

**Valedictory address delivered to the members of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh, at the last ordinary meeting of session 1852-53, April 15, 1853 / by William Murray Dobie.**

**Contributors**

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VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

(14)

DELIVERED TO THE MEMBERS

OF THE

ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH,

AT THE

LAST ORDINARY MEETING OF SESSION 1852-53,

APRIL 15, 1853.

BY WILLIAM MURRAY DOBIE, M.D.,

SENIOR PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY ;

RESIDENT SURGEON TO THE CLINICAL SURGICAL WARDS OF THE ROYAL INFIRMARY.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY

BY MURRAY AND GIBB.

1853.

MEMORIALS

The printing and publication of an Address written with so much purity and perspicuity as the following demands a word of explanation. At the closing meeting of last Session Mr. J. F. Macfarlan moved: "That the Address just delivered by the President be printed at the expense of the Society." The motion was seconded and unanimously agreed to.

Though gratified in the highest degree by such a flattering mark of regard towards myself on the part of the Society, it has been with feelings of much hesitation and reluctance that I have allowed the proposal to be carried into effect. On the one hand I have feared that the interests of this excellent Society might be compromised in the eyes of the profession or the public by the publication of a production so trivial and insignificant by one holding the office of a President; on the other hand I have not felt justified in offering any opposition to the unanimous request of a Society to which I owe so much. In compliance with the expressed wish of the members of the Society, I now present it to them in its original form.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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W. M. D.

## VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

It has been the custom at the termination of past sessions for the Senior President of this Society to deliver a farewell address to its members. In compliance with this time-honoured usage, I beg to offer you a very few remarks at the conclusion of this the 115th session of the Society; and I trust you will view my observations with an indulgent eye, as they have been written in the few hurried moments I could, with difficulty, snatch from a week of unusual occupation.

Gentlemen, I am sure you will agree with me in thinking that we have now brought to a conclusion one of the most remarkable and eventful sessions which it has been the lot of our Society to complete during the whole period of its long and illustrious career. If we may be allowed to judge by the testimony of the older members, the Medical Society has now attained an eminence equal to that of any period in its past history. A short time ago, I heard Dr Andrew Wood, a distinguished former president, state that he had taken the opportunity of once or twice attending the ordinary meetings during this session, and that, judging from what he then heard and saw, he felt sure that the Society was now in a condition quite equal to that of any period within his recollection. He added that he was so thoroughly convinced of the benefits accruing to every young man who joins this Society, that when any parent or guardian consulted him in relation to the

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necessary for a young medical student, he always entered in the calculation the usual entrance-money to the Royal Medical Society, as an item quite as essential in a liberal medical education as any of the classes in the academic curriculum. He was further of opinion that the business habits learnt here were of the greatest use to their possessor, in whatever position in life he might be subsequently placed.

The Society has been in few things more fortunate than in being brought before the notice of the public by the pen of so able an advocate as that eloquent writer and excellent man Dr George Wilson, in his beautiful life of Professor John Reid, one of its former presidents. I am aware that most of you are familiar with the work itself; nevertheless I trust you will excuse my quoting a paragraph or two from its pages. In speaking of this Society, Dr Wilson says:—

“ I have already referred to the societies as training schools in speaking. They are much more, however. The practice of essay writing and discussion among the finest and most congenial spirits of a college period thus brought together, evidently tends to stimulate inquiry, to give shape to knowledge; to create habits of business and public speaking; and to call into play all the kindly and generous affections by which friendship is at once created and exercised. Many look back on such societies with gratitude, as schools both of the intellect and heart, and trace to them no small portion of their character and permanent opinions.”

