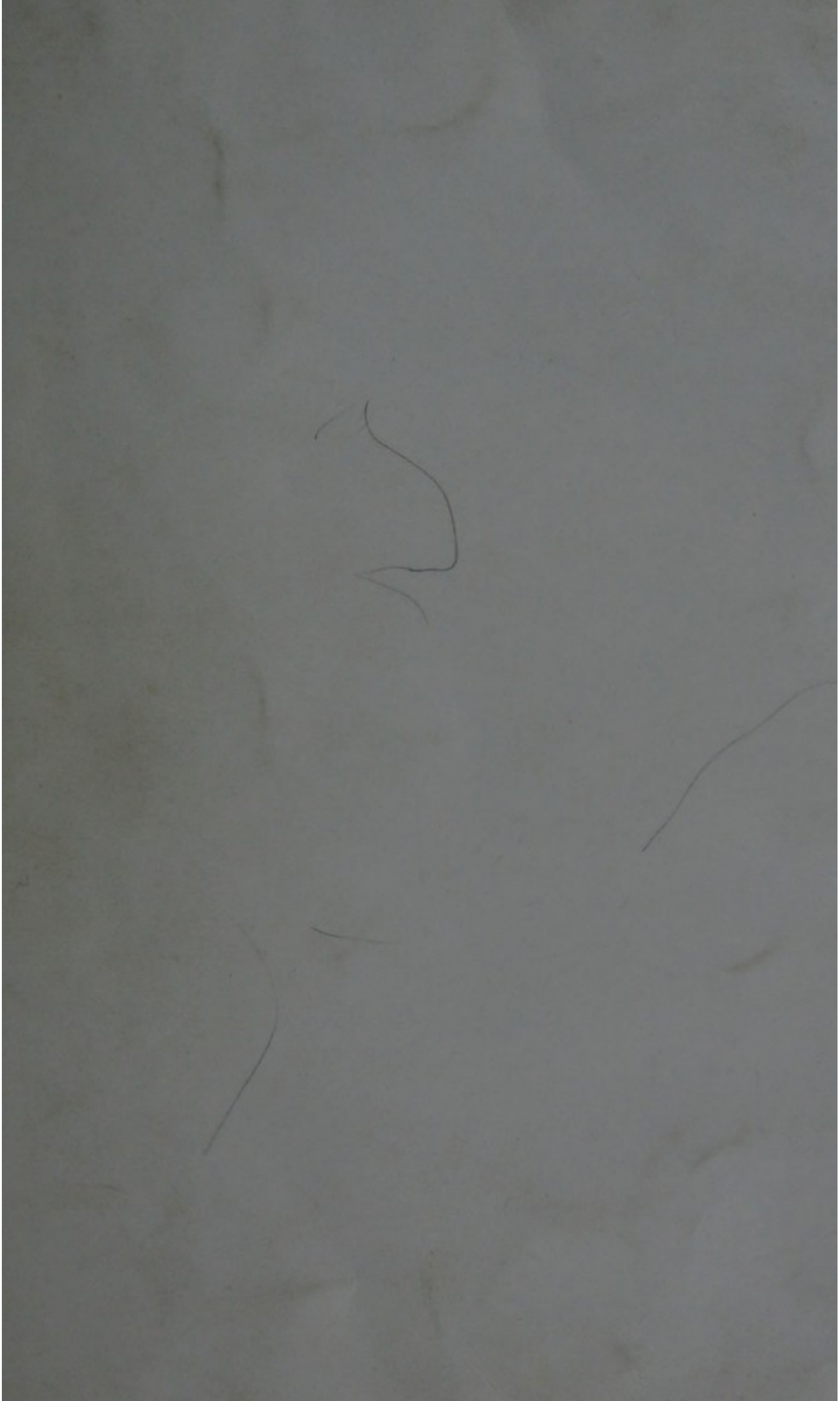
An address delivered in the theatre of the Meath Hospital, at the opening of the session of 1844-45 / by William Stokes.



AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED IN THE

THEATRE OF THE MEATH HOSPITAL,

AT THE

OPENING OF THE SESSION

OF 1844–45.

BY

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I HAVE to apologise to the Class of the Meath Hospital, for the late appearance in print of the ensuing Address. The delay has been owing to my wish, that some time should elapse between the delivering and the printing of this Lecture, so as to allow of a re-consideration of some of the topics which I have discussed.

