all the medical attendants who, in rotation, assume the duty of clinical teacher. Our magnificent

New Surgical Hospital is now fully occupied, and this along with the former buildings constitutes a noble Infirmary, with no fewer than 600 beds, and with a staff of four physicians and four surgeons for the in-patients, and two physicians and two surgeons for out-patients. The dressers to the surgical wards and clerks to the Dispensary are chosen from the students attending; and altogether the Glasgow Royal Infirmary is a practical medical school unexcelled anywhere, except perhaps by one or two of the older endowed hospitals in London.

As students of Anatomy in Glasgow, you have facilities for practical study which those in other schools cannot lay claim to. Material for dissection is obtained in abundance, so that in a ten-years' experience in conducting the practical anatomy department in this school, I have never known any one disappointed in getting as much dissection as he chose to apply for. And as for the means of carrying out this part of your studies, I can safely say that in few schools will you find a dissecting-room which excels in spaciousness, ventilation, and well-directed light, the handsomelyfinished hall which has recently been constructed for us by the managers of this institution. being the case in regard to these two most important parts of a medical student's curriculum-Hospital Practice and Practical Anatomy—it must lie very much with the student himself if he does not acquire a really useful knowledge of his profession.

In conclusion, let me impress on you that it is chiefly

on yourselves that you must depend for the truly practical knowledge of your profession. Try to take this view of your student life. You have four years to acquire the information necessary to enable you to begin medical practice; let this period be mapped out so that none of it be lost. Let much of it be spent in the dissecting-room—you can rarely get that sort of information after you begin practice. Above all be jealous of your time, and be regular at the hospital and lecture-room. The diligent student is sure to succeed in his profession. I need not tell you that out of this school, and even here as regards study, you are your own masters. The regulations of the Colleges require us to call the roll from time to time, to ascertain your bodily presence; but with this exception you are unfettered. We have few rewards to offer for your punctual attendance, but what we have I believe you will esteem a boon—our sympathy and assistance. The diligent student is sure to gain his teacher's regard; and if it is a desirable object to you to stand well in the opinion of those who undertake to guide you in your medical studies, believe me, to us it is a high reward to know that our instructions are appreciated and valued.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION.

Candidates for a Diploma commencing Professional Study after October 1st, 1861, must have been engaged in Professional Study during Four Years, which shall include not less than Four Winter Sessions' or Three Winter and Two Summer Sessions' attendance at a recognized Medical School.*

CURRICULUM FOR THE DOUBLE QUALIFICATION OF PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON.

		Duration—at least.					
A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR		2 C	ourses,		Six Months each.		
Anatomy,			Best		Twelve Months.		
PRACTICAL ANATOMY,		1 (Course,		Six Months.		
CHEMISTRY,		1	Do.		Three Months.		
PRACTICAL Or ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY,		1	Do.	•	Three Months.		
MATERIA MEDICA,		-	21.00		50 Lectures.		
Institutes of Medicine (Physiology), .		1	Do.				
PRACTICE OF MEDICINE,		1	Do.		Six Months.		
CLINICAL MEDICINE,		1	Do.		Six Months.		
In addition to the above Courses of Practice of)			2.4				
Medicine and Clinical Medicine, one Course		1	Do.		Six Months.		
of either of these at the option of the Student,)							
PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF SURGERY, .		1	Do.		Six Months.		
CLINICAL SURGERY,		1	Do.		Six Months.		
In addition to the above Courses of Surgery and							
Clinical Surgery, one Course of either of		1	Do.		Six Months.		
these at the option of the Student,							
MIDWIFERY and the DISEASES of WOMEN and		1	Do.		Three Months.		
CHILDREN,		1	Do.		Times bronons.		
MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE,		1	Do.		Three Months.		
BOTANY,†		1	Do.		Three Months.		
PRACTICAL PHARMACY,					Three Months.		
Hospital Practice,					Twenty-four Do.		
DISPENSARY PRACTICE,					Six Months.		
MORBID ANATOMY,					Three Months.		
PRACTICAL MIDWIFERY,	•				Six Cases.		
PRACTICAL MIDWIFERI,	•				DIA Caoco.		
Fee for the single Diploma,					. £10 0 0		
Fee for the double Diploma of Physician	L all	IU E	urgeo	,	. 210 0 0		

^{*}Candidates who commenced their Professional Studies by Apprenticeship or otherwise prior to October 1, 1861, will be admitted to Examination after Three Winter and Two Summer Sessions' attendance at a recognized Medical School.

[†] Those who desire the Single Diploma of Surgeon are not required to attend Botany, nor a Second Course of Practice of Medicine or Clinical Medicine.

Course of Study recommended to Students.

FIRST WINTER			
CLASSES.		ноп	JRS.
Chemistry,		10	to 11
Osteology and Dissection,		11	to 1
Anatomical Demonstrations,		1	to 2
Osteology and Dissection,		5	to 6
FIRST SUMMER.			
		71	4- 01
Botany,		91	to 8
Anatoma		19	to 10
Practical Chamistry		1	to 1
Hospital,		9	to 2
Dispensary Tractice,		2	10 0
SECOND WINTER.			
Hospital and Clinical Lectures,		81	to 10
Dissection,		10	to 12
Institutes of Medicine (Physiology),		12	to 1
Anatomical Demonstrations,		1	to 2
Materia Medica,		4	to 5
Anatomy—Lecture,		5	to 6
THIRD WINTER.			
Hospital and Clinical Lectures,		81	to 10
Surgery,		11	to 12
Anatomical Demonstrations,		1	to 2
Practice of Medicine,		3	to 4
Dissection.			
SUMMER (OR AFTER SECOND V	VINTER		
Hospital and Clinical Lectures,		81	to 10
Midwifery,		10	to 11
Medical Jurisprudence,		11	to 12
Dispensary Practice,		2	to 3
Hospital and Clinical Lectures, Midwifery, Medical Jurisprudence, Dispensary Practice, Practical Pharmacy—Dissection and Operative Su	rgery.		
FOURTH WINTER			
Hospital and Clinical Lectures		81	to 10
Hospital and Clinical Lectures, Surgery, Practice of Medicine, Dissection	100	11	to 12
Practice of Medicine		3	to 4
Tractice of frediction			
Practical Midwifery—Eye Infirmary—Dissection.			

The above order of study is recommended to those who can spend Four Winter Sessions at their medical studies. In the case of those whose circumstances render it desirable that they should finish with a Three Winters' Course, the optional classes, which may be found by referring to the preceding page, may be omitted, and the others spread over the three Sessions.