

From hospital-ward to consulting-room, with notes by the way : a medical autobiography / By a graduate of the London University.

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A Medical Autobiography.



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FROM HOSPITAL-WARD TO CONSULTING-ROOM.



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FROM HOSPITAL-WARD
TO
CONSULTING-ROOM

WITH NOTES BY THE WAY;

A Medical Autobiography.

BY
A GRADUATE OF THE LONDON UNIVERSITY.

“Ignavis precibus fortuna repugnat.”—OVID

LONDON
H. K. LEWIS, 136 GOWER STREET, W.C.

1893

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FROM HOSPITAL-WARD TO CONSULTING-ROOM.

I PURPOSE in the following pages to describe the career of a medical student, who by dint of industry and perseverance, made his way to the highest place in his profession. I shall also go with him in his after professional life, dwelling in turn on his varied experiences, and on what helped and what hindered him as the years passed away. I shall also glance, as space may permit, at such professional matters as may seem of interest and importance, dealing especially with some marvellous changes which have taken place in medical teaching, and the Science and Art of Medicine in his day and in the range of his own observation.

In a word the reader must regard what will be set down here as the story of my own life—strictly my own autobiography—with large digressions in connection with other lives and other things. Without further preface than the statement of the fact that from a large and somewhat unique experience, I

claim to speak with some authority and boldness concerning the things here treated, I now proceed.

I was born in the earlier years of this century, in North Yorkshire, adjacent to the County of Durham, indeed so close to the last named County that only the river Tees separated my birthplace from it. My father was a small tradesman as his father had been before him. I remember him as a fine tall man with a pleasant countenance, but he died before I was eight years old. I lost my mother also when I was only five years old. I call to mind seeing her and her baby-boy in the bed chamber in her last illness. She died from pulmonary consumption, and she and the baby-brother sleep together in one grave.

Our old Town in former days had a good market, but this was long before my day, for with the exception of two or three women with butter-baskets, and one poor lame fish-wife, when I was a lad the market had wholly disappeared. In proof of the former prosperity of the place, nearly a dozen very large granaries were standing then, and indeed are still standing, where in olden time well-to-do merchants stored their grain, and where—the people say—during the Peninsular War a great quantity of wheat was garnered, being carried to and fro in barges on the river, by the margin of which they stood. Its decadence began, as I was always told,

immediately at the close of that war, and in some sense because of its close, but chiefly through the sudden expansion of a larger town, near which ironstone was discovered. The town could still make its boast of two good Fairs, one at the beginning of August called Maudlin Fair, after an apple that was ripe about that time, or it may be that the apple was named after the fair, for I do not know the origin of the name; the other in October, a larger one of two days' duration. I have a vivid recollection of the latter fair. On the first fair day the whole street was thronged with cattle and men,—the town consisting of one long broad street and six or seven smaller ones branching out of it, called wynds, as in some parts of Scotland,—and, ah me! it stands to-day in my imagination just as it stood in my boyhood; and on the second day straw was strewed where the men and cattle had stood, and tons on tons of cheeses were set out for sale; and I seem now to have the old-fashioned steel-yards (scales) before my eyes.

At this October fair for many years there was a large booth erected for dramatic entertainments, in the centre of the one large street of which I have spoken, and the manager's name is still as fresh in my memory as though I had only known it yesterday. I have always thought that the performances in that booth, however unlikely, must have been above the

level of the ordinary shows at fair time, since the booth with its company always remained in the town several weeks after the fair; but be this as it may, it was then I imbibed a great love for theatrical representation, which remains with me to this day, and—like Charles Lamb—I am not ashamed of it.

The population of the town was twelve or thirteen hundred, but it has decreased of late years.

The gentry of the place, including Lawyers and Doctors, might have been counted on the fingers of a man's hand; but we had a Squire with a good old family name, who was the Lord of the Manor, and lived at a great red house called "The Hall."

The rest of the natives were tradesmen and labourers, but they maintained amongst them a dozen Inns.

The town itself has no beauty to recommend it, or certainly I should dwell upon it here. Its situation is low, and the river runs round it like a horse-shoe. In my days there we had almost every winter one or more floods, when the swollen river would rush across the base of its horse-shoe bend, and sometimes reach to the height of three or four feet in many of the houses.