W. S.

MERRION-SQUARE,
December 21*st*, 1844.

AN ADDRESS,

&c. &c.

It becomes my duty, as one of the Physicians of this Hospital, to open the course of medical instruction for the Session, and I earnestly request your attention for one hour, while we discuss some general topics, most fit and proper to be considered at all times, but particularly now, when we (for I hold myself a medical student as much as many, or even more than some of you) are to commence a period of study, fitting us as men, as physicians, and as soldiers, to combat error, and darkness, and disease, and death, to overcome our own ignorances, follies, and fears, and so be enabled to discharge the duties of our Profession. We cannot create life, nor can we destroy death; dust we are, and to dust we shall return; but it is given to us to gild the one, and to delay the other; and by a thorough knowledge of our Profession, and an enlarged view of its objects, and a deep sense of its responsibilities, to be the means of inconceivable good, and infinite happiness.

We may inquire, what is the actual state of the science which we are now to study? Is it in a state of uncertainty? Is it in a condition of progression? Have we exhausted the means of discovery, or is

there good hope that we are on the road to some great and comprehensive improvement? Gentlemen, these questions might be examined profitably at length, but it is impossible for us to give them more than a brief consideration. I may remind you, that in the history of Medicine we observe a succession of periods or eras, which, though they pass imperceptibly into one another, yet present the science under different aspects. The first may be called the empirical era, or that of simple experience; extending from the time of the ancient Greek physicians to the 15th century. The second is the era of speculation, extending to the commencement of anatomico-pathological study. The third, the anatomical era, is characterized by a return to the method of observation and induction, though pursued but in one direction; and the fourth, or present era, we call the Eclectic, combining the methods of the third and first, namely, the observation of the vital phenomena, as well as of those which belong to the material parts of our system.

For example—Hippocrates and his followers, necessarily ignorant of anatomy, normal or pathological—could only study the symptoms, progress, and causes of disease, and the effects of remedies; but, because they followed the method of observation and induction, they laid the foundations of medicine, the Cyclopean masonry of which two thousand years have not shaken.

We shall not dwell on the next era, or that of speculation, the dreamy period of the mechanical, chemical, and humoral systems, but pass to the third, or anatomical period, when the wide spread study of structure engaged all inquirers, and which has eventuated in the description

of almost every possible modification of our organization in health and disease; and which led men's minds into the natural error of seeing nothing, but that to which their mental gaze had been so long, so earnestly, though so usefully directed. But the final era was soon to come, for it was found that though by the anatomical physiology and pathology we had achieved much, yet, that as a system, it was incomplete and incompetent, and its pretensions too high. It was found that the great mysteries of life, growth, thought, feeling, action, were inexplicable by anatomy, and again, that there were many diseases in which there was either no organic change, or, if there was, it was a secondary effect; and finally, that the action of medicines was to be received as a simple fact, and, by anatomy at least, an unexplained fact. Hence the necessity for an eclectic system, or that which seizes on the *true*, of whatever time, or from whatever source it comes, arranges all the facts within its reach, and modestly admits its incapability of explaining many things, of the existence of which it entertains no doubt. In this era it is your privilege to commence your studies.

Let us inquire now, what is the actual state and prospects of medicine?

And first as to the state of medicine.

The history, the symptoms, the progress, and, in many instances, the combinations of the diseases of the European races have been well described, and this knowledge is accessible to all who choose to seek it.

Secondly. The great principles of treatment of the curable diseases are well laid down.

Thirdly. The methods of alleviation of suffering, and of delaying the progress of disease in the incurable affections, are well understood.

Fourthly. A great mass of knowledge exists as to special modifications of treatment for particular cases, and this advances every day.

Fifthly. Morbid anatomy has been carried so far, that our knowledge of it is nearly as perfect as that of normal anatomy.

Sixthly. The study of physical signs, in connexion, not only with symptoms, or *vital* phenomena, but also with the mechanical changes produced in each progressive or retrogressive step of disease, has been carried to a singular extent. This branch of knowledge, too, advances every day, increasing the certainty of medicine.

