

An address delivered in Mr. Overend's Museum, at the opening of the Sheffield School of Anatomy and Medicine, on Friday, October 17, 1828 / by Corden Thompson, M.D.

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J. A. Ward Esq.
with the Author's
best respects

AN ADDRESS,

&c. &c.

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ADDRESS
DELIVERED IN MR. OVEREND'S MUSEUM,
AT THE OPENING OF THE
SHEFFIELD SCHOOL
OF
ANATOMY AND MEDICINE,

ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1828.

BY CORDEN THOMPSON, M.D.

SHEFFIELD:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. BLACKWELL, 48, HIGH-STREET

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GENTLEMEN,

UNDER circumstances like the present, it is usual for an auditor to expect something approaching more to the nature of an eloquent appeal to his feelings, than to that of an argumentative address to his better understanding. The former, it is true, may more easily be swayed than the latter. To us, however, it is matter of congratulation, on this occasion, that we do not appear before you in the hacknied character of pleader for some charitable institution ; we have no moving prayers of

solicitation to your benevolent feelings, the existence of which we doubt not for a moment; nor have we any florid declamation, any impassioned language, or rhetorical periods to captivate the ear : we exact of you no other contribution than that of a few moments' attention. We would wish you, in fact, to throw aside the bias of feeling, since to be brief, it is your good sense alone that we seek to interest.

It were not difficult, Gentlemen, to expatiate on the advantages of education in general, to retail and enlarge upon the common-place arguments in behalf of instruction, and to be urgent in their application to our present purpose. And something probably of this nature may be expected in an Address which is professedly introductory to the opening of a Medical School. But such discourses have been so frequent of late, and the utility of illumination has been so often demonstrated, that this method of proceeding cannot be desirable, much less requisite. Indeed, if

we were to judge from appearances, people are now thoroughly convinced of the necessity of being enlightened, and the march of intellect strides so rapidly onward, that even the very infant is sent to be drilled.

We shall pursue then a different course. Our object will be to put you in possession of facts which may throw light on the nature and importance of medical education ; to shew you how our art, from its very infancy, has been happily or prejudicially influenced by its professors ; and at the same time to enumerate the various obstacles which impede the progress of science, in order that you may better appreciate the tendency of our exertions, and see their utility and importance. We wish you, also, to have just views of the nature and extent of the attainments necessary to the practitioner in medicine. And for all these purposes, nothing appears so answerable as a brief review of the mode in which our art took its rise, and of the

subsequent fluctuations which it has experienced. By many of you, probably, these subjects may never have been attentively considered; to such, therefore, they will prove the more interesting, and to all of greater utility than trite and commonplace argumentation. At the same time, Gentlemen, you will obtain a better insight to the nature of an undertaking like the present, and perceive that we are strangers neither to the difficulties which attend its execution, nor to the principles on which it ought to be conducted. To the teacher, indeed, a knowledge of the history of his profession is of the utmost importance. It enables him to give back to the times the adventitious exterior which science often assumes; to distinguish genuine, in fact, from spurious knowledge; to discern what is really new, from that which is simply revived. It points out to him the shoals and quicksands on which others have been wrecked; animates with zeal, and yet moderates that excessive indulgence in sanguine

expectation which leads to proportionate disappointment.

There cannot, we conceive, be a more striking illustration of the numerous, and to many, imperceptible obstacles, against which science has to contend, than that which is afforded by the annals of medicine. In them, we find an outline of events similar, indeed, to that which the history of every other department of knowledge furnishes, only of a bolder and more striking character. No science has undergone greater revolutions, or yields a finer exemplification of the lofty and sublime in human nature, mingled with the absurd and the ridiculous. At one time we see man dignified and elevated, then sinking into himself and becoming a fool.

The healing is a practical art, and one which owes its origin to necessity. Although disease is usually termed a preternatural state or condition, and in one

respect very justly so, yet we must remember, that it is a perfectly natural consequence of the operation of some external or internal causes on the animal frame, and viewed in this light, is common to man, and all other organic beings whatever. It consists simply in a modification, perversion, or interruption of the natural actions. The ordinary processes of nature in general are liable to these deviations, or, as they are denominated, aberrations. Attraction, for example, may modify the force of gravitation, as in the case of a falling body, deviating from the perpendicular. The eruption of a volcano, an earthquake, a whirlwind, are unusual, but not unnatural phenomena; they are the necessary results of accidental causes acting on the common laws of matter. Nature errs not,

“ From burning suns when livid deaths descend ;”

her very convulsions proceed from the steady harmony of her laws.

The manifestations of disease, therefore, were justly regarded by ancient philosophers as perfectly natural phenomena, and as such, their study was coupled with that of philosophy: “*Primoque medendi scientiæ,*” says Celsus, “*sapientiæ pars habebatur; ut et morborum curatio, et rerum naturæ contemplatio, sub iisdem auctoribus nata sit.*” A knowledge, however, of the agents which were useful in restoring the actions of the living body to their usual state, could originally be obtained only by accident, observation, or experiment. Practical medicine, in short, was at first, what it still remains among the uncivilized and barbarous, a mere crude, empirical art. The science of medicine, of course, must claim a later origin. It was not till numerous facts and observations had been collected, that anything like general theories could be framed; and where circumstances have continued adverse to the recording of such data, medicine has remained a simply conjectural art, blindly exercised by any who

imagine themselves competent to the task. Thus did the Jews, the Babylonians, and the Assyrians expose their sick on the high-ways in order to seek advice of those who might chance to pass by; a practice still common among the uncultivated nations of the East. Among the Indians and Chinese, medicine could never raise itself to the rank of a science. The Brahmans, or priests of the former, appropriate to themselves alone all medical knowledge, which passes from one generation to another, without being allowed to suffer the slightest change, every necessary information being recorded in one *sacred book*, called *Wagadasastir*, and its prescriptions, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, are unalterable. The Chinese also possess an *unerring book*, in which the art of physic is reduced to an absurdly refined sphygmology, according to which, when the name of the complaint is decided upon, the remedy is forthwith unchangeably determined. In Egypt, too, the cure of disease was in the hands of priests; here,

likewise there was a *written code* to be observed with the most scrupulous exactitude, from which, indeed, any deflexion was punishable with death. By these written laws men were at liberty to kill, but not to make alive by the exercise of reason !

Thus medicine remained among these nations perfectly stationary ; it was, in fact, simply an instrument, or means of oppression and aggrandizement in the hands of an all-grasping priesthood. It was restricted within impassable limits ; authority had placed a veto on its progress ; nature, experience, reason, common sense had nothing to do with the matter. Disease was attributed to angry deities, demons, and spirits ; against which, possibly, neither reason nor experience could suggest a better remedy than priestly incantations and superstitions. Yet Egypt, Gentlemen, was once renowned for her physicians : Cambyzes sent to King Amasis for an oculist ; the Greeks travelled

to Egypt for medical instruction ; and even Roman emperors were initiated into the Egyptian mysticisms, for we find Vespasian performing miracles in the temple of Serapis.