“ The active students willingly submitted to restrictions which they knew to be for the advantage of this Society, and they took care that their less attentive brethren should attest their membership by their presence (unless when illness rendered this impossible), or by the proxy of one of her Majesty's coins. There was occupation for every one. The most ignorant or idle of students, however slow to open his mouth on questions involving a knowledge of anatomy, chemistry, or physiology, could give an opinion on a question of finance, and had clear enough views as to the manner book shelves should be arranged; and as an hour was devoted to private business, and as silence was irksome, opinions were freely enough given. No doubt it sometimes happened that proceedings, regarding the propriety of which there could be no hesitation, were not authorised till a lengthened debate had paved the way for the unavoidable decision which every one foresaw must be given. But after all, even a protracted discussion such as I have been present at, as to the wisdom of white-washing a dark and dirty wall, had the

good effect of teaching deference to the opinions of others, and that submission to the vote of a majority which for Anglo-Saxon minds is the end of strife."

It has been usual in the valedictory addresses delivered from this chair to make a special allusion to each dissertation and paper read before the Society, during the session about to close. I cannot do this in the manner I could wish, not having found time to refer to the papers themselves, or even to the list of dissertations. Under these circumstances, the members present will, I hope, excuse the slight reference to these papers which I shall now make from memory.

The physical and psychical properties of that most important and interesting anæsthetic agent, chloroform, have probably been as fully investigated by this, as by any other learned society in Great Britain. During the past session we have not only had many interesting papers and discussions, but we have also had experimental committees appointed to report on this subject.

To my friend Mr E. R. Bickersteth, now of Liverpool, the Society was indebted for an excellent and original paper on the "Mode of Death by Chloroform." It was illustrated by an admirable series of cases and experiments performed on the lower animals.<sup>1</sup> At another period of the session, M. de Chaumont read before you a monograph upon the "Effects of Chloroform on the Blood." His admirably conducted experiments were afterwards repeated by a committee appointed by the Society,—consisting of Messrs Chaumont, Sibbald, Sherwood, Mercer Adam, and Dr Alex. Struthers,—and the result was, a strong confirmation of the correctness of M. Chaumont's views.<sup>2</sup> Mr Wingett gave the Society a dissertation on "The Psychological action of Chloroform," which excited an animated discussion.

Our esteemed treasurer, Mr Macfarlan, who, as you are aware,

<sup>1</sup> Permission to make further use of this paper has been granted by the Society to Mr Bickersteth, and I understand that it will shortly appear in the Monthly Journal.

<sup>2</sup> For an abstract of M. de Chaumont's experiments, see *Transactions of Physiological Society of Edinburgh*, in *Monthly Journal*, March 1853, p. 470.

is one of the largest manufacturers of chloroform in Edinburgh, prepared a communication for us on an interesting case, which came under his notice, of dangerous narcotism by that drug, which occurred in the case of one of his workmen falling into a chloroform vat. This communication was, unfortunately, not in time to be read this session; but I am confident that it will give rise to an interesting and animated discussion, and excite a renewed interest in this important subject, when it is read before you at the commencement of next session.

The best thanks of the Society are due to Mr Birdwood, for an admirable dissertation on the "Origin of Ideas," which contained proofs of sound and philosophic views, and was remarkably distinguished by the author's original tone of thinking and perfect familiarity with a subject so abstruse and difficult. Mr Mercer Adam's dissertation was on "Monstrosities considered Anatomically, Physiologically, and Pathologically;" it would be waste of time in me to dilate upon its merits, as you are already so familiar with the high scientific merit of every production of that gentleman's pen. The same may be said of his communications on "Colostrum;" on "The Circulation in the Acardiac Fœtus," and on other subjects connected with Teratology. Dr Wilkinson's dissertation on the "Connection of Diabetes with Disease of the Brain," was followed by a discussion, rendered more than usually interesting by the information respecting M. Bernard's experiments brought forward by Dr Sanders and Dr Haldane. Mr Hutchinson has read two very excellent monographs to the Society. The first, a practical one on "Uterine Hemorrhage;" the second, containing the result of Mr Hutchinson's researches into the "Physiological Anatomy of the True and False Corpora Lutea." Mr Murray read an admirable paper on an interesting question connected with Insanity; the author had evidently exerted his excellent talents to the utmost in the production of this admirable dissertation. My worthy colleague and friend Dr Struthers brought under your notice an elaborate paper on "Albuminuria." Suffice it to say that it was just the communication which we might have