Seventhly. As a necessary result of these facts, our means of diagnosis have been augmented to a degree far beyond what could have been anticipated a quarter of a century ago. The world at large has as yet no proper appreciation of the powers of diagnosis, now at the command of the educated physician.

Such, then, is the state of medicine, taken as a whole, and embracing all departments of the healing art. We are presented with the gratifying spectacle of medical science in a state worthy of its great and honourable aim: the noblest art in the world, for its object is the care and the keeping *of the life of man*—of man, well called the true "Shekinah," the visible revelation of God—of man, for whom this world was created, and for whom such wonders have been done.

Two questions now arise: Has medicine, in its essential points, been brought to its greatest degree of improvement? And if not, what are the means by which we hope to advance it still further?

The instruments, so to speak, by which we have brought medicine to its present state, are:

1st. The study of the characters of disease, considered as vital phenomena.

2nd. The study of the effects of disease in disturbing the functions, and altering the mechanical conditions of organs.

3rd. The study of the physical phenomena resulting from diseased action, as contrasted with those belonging to organs in their healthy state.

4th. The study of the laws of development.

5th. The study of therapeutics.

Now, to believe that medicine has been brought to its greatest possible perfection would seem opposed to all analogy and probability. It is a science of observation and induction, but dealing with phenomena, of which some are constant, others varying, presenting new characters, and infinitely various combinations. And thus, without the addition of a single means, beside those adopted from the earliest periods, medicine may be strengthened, and her domain extended; for new facts are every day discovered by the aid of each of the instruments in question. And even were this not the case, the consolidation, arrangement, and appreciation of those already known, would constitute a great advance.

Amongst our new instruments the most important seem to be,

1st. The application of statistical investigation to medicine.

2nd. The study of animal chemistry.

3rd. The microscope, employed to examine the ultimate structure of organs, and the influence of disease on the solids and fluids.

It is certain that much has already been done by these means, and we are justified in expecting that much more will be done. But though it is probable, that even with these powerful instruments we shall still fail in solving many of the higher problems of pathology, we must not permit ourselves to go too far in prejudging their value, nor refuse any new observation they may furnish us with, no matter how trivial it may seem to be.

I have placed statistical investigation first in the list of new instruments, because more is expected from it than from the others. Great attention has been paid to statistical science, in latter times, as applied to a variety of investigations, and it has been hoped, that by its application to medicine, the science will be given a degree of certainty which was never anticipated.

The investigator who has devoted the greatest amount of time, talent, and knowledge, to medical statistics, more particularly in determining the value of symptoms and the laws of treatment, is Professor Louis; and in speaking of this accurate and unceasing labourer in the field of science, it would be superfluous to add one word to the universal commendations his

works have earned for him. I do not know whether Louis still entertains the strong opinions he at first declared as to the absolute necessity of the numerical method, for establishing the laws of pathology, or the probability of its giving us a fixed code of treatment. I have always thought, however, that he and his followers seemed to forget, that before the application of their system, medicine was already a science, containing a vast mass of ascertained facts, and of principles which they have not shaken: a science, too, ornamented by the names of some of the greatest and best men the world has ever produced.

In the present day it is admitted, that the statistical method is of great importance, as applied to many departments of medicine, which are all, however, subsidiary to the art of curing disease. For example, we determine by it the questions of the frequency of disease; its prevalence at particular times, in particular localities, and its derivation from particular causes. The influences of age, sex, habit, temperament, hereditary disposition, and occupation, are to be determined by it. The question of the prevalence of particular diseases, affecting certain of the races of mankind, one of great importance, and as yet but little investigated, is a subject for statistical inquiry. So, also, is the frequency of pathological changes; the value of symptoms as connected with them, the combinations of disease, and the efficacy of remedies.

But when we come to determine fixed rules for practice, or seek for a numerical expression of the value of this or that method of treatment, the system fails.

It has been objected, that we cannot apply numbers where we have no standard of comparison, no unit, as it were, to reckon from. This objection, however, is more specious than real, and we may pass it by; but the real difficulty is, that even if we ascertained a rule for treatment in any disease, or group of diseases, yet, that the characters of these diseases are ever changing, and that the circumstances which modify their phenomena are infinitely various. We might suppose, for the sake of argument, that we had got a fixed rule for the treatment of a particular form of fever in the year 1844, but it is almost a certainty, that the rule would not apply in 1845; nay, a month, a week, a day, may cause a change, and this too, without any obvious alteration in the history, symptoms, or pathology of the disease; in a word, without any sensible change in the circumstances which formed the basis of the calculation.