It were useless here, to comment on the impossibility of any rational system of physic arising under such circumstances. With the Jews also, who borrowed their medical knowledge principally from Egypt, and moreover confined its exercise to the Levites alone, the healing art could make no progress.

It was otherwise, however, with the Greeks, the true fathers of medical philosophy ; yet in Greece, as well as in other countries, it was originally encumbered with religious superstitions. But here a happy juncture of circumstances gave rise to that collection of facts and observations necessary for the groundwork of science, and to which the speculative turn of this nation was soon attracted. For investi-

gations of this kind, it is true, they seemed eminently fitted by the nature of their clime, the beauty of their physical make, their acute understanding, and correct taste.

How, or in what manner, Esculapius first obtained renown, it is immaterial for us to enquire; suffice it to state, that, in every city, temples were erected to his honour, whither the numerous victims of disease fled for relief. The priests who served in these temples, acted likewise in a medical capacity, enjoying a comfortable subsistence from the gifts and offerings of their patients, who were carefully nurtured in the belief that disease and its cure were the immediate dispensations of the deity. Of course, whatever might be the result of the means employed, neither the priest nor the divinity ever suffered in reputation. If the malady yielded, the gods were propitiated; if it continued, their anger rested still upon the sufferer, or he had improperly performed some part

of the ceremonial, and fresh offerings, or gifts, were requisite to appease divine wrath. On this proceeding, in fact, hinged the secret of cure. There was, however, this remarkable feature in the temple practice ; the history of the disease, and the *juvantia* and *lædantia*, or the agents which had acted beneficially or hurtfully, were carefully engraved on the pillars and other convenient places of the temple, or on a votive tablet, which was hung up to testify at once the gratitude of the recovered, and the goodness of the deity. Representations, also, of the diseased parts, in gold, or other materials, were made and suspended from the walls, just as we now witness them in chapels abroad. The most important of these temples in respect to medical science, were those of Cos and Cnidos. The cases recorded in the temple of Cos, were collected by Hippocrates, of whose writings the "*Coacæ prænotiones*" are the most venerable monuments of ancient medical literature. In addition to the knowledge

acquired in these places, much also was derived from the Gymnastic Schools, the establishment of which formed a prominent feature in the state policy of the Greeks and Romans. Bathing, friction, dietetics, exercise, and the treatment of wounds, formed here the principal objects of attention. The heads of these establishments were termed Gymnasiarchs. By degrees the temples and gymnasia became public resorts for the learned men of the day. Here, whilst indulging their speculations on nature at large, the attention of philosophers was drawn to the phenomena of disease, and the mode of curing it. In this manner they gradually extended the field of their researches, and became themselves *practical physicians*. Thus did the healing art, as already noticed, advance with, and form a part of philosophy, whilst the priests saw themselves compelled either to mingle in the discussions of the day, or relinquish their lucrative occupation. Even so late as the eighteenth century, the doctrines of Em-

pedocles, one of the earliest philosophers who thus cultivated medical science, were still prevalent, although broached about five hundred years before the Christian era. It was Empedocles who taught the existence of four elements ; fire, air, earth, and water. We are indebted to Anaxagoras for the corpuscular theory, which was subsequently extended and applied to medicine by his contemporary, Democritus. The doctrine of Heraclitius, that fire is the *first active principle* in nature, is also very visible in the *calidum innatum* of the Galenic school, which still retained ascendancy in the sixteenth century ; and also in other subsequent medical doctrines. Such are the circumstances under which physiological systems of medicine arose ; so early did philosophy stamp its impress on physic, and so long a period has it required to efface it.

But, of Grecian physicians, none stands so deservedly high, as the venerable Hippocrates. He was of the renowned

family of the Æsclepiades, who served in the temple at Cos ; and was born about four hundred and sixty years prior to the Christian epoch. At this period, as we have already seen, there were three distinct classes of practitioners ; priests, philosophers, and gymnasiarchs. Hippocrates belonged originally to the first class ; but, after the death of his parents, he quitted his native country in order to complete his education, and repairing to Athens, studied philosophy and rhetoric under the celebrated Gorgias, and gymnastic medicine under Herodicus. Of elevated sentiments and dignified character, after the liberal education he had enjoyed, and the information acquired during his travels, Hippocrates naturally rose superior to the trickeries of priestcraft, and wrested the practice of physic from its killing and avaricious grasp. Hence, no doubt, arose the calumnies which subsequently assailed him. He had the grand merit of placing the healing art on its true and only basis, experience. Rejecting alike the wild spe-

culations of an imaginative philosophy, and the absurd system of supernatural causes introduced by the priests, he taught, that knowledge could only be obtained by an observance of the laws of nature; that our reasonings were to be founded on facts and experience, a careful and attentive observation of natural phenomena; not on hypotheses and gratuitous assumptions. Yet, whilst the father of our art was strictly practical, he did not blunder on in unmeaning empiricism; he neither despised nor neglected the aid of philosophy; but he opposed the exclusive spirit of system, and did not permit theory to obstruct his views of nature. His express words are, that "*philosophy ought not to be neglected in the study of medicine, nor medicine in the study of philosophy.*" But, by the latter, he did not understand scholastic phraseology, metaphysical subtleties, reasonings a priori, the abstract ideas of a refined transcendentalism, or any other finely woven

"Cobwebs fit for skull

That's empty when the moon is full,"

but that kind of philosophy which rests on the simple method of induction,

It was thus, that he both taught and practised the true mode of cultivating the art of physic. But the reformation which his example and conduct were calculated to produce, was unhappily frustrated, in some measure, by his very disciples. Instead of imitating their master, whose mind had outstripped the spirit of the times, they indulged in idle veneration for his character, viewed his performances in the light of perfection, and by a natural consequence, flowing from this belief in his infallibility, they ventured neither to add to, nor subtract anything from, the doctrines which he had delivered; preferring implicit faith in his *ipse dixit*, to the light of their own reason, and defending against his opponents even the most flagrant absurdities. The purely speculative turn, moreover, which characterized the philosophy of the day, was another obstacle to the advancement of medical refor-

mation. All minds were busied about abstract notions, the causes and essence of things. Common sense was lost in the mazes of the dialectic art, and philosophers believed in nothing but the airy creations of their own fancy.