expected from a writer so thoroughly acquainted with all the branches of the theory and practice of medicine. Mr Macarthur read a communication on "Epileptic Convulsions," which contained illustrative cases, and some very ingenious original views. The essay "On the Modes of Dying," presented by Mr Marshall, was one of much excellence; the same may be said of the dissertations on the "Effects of mind in disease," read by Mr Pringle, on "Phlebitis," by Mr Nasmyth, on "The Homologies of the Upper and Lower extremities of Man," by Mr Gulland, and on "The history of Inoculation and Vaccination," by Mr Gourlay. Some animated discussions followed the reading of these papers. Mr Collins and Mr Burn read papers on Medico-Botanical subjects; the former gentleman on "The Medicinal Plants of the *Solanaceæ*"; the latter, an admirable paper on those of the *Liliaceæ*. The subjects allotted to these gentlemen were treated in a very able and careful manner. Mr Steiner, with an enthusiasm for the Society rarely equalled, came from England for the express purpose of reading to the Society his dissertation on "Colour," which contained an excellent *resumé* of all that was known on the subject, and also many new experiments on Hæmatosin, etc. Mr Steiner presented a series of illustrative specimens to the Society, and a similar liberal gift of pharmaceutic preparations was made by Mr Burn at another period of the session. I must not forget to mention the elegantly written communication read by Mr Duff, "On the Indian disease termed the *Mahamuree*;" nor the kind communication of my friend Dr Lownds, H.E.I.C.S, on "The Fever of Scinde." Another communication has since been received by Dr Broadbent from the same gentleman on the subject of "Snake Poisoning;" but unfortunately too late to be read this session. I trust that my own communication on a "Punctured Wound of the Heart," and some demonstrations of morbid growths, were not entirely devoid of interest or benefit to the members of the Society.

To take a general review, the dissertations of this year have partaken of a more elevated character than in any session within my own recollection. There was another important communica-

tion read before the Society, which I perceive I have not yet mentioned. I allude to the long and elaborate paper sent us by Mr Braid of Manchester, which, during three successive evenings, was brought before your notice. On these occasions we were honoured by the attendance of many scientific and literary men, among whom were Professors Bennett, Gregory, and Balfour. Too much praise, or too many thanks, cannot, I think, be awarded to Mr Braid, for sending his very interesting monograph for discussion in our Hall. Most of you, I am sure, felt this; and you accordingly received the communication with marked favour, though perhaps the majority of your number were not prepared to adopt the views and opinions of its author to the full extent of their practical bearing.

“The debates of this Society,” said an illustrious President, Dr Caleb Parry, of Bath, (in his valedictory address, delivered on the 1st May, 1778, to the members,—then in exactly the same circumstances as you are now, viz., after they had been one session in complete use of their new Hall), “have been conducted with a liberal spirit of inquiry. Truth has been allured from her deepest recesses, and exhibited in all her natural charms; and error, wherever sheltered, and however disguised, has been boldly arrested, stripped of every adventitious ornament, and exposed in all his genuine deformity.” I appeal to you, gentlemen, if the same may not, with justice, be said of the debates of the past session; and in an especial manner of the brilliant discussions which followed the reading of Mr Braid’s paper.

The candid and impartial discussion, not only of the theories contained in this communication, but also of the statements brought forward by some professional mesmerists, who were present, shows strikingly how free the members of this Society are from any taint of prejudice or bigotry; while, at the same time, the calm, quiet, and—I may well say—triumphant refutations of the arguments of the too credulous believers, in what are called the “*higher phenomena*,” are well worthy of your remembrance. I especially allude to the eloquent speeches of Drs Bennett and Alexander Wood. The Society well knows how to select the true

from the false; how to distinguish between that which it is useful to know and that which it is dangerous to practise. The members of this Society have made themselves thoroughly acquainted with the whole subject of Mesmerism, or Hypnotism, and Clairvoyance, yet I question whether a single one, tutored and disciplined by attendance at the Medical Society, will, ever in his future practice, resort to the somewhat indelicate manipulations of the most philosophic of hypnotisers in preference to the better known anæsthetics, purgatives, and emmenagogues of our pharmacopœias.