It has been well said, that the objects of the numerical investigator and of the true physician are different. The first, knowing that he cannot cure all diseases, or all cases of a particular disease, seeks for a rule which will enable him to cure the greatest number out of a given number. The object of the physician, however, should not be this, but simply, to cure the diseases of A. B. and C. as they may come before him. He will not allow himself to be tied down to any exclusive treatment; but having already all possible knowledge of the enemy he has to contend with, exercises his reason, his judgment, and his instinctive skill, in infinite modifications of treatment. I have made use of the term "instinctive skill" for want of a better one; I know

it is an objectionable term, but I may attempt to explain what I mean by it; it is that condition, or proper training of the mind for a particular class of efforts, which enables it to act rapidly and successfully towards fulfilling the object in view; and this, too, unconsciously of any effort of memory or complicated reasoning process. This power is the great desideratum, wherever we have to deal, no matter in what pursuit, or under what circumstances, with unforeseen and varying combinations of events; it is the highest, because the most useful exercise of mind. It is only to be obtained by an accurate observation and extensive experience. It is not a mere memory of all the facts of our experience, but rather a high mental condition for a particular end—the result of the knowledge of these facts, taken as a whole. It is more accessible to one man than another. Indeed there are some who seem incapable of acquiring it; hence it is that in its exercise the mind of one man shews more brightly than that of another. Were it otherwise, were medicine a mere system of fixed rules, it would be an easy pursuit, but no field for the exercise of mind—at once its difficulty and its glory. Then, it may be asked, upon what is the physician to rely in the event of his being called to contend with a disease for which there are no fixed rules of treatment? Let us suppose an epidemic of fever to arise, and that there is no rule of treatment; is he to practise at hazard, or find out the treatment by experiments in which human life may be sacrificed? By no means, for he has great principles to fall back upon. He knows that fever is a disease of the entire economy, having a tendency to spontaneous

termination at a certain period; he knows that it is not symptomatic of disease in this or that organ separately considered; nay, that it may run its course to a good or bad termination without the production of appreciable local lesion. He knows that there is a twofold source of danger; one the direct influence of the disease on the vital powers, producing a general depression, or, it may be, death; the other, the springing up of various lesions of organs, which may become causes of death, and thus he is prepared. He finds that the great point to be gained is time, for if the patient can be conducted through a certain period, the efforts of the constitution will throw off the disease; and he gains that time, on the one hand, by supporting the strength by food and stimulants, the quantity and nature of which he regulates by careful observation of their effects, and on the other hand, by meeting, removing, or at least modifying, the local irritations which spring up in the course of the disease. Thus, now leaving nature to her own efforts, now supporting, or stimulating the powers of life; now withholding, now returning to his remedies; and now interfering to remove a local irritation, or functional disturbance, he repels the danger till the critical period arrives, and the recovery of his patient, after a struggle, shews the power of medicine.

On the second of the new instruments, Animal Chemistry, I shall be very brief; it may be called the science of the day; and in all the great schools of medicine we find distinguished men occupied in its pursuit. There is no reason why, in examining the nature of life or disease, we should not apply that knowledge of

physics and chemistry which, in other sciences, has led to such good results. At all events, we are not yet warranted in giving up the attempt to solve the difficulty, and we must use the means which are at our disposal. We are not to ridicule the chemico-pathological investigations of the present day, or suppose them a return to the humoralism of past times. For now, chemistry applied to pathology is the legitimate use of one set of facts, for the elucidation of another, not, as formerly, the extinction of a fraction of truth, by a mass of unmeaning terms and baseless assumptions. Nor are we to allow the crude ideas of some investigators, men eminent in Chemistry, but not familiar with disease, to make us reject or think slightingly of this method of investigation; but rather let us use them as lessons, (if such were wanted) of the danger of hasty generalizations.