Imagining themselves in possession of a sufficient number of data, whereon to erect a regular system of medicine, the posterity of Hippocrates quitted the sure and humble path of observation to launch into a sea of theory. In this manner, arose the Dogmatic School, which failed not to support its varying, and often contradictory doctrines by every possible subtlety. The academic philosophy, which, about this period, exerted so much influence over other sciences, again introduced to our art the world of supernatural agents. Indeed, it would be difficult to say, whether the ideas of Plato, or the subsequent humoral pathology of Praxagoras, made a more durable impression on medical doctrines. Two thousand years,

in fact, have scarcely sufficed to demonstrate the error of assumptions which never had the shadow of practical proof. So slow, Gentlemen, is the progress of truth. It is a common observation, however, that men run from one extreme to another. The unsatisfactory and self-contradicting theories of the Dogmatics presently became obvious; and a few enlightened individuals endeavoured to reclaim the Hippocratic doctrines from oblivion. This attempt to establish their art on the basis of rational experience, obtained for them the appellation of Empirics; the earlier, however, of this name must be carefully distinguished from their successors, who relapsed into the gross and ignorant quackery with which every age and nation, it must be confessed, too much abounds. In modern times, both the subtleties of the Dogmatics, and the practice of the Empirics have been again revived.

From Greece, science was transplanted to Rome. Here, Asclepiades, by

discarding the incomprehensible agency of supernatural influences, and avoiding the senseless measures of the empiric, laid the foundation of a new school, termed the *Methodic*; the doctrines of which were subsequently developed at greater length by his pupil Themison. Although the Methodics were, in general, too partial to their own tenets, yet they had thus made a very considerable step in medical reform. No sooner, in fact, had a superior mind shaken off the incumbering fetters of the times, than other individuals ventured to follow the example and think for themselves. In this manner, sprung up the *Pneumatics* and *Eclectics*, who professed to reject exclusive attachment to schools, and to combine whatever was excellent in the systems of the Dogmatics, Methodics, and Empirics. The Pneumatics, however, from which circumstance their designation arose, were guilty of the inconsistency of again resorting to the doctrine of *Pneuma*; and hence became involved in theoretical subtleties. The

Eclectics remaining true to their principles, culled what was useful from all parties, without exclusive adherence to any particular sect. The work of Aretæus affords a fine instance of the advantages accruing from this plan.

But neither the splendid example of Hippocrates, the efforts of the early Empirics, the brilliant success of Asclepiades at Rome, nor the bright model of the Eclectic School, Aretæus, were capable of preserving men from the bewildering mazes of theory. A few centuries, it is true, had witnessed the rise and fall of numerous schools, and truth was, at length, apparently prevailing over error. The ascendancy, however, obtained by common sense, was of short duration. Medical science was now to wear fetters of a more durable nature. A system, in fine, sprung up, which commanded a more lasting, blind, and bigoted devotion to its dogmas, than any which has hitherto been mentioned. Galen's doctrines, to be sure,

were not original ; they were simply a prolix developement and refinement of those taught by the Dogmatics ; but so loaded with hypotheses, theories, and subtle distinctions about words and names, as to have constituted a labyrinth from which the human mind required centuries to extricate itself. At the period when Galen flourished, (about 160 A.D.) the healing art was at a low ebb of degradation, from the perpetual disputes among the followers of different schools, and the practices of a host of ignorant quacks at Rome. On all occasions, it must be acknowledged, Galen pointed to Hippocrates, whose opinions he defended even to the most minute particulars. But this was not all ; he raised thereon a superstructure embracing every defect of which theory is capable. He seems to have been imbued with the true spirit of the Dogmatics, who appealed to the writings of Hippocrates, as to a court of final decision, without ever discerning the genuine Hippocratic method of cultivating medi-

cal science. Galen had amassed an immense store of scholastic learning, under the lavish profusion of which, the simplicity of nature was altogether obscured. Hence, the Galenic knowledge has been aptly styled by the celebrated Fr. Hoffmann, "*medicina nominalis, pure scholastica, et phantasie tantum filia.*" And yet, did this fanciful system, replete with the most absurd and contradictory notions, dressed in the learned garb of the dialectic art, maintain an undisputed sway in medical schools, for the incredible period of 1,400 years. To entertain opinions different from those of Galen, was once accounted a crime, second only to that of heresy or schism. Whatever the voluminous Greek had committed to writing, and it was certainly no trifle, (his works were published at Bale, in 1538, in five thick folios,) that was medical law and gospel. No one dreamt of suspecting his authority. Explanatory commentaries, elucidations, and reconciliations of opposing passages, teemed from the prolific

pens of his disciples. What crabbed absurdities, ridiculous speculations, or refined subtleties soever were to be found in Galen, these they understood by implicit faith. Theirs, indeed, was a Babylonish dialect, a kind of fustian cut on Greek and Latin, of which the less they understood, the more they admired it. Not even Cerberus, with his three tongues, could have vented a more unintelligible jargon ; and still it served to amuse and edify mankind for so long a period. Does not this resemble some romance, or fabulous tale of other days, more than the sober details belonging to the history of science ? And now the name of the once far-famed Galen strikes the ear of the medical scholar, like the expiring vibrations of some distant echo.

To rescue physic from this miserable thralldom, required a person of no ordinary stamp and character. Whatever may have been the merits of Paracelsus, as a man, or a physician, he is certainly

worthy of celebration as the grand reformer of medical science. In spite of other mental defects, he had a few bright and correct ideas, which his restless, impatient, bold, and selfish disposition, caused to be productive of benefit to the world. And had it not been for the spirit of cabala, mysticism, and theosophy, which Paracelsus had in common with others of those times, the determined and reckless opposition which he made to the Galenic school, would doubtless have wrought an earlier and more effectual change. The spark of reform, however, once lit, continued to burn. Whilst some clung with the resolution of despair to their old and favourite ideas, others formed a regular Paracelsian sect, enriching, in the true taste of the day, the doctrines of their master, with all that the spagiric art, religious and rosicrucian superstitions, magic, witchcraft, theosophy, and cabala could invent.

A few enlightened physicians espoused the principles of the Eclectics; and as

men now began to see themselves once more freed from mental slavery, other systems soon arose, though still strongly imbued with the prevailing absurdities of the times. Such were those of Helmont and Sylvius. However, the rise of the Italian school of anatomy, founded by Vesalius, whose dissections shook the authority of Galen in this department of medical science; the discovery of the circulation of the blood by Hervey, and the taste for mathematical exactness, which had been inspired by the profound thinkers who flourished in the seventeenth century, Kepler, Descartes, Locke, Newton, Leibnitz, and Wolf, proved eventually sufficient, to counteract the influence of Jesuits and Rosicrucians.

The Iatromathematicians or Mechanists, derived their title from the application of the mathematical calculus to the laws of the living body. After indulging to excess in the dreams of fancy and superstition, men now required every thing to rest upon the

basis of rigorous and exact demonstration ; medical science was, therefore, to be reduced to the certainty of mathematical knowledge. Notwithstanding the complete failure of these endeavours to reduce medicine to an exact science, the notions of the Mechanists long prevailed, and towards the close of the eighteenth century, a formal attempt was made by Cramp to erect physiology on the basis of mathematics.