The great fact that renders the *present* far more notable than even a centenary session is, that we have now entered upon a new and far more splendid "Temple of Æsculapius," than ever was the more sober edifice in Surgeon's Square. The meeting of Friday, the 19th November 1852, must be fresh in the recollection of most of you, when we had upwards of 200 of the *élite* of scientific Edinburgh assembled, for the purpose of inaugurating the noble Hall in which we are now sitting. You must well remember the excellent address delivered on that occasion by Dr Cobbold, and the discussion of the communication which Professor Simpson so kindly brought forward afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

The easy transition we have made from the murky region of Surgeon's Square to this commodious building, makes one almost ready to fancy that some magic has been, in this instance, at work, and that, like an Alladin's palace, our Hall has risen up by enchantment. But I would now remind you, Gentlemen, that the case is far otherwise; these splendid results are the effects and

<sup>1</sup> On this occasion Professor Simpson read a paper, detailing the results of some interesting experiments he had made upon pigs, from which he endeavoured to prove, that the contractions of the parturient uterus do not at all depend on the spinal nervous system, as Dr Marshall Hall has tried to establish, but are more probably "reflex-sympathetic" in their nature. This communication was illustrated by drawings, and also some dissections made by Professor Goodsir, of the vertebral columns of the animals experimented on. For Dr Cobbold's address, see the "Monthly Journal of Medical Science," December 1852.

fruits of the well-directed labours, and self-sacrificing liberality, of those who have immediately gone before you. Allow me to lay, very shortly, the facts of the case before you. Through the careful economy of our predecessors, and more especially from the prudent management of the finances of the Society by our esteemed Treasurer, Mr Macfarlan, the Society has been able to lay aside a sum of money, which had gradually accumulated to L.1300. In the year 1850, when the members of this Society resolved to accept the offer of purchase of the Hall in Surgeon's Square, made by the managers of the Royal Infirmary, the Society reluctantly agreed to sacrifice, if necessary, a portion of this fund to assist in the building of a new Hall.<sup>1</sup> But, that this encroachment on a sum that has more than once rescued this Society from destruction, might not be required, every attending member came forward in the most liberal manner to procure advantages, not to be enjoyed by themselves, but by you,—their successors. There was in this a generosity of the most noble kind; no other consideration could have influenced them but an enthusiastic love for, and a pure desire to enhance the reputation and extend the usefulness of this Society. This noble example has not, I am sorry to say, been followed by the members who have joined our ranks more recently. There is, however, yet ample time for you to make up for this lukewarmness. The Society seldom perhaps more than at present has needed your aid towards the support of its reserve fund. The Society, rather than be accounted backwards in its payments, has been obliged to make a large present advance from the accumulated fund, chiefly for the painting and fitting up of this building. I trust that you, gentlemen, will show, by the liberality of your subscriptions, that you are imbued with the spirit of your predecessors of 1850-51. If each member, who has not already subscribed, were this evening to set his name down for a single guinea, a very considerable item in the amount due would be at once obtained; and with what may, I trust, be confidently

<sup>1</sup> For an account of these proceedings, see "Monthly Journal of Medical Science," March 1851, p. 300.

expected from the members of next year, this needful sum will soon be realised. I may add, that the old Hall itself has not been forgotten.<sup>1</sup> A subscription was set on foot this spring for the purpose of presenting the Society with an oil painting of its former edifice. To this most of the ordinary attending members and also the extraordinary members in town have subscribed with much enthusiasm; and it is proposed, should the funds allow of it, to present each subscriber with a lithographic or photographic copy of the painting. The needful amount has not yet been realised, and subscriptions will therefore be thankfully received by the Society from those members at a distance who wish this project carried out, and who have not already contributed towards it.

It is perhaps out of place to mention, from this chair, the annual dinner held this year at the Waterloo Hotel; but as a collateral indication of the Society's advancement, I cannot pass it over without a word. This convivial meeting was attended

<sup>1</sup> Mr A. Mercer Adam, Honorary Secretary, has favoured me with the following note respecting the foundation stone, the medal, and diplomas found beneath the "Old Hall" in Surgeon's Square.