The same observations will apply to the Microscope. —A vast and almost untrodden field of investigation is now open, and morbid anatomy must be considered an imperfect science, until every morbid product, and every stage of disease which alters structure, and every organ in every case of apparently functional derangement, receive the most perfect microscopic investigation. To such of you as had the advantage of hearing the discourse of Dr. Bennett, of Edinburgh, which he delivered some time since in this city, these observations are unnecessary. I hold him up as an example to the anatomical student, and I earnestly advise all who can do so, to study under him, or at least to possess themselves of his writings. Already much has been done,

and some most curious and unexpected results have been obtained by the labours of Schoenlein, Gruby, Donne, Todd, and Bennett. I may here allude to the history and description of vegetable parasites in certain diseases of the skin, in phthisical cavities, and in the mucous membranes in typhus. The discovery also, by Dr. Bennett, of organic change in the nervous centres, when to the unassisted eye no departure from health could be seen, promises to throw light on the obscure class of the neuroses. It is to be hoped that Dr. Bennett will continue these researches, for there is not a more curious and important question in medicine than that which relates to the pathology of nervous diseases. Are they the result of organic change of the cerebro-spinal system, and, if so, of what change, or are they purely functional? No matter what the result may be; no matter whether the microscope discovers the change, or enables us to say that there is no change, the greatest benefits will follow.

I have said that even with the use of the microscope some of the more difficult points in pathology will remain unsettled. We cannot yet assent to the proposition, which has been called a law, that difference in pathological phenomena implies a difference in molecular constitution. The whole history of specific diseases is opposed to this doctrine, and it appears to me impossible, in the present state of knowledge, to explain the extraordinary phenomena of the nervous diseases, such as Mania, Epilepsy, Chorea, Tetanus, and Hysteria, without referring to an immaterial element in our system, a something beyond the reach of the anatomist,

the chemist, or microscopist. An element which, though immaterial, is yet susceptible of changes independent of, though often in connexion with those of matter. As the blood in typhoid fever has been found, after close investigation, to shew no molecular difference from that of health, a fact for which we have the authority of Donne, so the cerebro-spinal systems of the maniacal, epileptic, and hysteric patients may be found in no respect different from one another, nor from the condition of health.

But there are some who will lead you to despise these investigations, because they are novel. A class of men who, had they lived in former times, would have sneered at the discovery of the compass, and ridiculed gravitation. Gentlemen, it is easier to sneer than to labour, and whenever you meet these men, beware of them, keep them at a distance, hold no communication with them, for they are unfit companions and dangerous teachers. The worst features in the medical character are indifference and scepticism. Enthusiasm and hope are connected with the power to do, and the wish to advance; and Time, the corrector, will remove the Unfounded and strengthen the Real; but the man who will teach you to stand still, and shut your eyes, and be content with what you have of knowledge, is an enemy and must be shunned. We do not expect, no rational man expects, that this or that method of investigation will clear away all difficulties, and solve the mysterious problems involved in the consideration of vitality; but we are entitled to hope that new facts will be discovered, and, therefore, we wish well to all who labour in the search after truth.

There is another class of objectors who deserve greater consideration. They hold that these methods cannot lead us far, or add much to useful knowledge. Chemistry, say they, can only teach the laws of decomposition, and also the synthetical arrangements by which nature forms organs and secretions, but it cannot explain the communication of vitality. Again, the microscope can only lead us a little further in anatomy; it may discover changes invisible to the naked eye, but it cannot develope the nature of life, the connexion between the material and the immaterial; and, supposing every possible microscopic investigation to be completed, in health and disease, we would gain nothing but a more extended anatomy and physiology.

Now, while we admit all this, we deny the conclusion, that the investigations are not most important and desirable. It would be superfluous to impress upon you the value of any new fact, even though its bearing be not obvious, but if these objections had any weight, they would apply to all investigations whatsoever. Two great instruments have been given us for the discovery of truth, and the advancement of knowledge—our senses, and our reason. "Observation, rendered fruitful by study," is the only key to knowledge, and every new instrument must be received with gratitude. The objection, that these methods cannot discover the nature of life or of disease, is a shallow one, for, though none of the means by which medicine has been advanced, are singly competent to elucidate these questions, who would despise them on this account? But you must draw a careful distinction between the usefulness of medicine, and the

solution of these abstract and mysterious points; every thing that adds to our means of diagnosis, *improves medicine*, that is, facilitates the practice, and increases the certainty of the healing art. Chemistry and the microscope, are means of physical diagnosis, applying to the fluids, solids, and secretions of the body, and in proportion to the multiplication of physical means, and the right understanding of the connexion between the physical and the vital condition, or, in other words, between the result of disease and the disease itself, will the healing art increase in value.