There was, and it still remains, an ugly old flat-roofed Church, standing within a dozen yards of the river, an old Town Hall built on four arches of brick, some old-fashioned shambles now pulled down, a

Wesleyan Chapel erected by John Wesley, and a Friends' Meeting House, and strange to say, in my boyhood, there was only one Quaker to worship in it.

The houses were mostly of red brick, roofed with red tiles, many of them having cottages and gardens behind, and scarcely one new house has been built in the town itself in many years, as one of its aged and quaint inhabitants observed:—"It is the only town in England that was ever finished." The town was very dark at nights in winter, and when there was no moon, for after the lights in the shops were extinguished there was no light of any kind in the street, with the exception of a stray lantern as some old lady went out to tea, or on some other errand. The Curfew Bell tolled every evening at 8 o'clock, as in days long past in other towns, and the grass grew in front of the houses as on a village green.

The practical jokes and naughty tricks of my companions—of course not mine! played in this dull dark old town, must remain untold, but the reader's fancy may easily conceive their nature and extent. An old, old town, with odd and ancient ways! In looking back but one chief feature of the place stands out, and retains its hold on my recollection and my heart, and that is a GRAND OLD WOOD in connection with the largest Rookery I have seen, close at hand, and notwithstanding the spring-guns

and man-traps said to be ready for the destruction of trespassers, it was a veritable garden of delight to my companions and myself.

Returning to my personal narrative I can say with truth that my early life was simply and really "a struggle for existence" in an unpropitious environment. My mother, as already stated, died when I was five years old, and three years afterwards my father lost his life on a railway, which was in connection with Coal Depôts in which he had some business interests and employment. I was then too young to realise or understand the great respect in which my father was held by those who knew him, but young as I was I have a vivid recollection of the fact that every shop was closed, and the whole town seemed to be in mourning on the day of his funeral. A small property in houses was the portion remaining to two sisters and myself after my father's affairs were settled, which must have produced a very small sum indeed as annual rent; but numerous friends and townspeople of my father stepped forward, and with a liberal hand helped his orphan children at this crisis; and although the hand of death has been laid upon the bulk of them, I set down this good and generous act in my story as a tribute of gratitude and respect to their memory.

I will not dwell further on this part of my life, for the shifts and stints of poverty leave no pleasant

memories behind. To the united noble efforts and self-sacrifice of grandmother, on father's side, and of two aunts who kept a school for little children, we were indebted for our bringing up; and their struggles to accomplish this must often have been hard and grievous; they also are all gone, but "their works do follow them," for surely God's blessings went along with their unselfish care.

My first recollection of school life is in connection with a Mistress, or Dame, so called in the vernacular, who took snuff. She was a kind old body, and of her I suppose I learnt my letters, and I believe not much more. How well I call to mind the school-room, with its ancient corner Cupboard covered with curious Chinese or Japanese figures, it is still extant, and having been furbished up and somewhat modernized, is in the possession of one of my relatives.

How many years I remained in the school of my first mistress I can form no idea—memory on the matter being a blank—but probably up to the age of eight years, for at that age I remember very distinctly being taken by an uncle to the endowed GRAMMAR SCHOOL of the place, the Master being the Vicar of the parish. At this school I spent four years and a half as a day scholar, and with the exception of some scanty teaching in the evening, by one of the later masters of the above-named school, this was all the direct and scholastic tuition I had.

The school was a very ordinary one in my time—sixty years since. My first master, the Vicar, was an aged man, and it was his custom to fall asleep in the afternoon, and as there were neither Ushers nor Monitors, the result in respect of discipline may be imagined, but not described. On the death of the good old Vicar, three or four masters followed in quick succession, more or less damaging the character of the school; for each new master had new methods of teaching and of discipline, and through this the unfortunate scholars were mystified and hindered. We had one ill-tempered and wretched master who thrashed us nearly every day, and who seemed to take delight in hitting his scholars with well directed aim on each side of the head; and as I fell in for a fair share of this diversion, I have often wondered—my head being so often and roughly shaken—that my brain escaped serious injury. Another of the masters—I forget whether before or after the rule of the above-named rough fellow—was a Scotchman and intemperate, but like many clever, nervous men who yield to the subtle temptation of drink, he was full of the milk of human kindness, and I loved him much, and have yet the greatest respect for his memory. It will be seen then how meagre was my education, and it may truly be summed up in the following items:—(a) Latin—a very slight foundation. (b) English—Reading and Grammar better, but defective. (c) Arithmetic—as

far as Vulgar Fractions, and lastly, Writing; in that day to write a good hand was considered of chiefest consequence.