Shortly after the sale of the Society's late Hall in Surgeon's Square, it was desired to communicate with the law-agent of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary — its purchasers — requesting, as a special favour, that the gilded rod and serpent, surmounting the dome, the foundation-stone, and any other relics of interest, might be preserved for the Society. This request was kindly acceded to by these gentlemen; and probably some details as to the recent acquisition of these relics by the Society may not be uninteresting to the members generally.

The foundation-stone was a very large massive block of stone, covered by a carved slab, bearing the following inscription:—

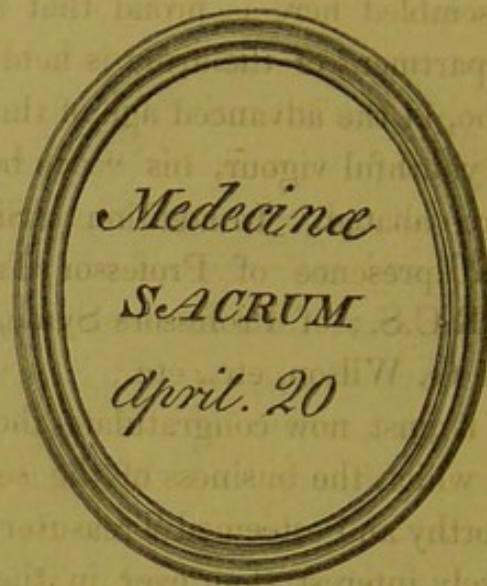
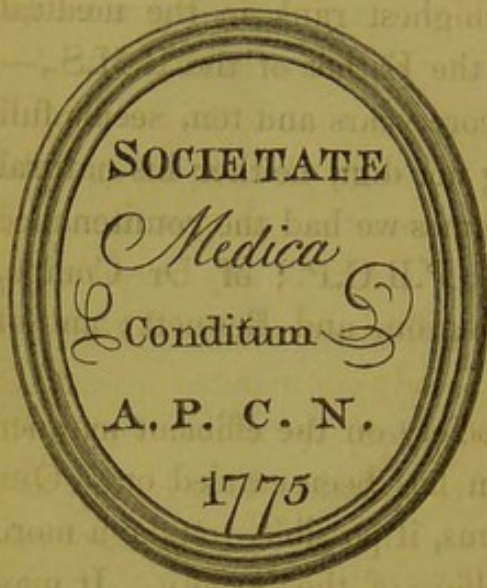
"Sacred to Medicine.  
 "Founded April 21<sup>st</sup> 1775.  
 "By Thos McImes, Mason?"

This slab has been preserved, and is built into the wall of the passage in the Society's new Hall, with a suitable inscription above it.

The foundation-stone itself,—which, as all members must be aware, was laid by the venerable Dr Cullen in 1775,—contained a glass bottle, and a large leaden case, hermetically sealed, resembling in shape and size one



by a far larger number of distinguished men than usual. Among them was the venerable Sir James Grant, C.B., who, having the Society's diploma-cases. This bottle contained only a silver medal, a wood-cut of which is annexed.



The leaden case was found to contain only two of the diplomas,—one paper, the other parchment,—originally granted to the members of the Medical Society. The following is a copy of the diploma, *verbatim et literatim* :—

“ SOCIETAS MEDICA

“ EDINBURGI. A. D. 1737. Instituta ;

“ Omnibus ad quos hæc pervenerint—

“ Sc.