I have endeavoured to shew you, that medicine has already advanced to a great degree of perfection, and the methods in question are but new applications of instruments long in our possession. We are not to conclude that medicine has come to a stand still, because certain parts of it are not well understood. It is like other branches of human knowledge, essentially progressive, and our duty is to work with the instruments we possess, feeling certain that our labours will not be in vain.

Here let me quote, and commend to you, the words of Schiller, when apostrophizing Columbus:

"Steer on, brave sailor! steer right on!—though scoffers may deride,
And the tired pilot at the helm his rudder cast aside,
Yet ever, ever westward ho! the coast must there appear;
Already to thy mental sight it rises bright and clear.
Trust to the God who guides, pursue the silent Ocean flood,—
Ev'n were it not, still there 'twould rise, to make thy surety good.
With Genius Nature joins, in everlasting covenant still:
The promises of one, the other fails not to fulfil."

It is a source of great gratification to me, that I can-

not better illustrate the effect of steady labour for the advancement of medicine, than by referring to the rise and progress of the Dublin School. If we date from the publication of the first volume of the *Dublin Hospital Reports*, we see an advance in reputation, for which there is no parallel in the history of any school of medicine whatever. Other schools enjoy, and most justly, a great reputation; but there is no other instance of a school rising to first class reputation in so short a time. Gentlemen, the history of medicine can produce nothing like it. In little more than a quarter of a century, we find the character of the Irish School of Medicine in the highest estimation over the civilized world, and the names of its numerous ornaments familiar to all who have advanced with the science. It would be a grateful task to examine in detail the labours of our countrymen, but the subject is too extensive to be properly handled now; yet I cannot refrain from mentioning the names of our most distinguished investigators. Let me instance those of Cheyne, Graves, Marsh, Townsend, Corrigan, Greene, Law, Carlile, and Haughton; of Dease, Colles, Todd, M'Dowall, Shekleton, Macartney, Crampton, Cusack, Carmichael, Adams, Hutton, Harrison, O'Ferrall, Jacob, Porter, Smith, Houston, and Wilde; of Montgomery, Collins, Beatty, Kennedy, and Churchill; and of Apjohn, Kane, Barker, Osborne, Hunt, Donovan, and Aldridge.

I might easily enlarge this list of distinguished names, but it is unnecessary; but I must remark, that as the rise of our medical school has been unassisted by any exterior circumstances, it must be taken as an

evidence of the same development of mind which has given us, in other departments, a commanding claim to respect; for, in the walks of mathematical and physical sciences, in theology, literature, and antiquarian research, we can point to contemporaneous names, of which our country may with justice boast. I might enlarge more upon this topic, but I must refrain; yet I cannot forget that I am an Irishman; every man is more or less a patriot, and loves his country for its own sake, but it is well, while we cherish this right and natural love, to feel that we are proud of her too.

The advance of the Irish School of Medicine is the more remarkable, when it is considered, that there are no public rewards for the great majority of its teachers. There are no endowed foundations, except those of the University and the School of Physic; nor are there any prizes for the encouragement of students, but those given by the teachers themselves. We have reason, however, to hope for a better state of things. The present enlightened Lord Chancellor of Ireland has set the example, by offering a munificent premium for the best essay on a particular medical subject. Let us hope that this wise and philanthropic act will lead to some public measure, calculated to foster an institution already so creditable to the country.

I cannot leave this subject, without alluding to two remarkable characteristics of the Irish School of Medicine.

The first is the practical character of its investigations. We have had but little speculative or theoretical writing; but almost all our great memoirs have been

monographs on points of Practical Medicine, Surgery, and Midwifery—or original researches in Diagnosis, and in Pathological Anatomy, as illustrative of practice. Every one of them is a positive addition to the healing art—a new instrument in the hand of the practitioner.

The second is the singular absence of controversy, and there can be nothing more commendable than this; for it matters little who is the discoverer of a new fact, if it be established, and made available for good—given to our fellow-men for their benefit, to fructify through all time. Let others, if they will, wrangle about priority of discovery, our business is to build up the temple of medicine, and we pause not to inscribe our names, which are nothing, on each separate stone we may have carried or laid.