Whilst medicine was thus partaking of the improvements visible in philosophy, which daily purified itself of its former monkish and scholastic errors, it was enriched by the labours of *Sydenham*, not inaptly styled the English Hippocrates. He trod strictly in the steps of the great father of physic ; and from this period many illustrious examples of learning and talent adorned the profession, which continued to maintain a steady progress towards improvement. Anatomy had changed its aspect ; men were now aware of the ne-

cesity of becoming practically acquainted with the human structure. And though the opinions of Boerhaave exerted a most extensive influence over the medical world, yet the labours of this truly great and distinguished individual, tended, on the whole, greatly to advance the science of medicine. The spirit of practical research which pervaded philosophy, soon detected the errors of theory. A novel impulse, too, was presently given to every branch of medical literature by the genius of the immortal *Haller*, whose acuteness, depth, and comprehensiveness of mind, are not less surprising than the immensity of his literary undertakings. Men were not now to be led astray by the wild ravings of the fanatical Stahl, who converted the soul into a sort of *deus ex machina*, attributing to it the regulation and performance of every action and function of the body, even to its very production. Since the time of Haller, whose numerous discoveries, whose zeal, industry, and talents have rendered him for ever worthy of admira-

tion and imitation, enlightened men at least have learned to distinguish theory from facts ; speculative, in fine, from practical knowledge. This, Gentlemen, is the grand lesson of history, and which but few ever learn.

In the preceding outline, faintly and imperfectly sketched, of the rise and fluctuations which the healing art experienced, prior to its establishment on the true basis of rational experience, on which alone it can flourish, you will not fail to perceive how strikingly it has been influenced by the prevailing notions of the day. Neither can you omit remarking how obviously its cultivation has been promoted or retarded by the character and education of those who practised it. In the hands of the Esculapian priests, or the monks of later times, it could never rise above the level of an empirical and superstitious art. And again, though philosophers conferred an invaluable blessing on society by wresting the practice of physic from the sole posses-

sion of an ignorant and bigoted class of individuals, yet the superhuman direction which philosophy took totally impeded the progress both of medical and other sciences. With a fond partiality for the mysteries of Egypt and the prodigies of Pythagoras, the ambition of Plato induced him to step forth as a haughty professor of wisdom. Neglecting, however, the sober philosophy of Socrates, he bewildered himself in a maze of words which even the Stagyrte himself could not unfold. But here lay the evil ; wherever anything appeared incomprehensible, there intellect was supposed incapable of penetrating the conceptions of the divine philosopher, whose eagle sight it was imagined could gaze without injury on the resplendent blaze of truth which blinded common eyes. The fundamental principle of his system, received from his teacher, Heraclitus, according to whom, all “ sensible things are variable and cannot be proper objects of science,” was the most complete of all barriers to the advancement of

knowledge. Assuming the truth of this doctrine, Plato concluded that if there be any such thing as science, there must exist besides sensible objects, *permanent natures* perceptible only by the intellect. These were his divine and immutable *ideas* which he adopted from Pythagoras, as constituting a permanent intelligible world, the proper object of science; whilst with Heraclitus he regarded the fluctuating world of sense, as the object of opinions. Visible things, therefore, were deemed mere fleeting shades, and ideas the only permanent substances. So grossly may nature and reason be perverted when men lose sight of the finger posts to truth, observation and experience.

Whilst philosophers were thus lost in the airy regions of fancy, a splendid example was given to the world in the illustrious father of our profession, who endeavoured to rescue it from a bondage little inferior to that which it suffered under the priests. The practical sense of Hip-

pocrates, however, seems not to have been apprehended by the speculative genius of the times. He appears, indeed, to have stood in relation to his contemporaries as the child of precocious intellect does to its fellows.

When letters revived, after the barbarous ignorance of the middle ages, medicine again underwent a total change; and although systems and theories tinctured with the philosophy or religious notions of the day have arisen and impeded the advancement of our art, yet they have not exerted any permanent influence over it. Even the reappearance of Platonism, exemplars, eternal patterns, archetypes and so forth, have gained comparatively little attention. Every where the cultivation of anatomy, human and comparative, healthy and morbid, is pursued with a zeal and ardour hitherto unknown; the impulse, indeed, which has been given by the French to pathological researches, or the investigation of diseased structure, and

the works which that nation has produced on the subject will form an era in the future history of medical knowledge. The study of nature, too, is becoming an object of more general interest; and to this, the numerous discoveries made by the moderns in chemistry and natural history, have not a little contributed. The former, indeed, once threatened to draw medicine into its vortex: but mind was too practically biassed to continue the slave of chemico-medical theories. Yet so long has mankind been the dupe of opinion; so long have men worshipped as truths, the creations of their own sickly imaginations; and so incapable are they of perceiving or throwing aside the errors inculcated during youth, and which, with mature years, become more inveterately rooted in the mind, that several important branches of the profession are yet in their infancy, the practical cultivation of them having been superseded by theoretical speculation.

The present, however, is an age dis-

tinguished for its improvements. Rich in novel inventions, bold in speculation, fertile in devising means for the melioration of our species, and prompt in carrying them into execution, men have infused into social life a sort of republican energy, which has at length aroused the efforts even of a dormant aristocracy. Although, when viewed philosophically, it is clear that the grand business of man has always been the education of himself and his fellows, yet the importance of properly conducting that education was never, perhaps, so thoroughly and generally felt as at present. The liberal and enlightened views of sound philosophy, and even the dictates of common sense, have ever been cabined, cribbed in, and confined by the narrow minded and intolerant views of schools and sects, and by the prevailing prejudices of the times. Of this we have presented abundant illustration ; nor must we imagine that these causes have now ceased to operate, although the general diffusion of information is doing much to counteract

their effects. The means of obtaining elementary instruction in all departments of knowledge, have been multiplied and diversified, it is true, to an astonishing degree. The most self-contented and complacent of such as are loud and clamorous in their praises of "good olden times," who never venture to harbour a thought that the attainments of their forefathers may be surpassed, or the state of things left by them amended and reformed, are compelled either to assume a cloak of affected contempt, or to yield to the tide of innovation and improvement. "Men," says the immortal dramatist, "are as the time is ;" but the spirit of the times, is the spirit of man. The stamp or impress imparted to the former is the sensible or obvious expression of the latter. It is thought which gives to time its distinguishing features ; thought, not of the vulgar and impressible horde, but of the gifted and talented few. Hence the dangers which attend its flowing in a wrong direction.