“ *Ingenuus ornatissimusque Juvenis, dum Socius nobis interfuit, plurima et pulcherrima, haud minus Ingenii felicitis, quam Diligentiae insignis, Animique ad optimum quodque parati, exempla edidit ; Ideoque, ei, has literas, meritis tantum concessas, sigillo nostro munitas, Nominibusque subsignatis, discedenti, lubentissime donamus.*”

This diploma is surmounted by an urn, from which floral wreaths depend on either side ; and the spaces for signatures are divided by an Æsculapian rod, serpent, and cock. There is one circumstance which renders this ancient diploma unusually valuable and curious, viz. : the certainty of the existence or form of a diploma at this period, being unknown to any member, even to the Society's historian, Dr Stroud. This gentleman, in his valuable account of the Society, page 70, says :—“ Suitable diplomas were granted, *at least as early as April 1778*, when a communication was transmitted to the Society by Dr James Gregory, on the part of the Medical Professors, declining, in their capacity of honorary members, to annex their signatures in future, on account of the peculiar impropriety of their seeming to attest qualifications

survived the glories and honours of Waterloo for a period of thirty-seven years, rejoiced to honour us with his presence on that occasion. We trust that he may yet enjoy his well-earned laurels for many a future year; and I am certain that every one assembled here is proud that the highest rank in the medical department of the army is held by the Father of the R.M.S.,—who, at the advanced age of threescore years and ten, seems full of youthful vigour, his “eye being not dim, neither his natural force abated.” In addition to Sir James we had the countenance and presence of Professor Traill, P.R.C.P.; of Dr Combe, P.R.C.S.; of Professors Syme, Simpson, and Bennett; and of Dr G. Wilson, etc., etc.<sup>1</sup>

I must now congratulate the Society on the efficient manner in which the business of the session has been carried on. Our worthy and esteemed Treasurer seems, if possible, to take a more lively interest than ever in the welfare of the Society. It may well be asked, What situation would the Medical Society now occupy had it not been for Mr Macfarlan’s unwearied labours,

which, from non-attendance, they were unable to ascertain, and which might subsequently be submitted to their examination, with the view to the attainment of an University degree. In the following year, the preamble of the diploma having been modified in conformity with the newly-obtained Charter, *engraved plates were first adopted*, which, in 1781, were made to exclude the variable and *written* testimonials previously allowed,” etc. Now, it will be observed, from the passage quoted, that Dr Stroud has fallen into error, inasmuch as engraved plates were *not* first adopted in 1781, but were in existence before 1775; and, as the testimonials given before 1781, were *not written*, but *engraved* forms.

The parchment copy of this curious diploma is about to be framed by the Society, and preserved as a curiosity. The medal likewise is to be enshrined in a glass case, as becomes its sanctity and antiquity.

The rod and serpent, which surmounted the dome of the late Hall, are also safely in the possession of the Society. The storms of seventy-five years have effaced nearly all traces of the gilding from them; but it is proposed to regild them, and to place them as part of the cornice-work above the Presidential Chair. (A. M. A.)

<sup>1</sup> For a full report of the speeches, etc., at the annual dinner, see “Edinburgh Evening Courant,” 15th March 1853.

which have been wholly unrewarded, except by the love and esteem of its members?

To my colleagues I have to offer my best thanks for their co-operation and assistance in the work of the session; and, on their behalf, I have to render to you our hearty thanks for the invariable support you have given us in our endeavours to enforce the laws, and sustain the reputation of the Society. For my own part I feel thankful that the imperfect manner in which I have performed the duties of a President has been so well made up to the Society by the able exertions of my colleagues. I cannot pass the inaugural speeches of my fellow Presidents, without a word of remark;—such masterly productions have seldom been heard in this Society, and without offence to any, I think I may single out the address delivered by Mr Shaw, as the most admirable piece of oratory, both as regards substance and delivery, that has been heard from this chair within the memory of any one of us. In speaking of the other office-bearers, foremost amongst them stands our Curator, M. de Chaumont, who, aided principally by the indefatigable exertions of Mr Loch and Mr Scott, has rendered the classification and arrangement of our books perfect. The other onerous duties of Curator of the Library have been performed in a manner that deserve the hearty thanks and highest approbation of the Society. The important and laborious duties of Honorary Secretaries have been shared by Mr Mercer Adam and Mr Hutchinson. It is superfluous to say that these have been performed with unusual assiduity and ability.<sup>1</sup>

*The Office-Bearers for the Session 1852-53.*

*Annual Presidents.*

William Murray Dobie, M.D.      Doyle M. Shaw.