Cricket and fives, the latter played with the hand (not racket), were our principal games in my school-days, and I could play the former game so well, and with such delight, that now in my old age I take great pleasure in seeing a first class cricket match, as at Lord's.

Before closing the recital of my school-life, I must not forget to name an old and curious custom, common in Yorkshire at that time, but I think nowhere else. At Easter and at Whitsuntide, when the scholars heard nothing from the master respecting HOLIDAY, they audaciously locked the master out of his own school-room, refusing him admission again until he promised the holiday, which he knew from their proceedings they sought. Of course the whole affair was a sham! The masters feared to displease the parents of the children by giving too many holidays, and they at least winked at this practice, which gave them the desired plea for "breaking up" for a few days, and escaping from the usual routine. As I sit here in my study and recall these small excitements and pursuits of my boyhood, very solemn feelings come over me at the thought that all—or nearly all—who then stood by my side have passed into the land of shadows!

After the education described above, and before I was thirteen years old, I began my medical apprenticeship with a relative in general practice, and remained with him close upon five years; and learnt to dispense medicines and perform the minor operations of surgery; such as blood-letting, the extraction of teeth, and the management of slight injuries, and I may say, without egotism, that in dispensing at least I became proficient. It was my master's usual custom to order half a dozen or more prescriptions verbally, trusting to my memory, to the great surprise of any uninitiated by-stander; and to expect me to note them down correctly in the day-book, and in this way I became a veritable expert in writing prescriptions. I also learned a great deal about the more common disorders which "flesh is heir to," for towards the end of my apprenticeship I was sent to visit some pauper or other patient who was not dangerously ill. I also got to know what were the customary professional charges, both in connection with town and country practice, but I shall have more to say respecting these further on.

I was kindly treated during my apprenticeship, but I confess I was a self-willed lad, needing stricter discipline than fell to my lot; yet for the medical man who took me into his house without a premium, when my prospects, as the reader has seen, were none of the brightest, and brought me up to a pro-

fession so full of ever-growing interest, I shall ever cherish the liveliest gratitude. I have always been glad and grateful for my apprenticeship, despite its duration; and, notwithstanding the great changes which have passed over the profession, I still believe that at least a short apprenticeship at the entrance of the student on his professional career, is desirable, if for nothing else but that, as a writer has said :—“ There are great risks in sending our young lads fresh from school to the large centres of medical education without oversight or restraint.” I was a wild lad and full of mischief and not easy to manage, but I had the faculty of application even in that day, and gave much time to the study of Latin and *Materia Medica* (using only the Latin *Pharmacopœia* then in use, and Paris’s “*Pharmacologia*”), which served me in good stead in later years.

But yet I was left very much to my own devices, without control or guidance in my reading, and therefore I wasted much time during my apprenticeship.

It may seem strange to many in this day that I spent so many years as a pupil, but it must be borne in mind that at that time the “*Society of Apothecaries*” required the student to pass five years as a pupil with a member of their own body.

Here I must note some great changes in the profession, which had their beginnings at least, about

the time my apprenticeship closed. The first is that great change which then came over the professional mind, with respect to blood-letting, and the sudden disuse of the custom. During my pupilage, and the first year of practice, blood-letting was still largely employed in very many diseases. It was used in all inflammatory diseases, in nearly all accidents, especially where the head was injured (suspected concussion and compression of the brain), and in apoplexy, by whatever caused, it was the first thing resorted to.

So thoroughly indoctrinated with the belief in the virtues of blood-letting was the public, as well as the professional mind, that in early spring, and at the fall of the year, it was the common custom for people of all ranks to be bled that they might be kept in health; and in those days, when people were great beef-eaters and beer-drinkers, it might well be that the practice was justified.