Now, fortunately, the cultivators of every science are exerting themselves to extend its utility, and to diffuse a general interest for the acquirement of natural knowledge. Candour and liberality are seen to prevail over prejudice and interest : freedom from the dogmas of schools and an ardent desire for improvement supplant attachment to ancient systems and faith in the "ipse dixit" of masters. The spirit of knowledge is abroad ; the enclosures of man no longer limit its progress ; convents have for ages ceased to be the receptacles of books ; priests and monks the sole depositaries of learning. Now, too, the privileged walk of an academy is not the only precinct sacred to philosophy ; colleges and universities are not the sole fountains of instruction.

Science, like its possessor man, who freely ranges over the surface of the globe, cannot be confined within artificial barriers ; it outsteps the landmarks of schools,

and disdaining local boundaries, spreads like a rich overflowing stream on every side, flooding away the refuse of prejudices, and fertilizing with its passing waters even the most uncultivated spots. Knowledge, in brief, has ceased to be the monopoly of a few, the authority of name and opinion wanes, and the aristocracy of letters assumes the form of a republic. Doubtless there will always be found forts to ensconce absurdity and ignorance; there will always exist characters who either designedly, or unwittingly, render the avenues to truth perplexing and impervious. So long, too, as education remains stationary, so long as it ceases to march with the progressive improvements in philosophy and science, persons will never fail to be found whose antiquated habits of thought, whose mental discipline and notions are such as will not permit them to relinquish the path trodden by their ancestors. From a sound system of instruction alone can we expect lasting and beneficial results.

But whilst it would indicate blindness, or strange perverseness, not to acknowledge, in many instances, the visible decline of prejudices, the common fastnesses of ignorance and design ; and whilst, on the other hand, we cannot fail to perceive an increased liberality of opinion, as well as the practical direction which literary efforts assume, yet no sanguine hopes are to be entertained as to the early and general prevalence of rational views, because the true method of cultivating knowledge has been too long neglected.

All philosophy must be founded in nature ; the former in fact, is simply an exposition of the laws relating to the latter, and these are not discoverable by crude cogitations of the brain, but by observation and experience. Instead, however, of having had recourse to these guides ; instead of having permitted nature to dictate laws to them, metaphysicians have proceeded to work with preconceived or traditional opinions, agreeably to

which they have thought it necessary to explain all phenomena, thus moulding nature to a shape of their own inventing. But as she was naturally often repugnant to this violent proceeding, and frequent exceptions occurred, where no possible wresting of facts succeeded, then by a sort of juggling abuse of the maxim, "*exceptio probat regulam*," the truth of their premises was made to appear. These writers also have, in general, confounded mind or intellect with the nobler and immaterial part of man, the *soul*, making the latter subject to disease and aberration; a doctrine which to us, at least, appears not only derogatory to human dignity, but contrary to the uniform tenor of Christianity.

In this manner, the greatest absurdities have been broached, eternal disputes maintained, and words or ideas made of more consequence than things. It is but very lately that a more rational system of

investigating the laws and nature of mind has been entered upon ; its operations, too, are still confined. Are we, then, at a loss to account for the slow progress of science ? If we take a view of the anatomical and physiological relations of man, in respect to his fellows and the creation at large ; if we consider his mental structure, its intimate connexion with the body, and the numerous circumstances which regulate and modify the state of the latter from its earliest developement ; if, further, we consult the records of history or the results of our own observation ; and finally, if we glance at mankind in its individual or collective capacity, as embracing a sect, a party, or a state, we shall soon perceive the limited nature of that Being whose very presumption is often mistaken for a divine attribute ; we shall quickly discover boundaries which he would but cannot franchise ; heights to him insurmountable, imperfections which he cannot correct, defects against

which he has no remedy. Man is a finite being ;

“ His time a moment and a point his space.”

The organizing forces concerned in his production, are subjected to a threefold limitation. In the first place, in respect to the nature or kind of action ; they must produce a certain specific substance or organic matter conformable to the nature of the individual. Secondly, in reference to space ; their intensity must be such as to produce a being of definite form and proportions. Thirdly, in regard to time or duration ; gradual developement and decay are restricted within determinate and regular periods.

Simple as these truths seem, they are pregnant with important results. They teach us that the perfection at which some imagine us capable of arriving, is a doctrine at variance with nature ; it is a beau ideal which the limitation of the organizing

forces just mentioned prevent us from attaining. We may indeed modify the operation of these powers to some extent, but there is no proceeding beyond a certain point. The propositions which have been made for the beautifying and perfecting of our species, are no doubt founded on sound and rational views ; their utility, in fact, is demonstrated both by the practice of the ancients, and daily experience in the animal creation ; nor can there be a question, that much might still be done in this respect to improve both the physical and moral condition of man. Before this can be effected, however, the principles of a sane physiology must be permitted to regulate the education of youth.

No improvement can be expected from a system which regards every man as capable of the same degree and kind of excellence, and subjects each, therefore, to the same routine of discipline. The dispositions and faculties of men are as various

as the hues painted on the leaves of the forest. We do not all possess the same mental organization, the same powers of reflection and perception ; in short, we enjoy a similar, but not an identical, constitution. One and the same object will not cause one and the same impression on every individual. The narration of an interesting event, or the reading of an affecting passage, will not produce precisely the same effect on any two persons. “Quot homines tot sententiæ.” Natural susceptibility and original conformation will be everything here in the first instance : then come their modifications from cultivation, neglect, associations, habits, and other circumstances. The state of the body, too, modifies feeling, obtunding or rendering sensibility more acute ; so that the same cause does not constantly and invariably excite the same feelings, thoughts, or emotions in one and the same individual at different times. Were all *identically* constituted and affected by what they heard, saw, or felt, the conflict

of opinion, and the discords of society would, nay must, inevitably cease. The testimony of history would be one and indivisible; then, too, indeed we might behold the fair personage of truth in some more palpable form than at present.

Things, however, must be taken as they are, and not as we might fancy, or wish them. In fact, on this original difference of constitution, and variation in the effects of impressions, the excellence of the Baconian philosophy ultimately rests. “*Non temere credere, nervi sunt sapientiæ*” was the language of the Roman philosopher, and cannot be too strictly observed in all scientific pursuits.

Thus, Gentlemen, you see that a grand obstruction to the diffusion of knowledge and mental cultivation resides in the nature and constitution of men themselves, which renders every attempt to reduce them to sameness of opinion as abortive as it is in reality absurd. The

exercise of the faculties, too, is a tedious and fatiguing process, that makes the acquisition of information a labour; nor when once acquired can it be retained without unremitting exertion. The intensity of impressions wears away; in other terms, memory fails us, and former impressions demand renewal. Fresh stores of knowledge must also at the same time be laid up. All this is performed with greater difficulty than manual labour; the instruments or organs are of a finer and more delicate texture, and fatigue is sooner induced. Now, as we naturally seek to avoid painful or disagreeable sensations, and incline to those which are pleasurable, some additional stimulus is required to incite us to activity. This we find in ambition, necessity, and a highly cultivated state of society. But for these, natural inertia and aversion to toil, would often lead men to pass their lives in a state of placid and undisturbed repose, like the poor supine Hottentots who seem practical followers of those ancient philosophers

that maintained inaction to constitute the chief delight of existence.