Alexander Struthers, M.D.      William Menzies Calder.

*Curator of Library.*

F. S. B. F. de Chaumont.

*Honorary Secretaries.*

A. Mercer Adam.      R. F. Hutchinson.

*Treasurer.*

J. F. Macfarlan.

The members of the Library and Finance Committees have been remarkably distinguished this session for the excellent manner in which their duties have been performed. They have done their utmost to extend and enhance the reputation of the Society. Among the changes that may be noted in the Society, I may mention that Mr Haig, at an early period of the session, resigned his situation as sub-librarian. In consideration of his services, the sum of L.30 was liberally voted by the Society for the support of his wife and family; and I am now happy to inform you that there is a prospect of his being able to obtain a comfortable livelihood in another vocation. His successor, Mr Thomson, was chosen out of a large number of candidates. He has hitherto discharged his duties very much to the satisfaction of the Society, and seems admirably qualified to hold the post of sub-librarian. There is one other circumstance which I cannot forbear mentioning, indicative, as it is, of the hopeful condition of the Society, and the enthusiastic zeal of its members. The museum, which, during the last few years had been allowed to fall into a state of chaotic confusion, is now being arranged, repaired, and put in a state of efficiency and order. This is being done solely by the members themselves; those who volunteered their services have set to work in the several departments with which they had the most familiarity; and thus the Anatomical, Pharmaceutical, Botanical, and Mineralogical departments, are all under the superintendence of different sections competent to manage them. Our former senior President, Dr Cobbold, of the University anatomical museum, is superintending the renovation of such anatomical wet preparations as are not in good condition. Our museum which contains many admirable specimens in every department, promises now to become of great utility; and its materia medica collection being now nearly complete, will be of immense service to such members as are engaged in the study of pharmacy. The accommodation for the museum in our new premises is spacious and commodious, and strikingly contrasts with the contracted and dingy chamber allotted to it in the old Hall.

I must now congratulate those of your number who, after a long period of laborious mental exertion, are returning joyfully to their distant homes, with the delightful prospect of quiet and leisure in the country, during the beautiful months of summer. Others there are to whom our congratulations are also due,—who, nothing daunted by the labours and fatigues of a winter session, both of the University and the Medical Society, propose, after a brief interval of rest and relaxation, to resume the same, or a new set of studies during the summer session. There is yet another, and pretty numerous class among the members of this Society, to whom the next few weeks afford no prospect of the intermission of laborious mental effort. To them I prefer rather to offer my sympathy than congratulations; at the same time, confidently trusting that the fact of their names being on the roll-book of the Royal Medical Society, is a certain guarantee that when the hour of trial arrives their success will be certain, and in many cases brilliant.

And now, gentlemen, I must bring these unconnected remarks to a close. I do so with feelings of no ordinary emotion, for this is the last occasion on which I shall address you from this place; the last time that I shall sit in a chair, which, through your indulgent partiality, I have had the honour to occupy for two sessions. When I consider your unmerited kindness as a body to myself, and the friendship of not a few of you which I have been so fortunate as to obtain, it is indeed a matter of painful concern to me to think that the days of my association with you are numbered,—that my office of President of this Society is virtually at an end. Let me assure you that some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent among you, and that I shall ever look back upon my connection with the Society as the most fortunate event that ever happened to me. And, in bidding many of you perhaps a last adieu, let me add, at the same time, a single word of farewell counsel. While you are pursuing with youthful ardour all that is beautiful and fascinating in science, let me urge you not to forget that our pleasures and studies—like a session of this Society—must soon come to an end; that

each one of us must one day "shuffle off this mortal coil;" and, bearing this in mind, you will find it less difficult to attend to things of even higher importance than your studies. While you devote yourselves with ardour to the high acquirements of science, cultivate also the habit of mind by which science shall lead you to the Great Eternal Cause; and be assured "you follow the dictates of the most exalted philosophy when you commit yourselves to Him as the guide of your youth; when you resign yourselves to that guidance, and ask that powerful aid, both for your conduct through this life, and your preparation for the life which is to come."

FINIS.