Gentlemen, I cannot conclude this Address, without observing, that the advance of medicine, as well as that of any other profession, or branch of knowledge, must be influenced, not only by its own inherent capabilities, but also by the character and conduct of those who embark in it. There never was a time, when it was more necessary for the members of our Profession, and for those who are preparing to enter it, to consider deeply the importance of preserving its honour and respectability, and I trust that every one whom I now address, will see how much depends on their individual feeling and conduct. Our Profession does not offer power, or place, or dignities, as the world considers them, to its members. A time will come, we cannot doubt, when its public rewards will be higher, but now its only dignity must consist in its objects and its usefulness, and the cha-

racter of its members for virtue, honour, and learning. The attention of Government has been lately directed to measures calculated to influence the Profession of Medicine; and we should feel grateful for any enactment which will bring it into a more close relation with the other great institutions of our country. There are measures in contemplation, which, no one can doubt, have originated in the desire to truly serve the interests of the Public, and meet the necessities of the time. But all attempts at medical legislation will be ineffective, or at least insufficient, unless they are based on the one great principle, that the interests of the nation require that the members of the Medical Profession should have the education, the feelings, and the rank of gentlemen. In what profession is there so much of private confidence deposited? In what profession is the daily, hourly exercise of the higher qualities of the mind so called into action? or, in what pursuit are the facilities for base or interested actions so numerous or complete? Therefore, any measure that degrades it is to be reprehended; and, on the other hand, all that tends to elevate it to its proper position must be commended. The question involves the highest public interests, and comes home to every man who loves life, or who is blessed with objects of love, more dear than life itself. In the great question of medical legislation, then, it is not the interests of this or that College, or Corporation, or School, that are to be considered, but rather how the Public, from the pauper to the noble, is to be supplied with a body of medical men, who consider their calling as a Profession, and not a Trade. I am of opinion, that the restric-

tions on education, so long in force, are most injurious. There has been a trade in teaching, by which the medical student, and through him the Public, have been the victims. In various corporations the teachers are the law-givers, and fashion their rules for their own petty interests. All this, I trust, will be done away with in time.

To elevate the Profession of Medicine, or, in other words, to increase its rank and usefulness, and thus truly serve the Public, it is above all things necessary :

1st. To give a bonus for the highest general education.

2nd. To increase its public rewards.

By the first, while no one is shut out, we elevate the character of its members ; and, by the second, we hold out inducements for the sons of the better classes to enter its ranks, and to those already enrolled, to labour for distinction.

Take a young man, who is to enter the Profession, give him a liberal education ; train him by a proper discipline, such as our Universities afford, to the proper use of his reasoning powers ; place him in a generous competition with the best of his own rank ; let him be confirmed by teaching and example in the habits of a gentleman, and the duties and belief of a Christian ; and then let him enter on his medical studies, and you will do much towards ensuring his future success and public usefulness. Let him spend a certain time in the pursuit of medical knowledge, where he may best find it, and then let him be enrolled in the lists of the Profession, and, I believe, you will have a better and higher man than the present system can produce. I would place

the medical student on the same footing as the student of Arts in general, of Divinity, or of Law; and I most earnestly desire to see the terminal examination done away with. I wish to see examinations in Medicine as we have them in the undergraduate course of the Universities; but the one examination at the conclusion of the educational term, is no safeguard to the Public, and is an incalculable injury and degradation to the student. I would have our medical corporations and colleges found Fellowships and Scholarships, and Exhibitions, to be awarded, by examination, to the best and most learned of the students, or graduates, but the student should be free, and should feel, that an unstained moral character, and the spending of a certain time in the honourable and earnest acquisition of knowledge, would entitle him to be enrolled a practitioner, without the possibility of a stamp of disgrace being set upon him.

Gentlemen, I have passed many years, as a pupil and as an officer, in this Institution, and I have ever had reason to be gratified with the high and gentlemanlike conduct of the Class of the Meath Hospital, and their constant attention and success in the study of Clinical Medicine, the great object, both of the student and the practitioner. I trust it will not be my fault, or that of Dr. Lees, whom I am proud to call my colleague, as well as friend, if the same desirable state of things does not continue in the present Session.