The extreme reluctance with which men part with preconceived notions, or the doctrines inculcated during youth, how erroneous so-ever they be, has already been pointed out. Mental, like physical habits, cling to us in spite of ourselves ; and hence the great importance of giving them an early and proper direction, and of obviating the contracting influence of local relations. Every one, we imagine, must be aware of the retarding operation on mental cultivation, exerted by local circumstances ; such as occupation, society, political or religious parties, the authority of names, the bias of interested feelings, necessity, and confined means.

Men's pleasures, hopes, and fears vary according to their age and corporeal organization ; yet all pursue one and the same end, happiness or enjoyment. But as the

capability for the latter varies in different individuals, agreeably to the adage “*de gustibus non est disputandum*,” it happens that interests clash. And as one man is more eager than another in the pursuit of any particular object which may seem to him a desideratum, his selfishness, as it is termed, becomes intolerable to another with whose views, interests, pleasures, or prejudices it may interfere. Hence the bustling and thronging strife of existence; the desire to obtain and accumulate the means of procuring enjoyments, and independence of those around us.

Here, then, you have other obstacles to the progress of illumination, and such as it is not easy to overcome. Add to all the preceding, the dulness or hebetude common to the mass of our species, for it is in vain to disguise it, and which, when joined to the effects of habit, constitutes what Cicero terms the “*Magna tarditas hominum* ;” take into consideration, further, the effects of political power when exerted over the mind

of the subject, as at this moment is well exemplified in the Austrian States; lastly, call to recollection the impeding influence of religious bigotry, amply illustrated in the preceding part of this discourse, and but too cruelly manifested in the fate of Galileo, the roastings of heretics, and still more recently the fanatical persecutions of Priestly, and you will perceive abundant obstructions to the progress of science and the general spread of knowledge. Men are still men, and some there are even now who encourage ignorance, would fain close up the fountains of instruction, or turn them into one narrow and confined channel.

It is of great importance that a student should be aware of the difficulties he has to contend with in cultivating his mind, of the dangerous influence of temporary relations, the proper method of conducting his studies, and the extent of the acquirements demanded of him. You will agree with me no doubt, that if there

be a profession, of which the members ought preeminently to receive a liberal and enlightened education, it is that of Physic. There is none which is so immediately and closely connected with the well-being and comforts of men during the period of their natural existence; none in whose members society ought to possess a higher degree of confidence and esteem. Neither riches nor friends can assuage the pains of disease. Deprived of health, men vegetate or breathe a sickly atmosphere of morbid hallucinations, but life has no enjoyment, not having that which imparts delight to existence. If health, Gentlemen, be prizeable at so high a rate, the education of those to whom its care is intrusted, ought certainly to form an object of no trifling solicitude. It is, in fact, when viewed in connection with disease, that the utility and importance of the healing art become fully apparent. Coeval with the origin of man, the actions of whose frame are liable to aberration from a thousand causes, the practice of

physic has ever been an indispensable requisite even amongst the rudest and most barbarous of our species. But it is of still higher interest and importance in civilized and polished nations, where luxurious refinements, and the arbitrary and often absurd regulations of society, by multiplying the sources of disease, demand at the same time increased means of succour and obviatio*n*. Here, too, disease assumes less distinguishing characters ; appears under more protiform shapes, and requires greater skill and judgment in detection. It is not on the bed of sickness that the officious kindness of well-meaning friends can avail ; it is not there that men seek the assistance of good-natured ignorance, but for the discernment of an impartial understanding. There is no case in which it is so necessary for a man to possess freedom from prejudices and systematic hankerings, singleness of vision, acuteness of perception, and coolness of thought, as at the bedside of a patient. Ailments are not cured

by the tenets of schools and sects, but by the judicious prescriptions of a mind guided by observation, and unfettered by the contracting influence of prevailing systems.

But this kind of mental culture is not the result of mere school-boy tuition ; it requires a variety and extent of information, and a process of discipline that few people are aware of. It has been well observed, that there are some branches of study so confined within themselves, and so capable of accurate deduction and precise definition as to be completely independent of all others, and to require the exercise of a clear apprehension and correct memory only for their pursuit. Other departments, however, defy all attempts to subject them to any didactic method, and require the exercise of a peculiar address, a judgment, or a tact, which can only be formed by indirect means. Now, physic is one of these departments in which there is a frequent necessity for an incommunicable

faculty of judgment, a sagacity which, from extending beyond the simple combination of what can be taught by precept, has been termed transcendental. And there is no other way of cultivating these powers than by a much more extensive range of elementary study than appears to a common and superficial observer, to be in any way connected with the immediate objects of the profession.

One can scarcely avoid feeling confused, says one of the most distinguished and enlightened physicians of Germany, on taking a survey of the immense variety of knowledge which the accomplished practitioner ought to possess. Not to detain you by enumerating natural qualifications, some of which have already been hinted at, and which cannot be imparted by a teacher, let us take a rapid glance at the course of discipline through which a liberally educated man ought to pass. Besides the usual classical education, as it is termed, the

student must devote himself to mathematical reading, not in order to make himself a mathematician, to use the language of Mr. Locke, so much as teach him how to reason. From the pure he will proceed to the mixed mathematics, which leads him to the study of mechanics, hydrostatics, and in a word, what is denominated natural philosophy. He must moreover acquire the French, German, and Italian languages; destitute of the two former, indeed, he can make no pretensions to medical scholarship, nor even to a complete acquaintance with the improvements which are daily making in his profession. These are indispensable accessory acquirements.

Next come those departments of science which stand more immediately in connexion with medicine, as botany and chemistry; then the study of anatomy, physiology, surgery, the obstetric art, materia medica, and the theory and practice of physic. These various branches of knowledge have

still further subdivisions ; anatomy, for example, is divided into human and comparative, healthy and morbid ; materia medica embraces dietetics, toxicology, and so forth ; practical medicine includes general pathology, semiology, medical jurisprudence, hygiene, and so on. All these must be cultivated with more or less minuteness.

Have we not here, Gentlemen, scope for the exertion of genius, an ample field for the occupation of industry and talent ? The enlightened practitioner moreover must make himself acquainted with the philosophical notions and popular prejudices of the day, in order to guard himself against their undue influence, to enable him to stand aloof, the calm but not idle spectator of events.

You have seen how adherence to certain dogmas has contracted and narrowed the minds of medical men ; you have seen how prepossession in favour of

systems and theories has led them into the greatest absurdities, obstructed their practical usefulness, and impeded the progress of science; you have witnessed, further, the deforming effects of superstition and ignorance, in times comparatively modern. These lets and hindrances perpetually beset us. They plead urgently for an extended and liberal education of professional men. We are apt to pass through life, surrounded by a certain world of ideas, notions, or opinions, which have been inculcated during youth, stringing them together in different ways, without ever dreaming they may be utterly erroneous, or attempting to make fresh additions to them. Men plod along, not indeed without considerable exertion, perhaps, but in a manner resembling that of the horse at plough, which, when once put into the furrow, pursues it to the end. Hence, Gentlemen, as there is nothing which so effectually destroys the evil consequences resulting from habit and early associations; nothing which so much tends to enlarge

the sphere of ideas, to dissipate partiality for customs, opinions, and men ; nothing in fine, which renders the mind so superior to vulgar prejudices, and open to conviction and improvement as the visiting of foreign countries, travelling has ever been justly looked upon as the best means of finishing a medical education.

Such is an outline of a liberal and enlightened course of study ; not that every one, under present circumstances, has either the means or power to accomplish all that is here laid down. Many enter the profession without being aware either of the difficulties through which they must pass, or of the laborious and toilsome studies necessary to be undergone. Parents look upon it as a sort of trade to which any brainless youth may be brought up ; they dream nothing about previous education ; they never heard how necessary a natural aptness to observe, is to the medical man ; to them one individual seems as fit for the business as another. Such are the effects

of our present mental philosophy. Once embarked, however, in the profession, it is the duty of every one to aim at the highest possible degree of attainment. In that manner alone, can he sustain the dignity of his character, or elevate himself to distinction. In every instance, almost without exception, where men have attained eminence in the healing art, they have possessed varied and extensive acquirements.

We are quite aware that a man may go through the common routine of professional duties, with few or no accessory attainments; but, Gentlemen, we also know that he cannot be an enlightened and scientific practitioner. It is one thing to pass down the mingled stream of existence; and another to secure an honourable place of distinction. "*Medicini enim nomine sunt multi, re ipsa perpauci.*"

The veriest quack may occasionally obtain ephemeral reputation with a certain

class of society, but whatever variations result from the uncertain operation of moral causes, it must necessarily be assumed as a general truth, without which all earthly motives for exertion would be annihilated, that every man's chance of success in his profession, will, in some measure, be proportionate to his merits and his talents. To increase the one, therefore, and cultivate the other in as high a degree as possible, ought to constitute the aim and ambition of the student, who cannot have too deeply engraved on his mind the answer of an illustrious Grecian philosopher, when asked how long he intended to be a scholar? "As long" was the reply, "as I am not ashamed to grow wiser and better!"

Unless we greatly err, it will now be manifest, that the due cultivation of medicine exacts a stricter discipline of mind, infinitely more varied instruction, and greater perseverance and industry, than the generality of men imagine. Does

there, then, need a better apology for establishing the present School of Anatomy and Medicine? To promote medical science, by being useful in the grand business of education, is the object which we here propose, and if the views already expounded to you be correct, ours is not an unimportant labour. Every facility which is afforded for instruction, especially in a science like that of medicine, embracing so many departments of knowledge, must be deemed of consequence. Medical science unfortunately, has not simply to contend against obstacles which impede the progress of knowledge in general, but it labours under other disadvantages peculiar to itself.

The study of practical anatomy is attended with expense, difficulty, and even danger. The prejudices of the vulgar, and of others, from whom one might expect better things, are too notorious to need repetition. In them we have another instance of the glaring folly of men who

lay claim to reason and discernment. Anatomy, to the medical man, is every thing; it is the very foundation stone on which the entire superstructure of his knowledge rests; deprived of its light he must for ever blunder on in the dark. The propriety and absolute necessity of studying it are questioned by no one. And yet, not only every garrulous gossip, but also soi-disant wise man, is perpetually prating about the horror of dissection, shrugging up the shoulder, and regarding the practical anatomist rather as an unfeeling monster than a cultivator of science. If moreover, some witless scrape-all for the weekly press, does but stumble on anything relating to this subject, with what eager haste does he make known the *horrible discovery*, as such articles are commonly headed. To an enlightened mind, however, there cannot be anything more horrible than this foolish procedure, which serves merely to impede the advance of science, and to excite or nurture disgust.

Such accounts should never be suffered to meet the public eye. It is treating the profession in a manner resembling that in which the Egyptians formerly behaved towards a class of individuals engaged in the art of embalming. The Paraschistes, or person who cut open the abdomen, was obliged to make his escape immediately after performing the operation, in order to avoid a shower of stones about his head. Thus, society is clamant for well educated practitioners, but uses every effort to prevent them from becoming so. A more absurd, ungrateful, or thankless proceeding can scarcely be imagined. History, however, forbids our astonishment. Difficulties can be overcome by exertion alone ; yet how willing so ever a student may be to perfect himself in this first and most important department of his profession, there are few cases in which it lies within his power. It is a primary object of our undertaking to further the acquisition of anatomical knowledge ; to remove as much as possible the

the obstructions which, in this respect, the pupil has to contend against on his first entering upon the career of physic. Wherever there exists a thirst for knowledge, the simple gratification of that thirst will always prove an effective stimulus to labour, provided suitable means are at command. Now it is precisely with a view of supplying such means that this establishment has been founded. And it is doubly important when we consider the disadvantages under which the young pupil labours from the mode of education now prevalent. Is it not grievous, Gentlemen, to see five years, precious and irrevocable years, spent in learning to compound a few drugs? Is it not matter of regret, to observe habits of slothfulness acquired at the same time, which are never afterwards lost? Is it not, in a word, lamentable to think, during those years in which the mind is peculiarly susceptible of taking a proper bias, in which it is still the "*udum et molle lutum*," the clay in the hands of the

potter, capable of assuming the most beautiful forms, that it should lie neglected like the brute matter of creation? Or, that like some uncultivated garden, it should teem with rank and fruitless weeds? By schools of this nature alone can these evils be remedied.

There are few men who have not occasion to lament either the loss of time, or the want of proper direction in their studies, necessarily attendant on the present state of things. We wish, Gentlemen, to prevent the former, and as far as we are able to assist in the latter. Need we attempt to shew how irretrievable a loss of time must be to one who has so ample a field of literature to compass? Can it be necessary to dwell on the advantages accruing to the pupil from an early initiation into the principles of his profession? Advantages of the highest moment, and calculated to stamp the character of his future years? It is not one or two occasional lessons of instruction; not casual

and disconnected lectures on particular subjects, that can benefit the young enquirer, but a regular system of tuition, and that, Gentlemen, we purpose following in this school. Utility, in fine, is the grand object which we have in view, not enolument or popular applause ; not an artificial reputation or invidious distinction. Our intention is to facilitate the first approaches of youth to science, to render those years in the life of a medical pupil, which are usually frittered away in trifles, productive of important and lasting results. We are well assured that the only honour derivable from our exertions will be proportionate to the advantages reaped by the student, the benefit of the latter, constitutes the success of the teacher. We aim, then, at being successful ; practical utility will form our cynosure ; the point towards which our efforts will be directed. And as there is no better method of exciting the interest and keeping up the attention of the pupil, and at the same time teaching him to think and

reason for himself, than frequent examinations, the catechetical mode of instruction will constitute a prominent part of our duty.

Ponder for a moment on the advantages offered by a provincial school of medicine, not simply to such as have left the classical seminary, and are already engaged in the profession, but to those who, though ultimately intended for it, are still occupied in making preliminary acquirements. An opportunity is thus offered the latter of pursuing at the same time the elementary branches of medical science, and being thus early acquainted with the principles of the art which they are subsequently to practise. And as solid acquisitions are only attainable by frequent repetition of the same thing, this is an advantage of the highest moment. Knowledge is thus acquired in an almost imperceptible manner, and the mind becomes habituated to medical reasonings.

The schools which were once scattered through the cities of Greece by private exertion, sought no other patronage than that which was secured to them by their worth. On the same footing must ours rest with the public, on which we have no demands to make but those of candour and impartiality.

Our object, Gentlemen, in tracing the rise and varying fate of medicine, and in developing the obstructions to science, has been to evince the incredible slowness with which our art has advanced, owing to causes inherent in man himself, and to defects in education ; to illustrate practically the necessity of extensive attainments to the medical practitioner, if he is to benefit science or be successful in his career ; and finally, to convince you that there is still ample room for exertion, and that medical philosophy is not promoted by the reputation of sects, but by the study and observation of nature. People often

imagine the pitch of cultivation at which we have arrived to be so high, our knowledge so vastly great, that little or nothing remains for us to do. Our ancestors, say they, were as wise and learned as we; what need we improvements and innovations for which they saw no necessity? All things went on well enough with them, why not, then, with us? But, Gentlemen, when we look into history, we find that all things have not gone on well; that ages have received distinction according as they excelled in improving upon the plans of their predecessors. We find that the very learning of our forefathers has been made subservient to the propagation of error, and that we are but just emerging from a state of ignorance in many most important departments of knowledge. History teaches us that a proper direction of early study is of the most vital consequence. At a time when it was the general fashion for men to resort to Egypt for instruction, Hippocrates, tutored from his youth to the observance

of nature, turned his back on the mysticism of that country. He studied the polite literature of the day, but he did not enter the cast of priests, to learn its medical incantations. Of what mighty influence was this on his future progress in science ! Remaining true to observation, and availing himself of the experience of others, he left behind him a work which will ever stand the imperishable monument of his fame.

Look now for a moment at the pernicious influence exerted by an Egyptian education on the other medical philosophers of that day, and you will at once perceive the force of my remarks. They might be further illustrated by the example of Erasistratus, whose splendid talents received so unhappy a bias from the doctrines in which he was educated. And surely it is not necessary to call to your minds the baneful effects which, in modern times, flowed from an implicit adoption of the Brunonian tenets.

As teachers, Gentlemen, we shall always endeavour to guard the pupil against these consequences ; we shall seek to imbue his mind with an eclectic love of truth, where and by whomsoever taught ; pointing on all occasions to the unerring guides, observation and experience. It will be our duty, in fine, to divest science of its adventitious clothing, to strip off the garb that belongs to the spirit of the times, to initiate the student into the true principles of his profession, and where these fail, not to imbue his mind with false or hypothetical ones, but to expound the proper mode of investigating them.

After what has been said, it cannot, we conceive, for a moment be requisite to trespass longer on your time, by advocating an establishment, of which every liberal and candid mind must approve. We shall not here descend to anticipate the insinuations of the captious objector, suffice it to state, such are the arrangements which have been made, such the

facilities for improvement that will be enjoyed by the pupil ; so great is the wish of my colleagues and myself to assist him in acquiring information, and such, briefly, are our feelings on the occasion, that we hesitate not to adopt in our own defence, the language of the eloquent Roman, “qua quidem in causa et benevolos objurgatores placare, et invidos vituperatores confutare possumus, ut et alteros reprehendisse pæniteat, alteri didicisse se gaudeant. Nam qui admonent amice, docendi sunt ; qui inimice insectantur, repellendi.”

Before we separate, however, you will permit me, as an individual at least, to testify my admiration of the spirit, the energy, and the enlightened views of the individual under whose roof we are now assembled, the *founder of the Sheffield School of Anatomy and Medicine*. It is the first which has ever been established, or indeed which has ever been seriously attempted to be established in this town ; and it has received the sanction of the Court of Ex-

aminers of Apothecaries' Hall. It claims attention, therefore, not simply in regard to the importance of the ends which it seeks to accomplish, but likewise as an event which marks the spirit of the times. And though, Gentlemen, as an innovation, we might expect that envy would detract from its character, or prejudice seek to obstruct its rise, yet who that views with each of you this ample and spacious erection for objects of natural science, that surveys the conveniences and requisites of every description both for teacher and pupil, can refrain from expressing approbation and applause? Where, Gentlemen, it may confidently be asked, will you find in modern times, a corresponding example of individual exertion and personal sacrifice? Where, a more meritorious and laudable undertaking; or one which reflects greater credit and honour on the liberal and enterprising spirit of improvement from which it flowed? The candid and enlightened person, the admirer of improvements, the impartial approver of

whatever is excellent, though it should not emanate from himself, will doubtless hail this Medical Academy, with wishes for its prosperity, and those feelings of satisfaction, that distinguish the lover of science from the narrow minded follower of a party. You require not to be informed that the time, the labour, and the expense of collecting a museum of this kind, are not matters of a light and trifling nature. Would that so noble an example of ardour in the pursuit of science, possessed on this occasion, a more able and eloquent eulogist ! Whatever may be the success of those who teach in this school, the merits of its founder remain still the same ; no invidious ostracism of public illiberality can blot them from the history of your town.

In conclusion, we would impress on the mind of the student the language of an ancient Greek, “ the practice of physic is the most noble of all arts ;” and “ the philosophic practitioner a truly divine

character." Let the pupil, then, aim at this distinction, this dignity, and nobility of character ; nor deem it sufficient to follow the steps of the plodding routinier, whose merits, like those of the mere empiric, are measured solely by his purse.

Finally, with reference to the conjoint labours of my colleagues and myself, in this Medical Academy, we would address all in the words of the aspiring poet of old,

" ADESTE, FAVETE."

FINIS.

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