Dr. Billing in his "Principles of Medicine" tells a good story about blood-letting in the days when it was scouted and generally given up. "One of the staff of the London Hospital, Dr. Little, took a dozen appropriate patients as they offered, treating them according to the method of our younger days by phlebotomy, and thus demonstrated to his class the good effects of what they reckoned, from preconceived notions, would turn out to be manslaughter

at least, if not murder. He says, 'what pleased and surprised them most was the quick and great relief expressed by the patients from the bleeding.' Dr. Billing goes on to say "the conclusion of the story is amusing, for Dr. Little found that when he prescribed the bleeding for each patient, that unless his son, or some other of the assistant-surgeons was in the way the order could not be carried out, as any pupil who attempted it went wriggling with the point of the lancet in such a manner that he ran the risk of either not getting blood at all from the vein, or of wounding the artery, and the doctor was actually obliged to operate himself."

In the early days of my professional career, during my absence from home for a few days, one of my patients was taken ill and fell into the hands of a practitioner of the old school, and he did not omit the use of the lancet. On my return I was told that my patient had had an attack of inflammation of the lungs, had been bled from the arm four times, and had three or four dozen leeches applied to his chest. After this it did not surprise me to learn that the patient on being raised from his pillow to take food had suddenly fainted and died!

The apology made by these forefathers of ours when the patient died was this, that the disease (inflammation) was subdued by blood-letting, but there was no power in the system to rally; he was

too weak constitutionally they meant. I have said it was the custom for people to be bled at spring and fall, and so strong was the belief in its utility for preserving health that men would come into the surgery during my pupilage and say without asking a single question "I want bleeding." This amazing practice was followed by the elder medical men even close up to the present time; for it is not more than five or six years since the practitioner who treated my patient as stated above so heroically died, and as long as he was able to practice he pursued the same course. The great change which has come over both medical and lay opinion on this matter is almost inconceivable; for the medical man who proposes to bleed a patient in this day will often find a difficulty in obtaining the consent either of the patient or of the patient's family; and they will suspect his skill and wisdom for proposing it. In accounting for this change in our practice it was said that the human system itself had changed in latter years. Dr. Allison was I think the first physician who attempted to explain the matter in this way, and the profession generally accepted this view. Dr. Watson the classical medical writer of that day says on this subject: "There are waves of time through which *sthenic* and *asthenic* characters of disease prevail and we are at present passing through one of its *adynamic* (asthenic) phases."

But it would have been a wonder if the whole of the profession agreed with this view; for looking back upon it at this distance of time it seems fanciful and unreal. Dr. Hughes Bennett strenuously opposed it, and through his writings and the improbability of so sudden a change of the human constitution, many agreed with him. He argued that there is no sign that the human frame has deteriorated during the last few decades, and men are able to do as much mental and physical work now as ever they were. He also stated that the mode of treatment adopted by veterinary surgeons had undergone exactly the same change as among medical men, yet that it had not been shown that race-horses or cart-horses had in any measure deteriorated, or were less strong or vigorous than they were formerly. In support of his opinions and with quiet satire Dr. Bennett brings forward the evidence contained in a letter addressed by a farmer to the editor of the "Scotsman" newspaper on October 2nd, 1857; the letter is as follows:—"Dr. ——— in his communication of the 15th ult. makes the startling announcement that physical and moral decay are undermining the vigour and energy which formerly characterised the inhabitants of this country; and as a proof of the assertion that physical decay was at work, states that the free blood-lettings in the case of inflammatory diseases which formerly were in practice,

cannot now be resorted to with benefit. I am neither a medical man nor a veterinary surgeon, but I own a few horses and a few animals of the cattle and sheep tribes. How comes it then that some thirty years ago, when any of these animals were seized with any inflammatory affection, however slight, that profuse bleeding was resorted to and with advantage? Now, however, the veterinary surgeon never bleeds, save on very rare occasions, at the same time telling me that the animal cannot afford to lose any blood, and this treatment is just as successful as the former was on Dr. ——'s principle, then our horses should be physically inferior, to what they were thirty years ago. Is this the fact? My experience says they are at least equal in physical power, energy, and vigour, to what they were then. Do the horses of Glasgow or Edinburgh draw lighter weights, do our carts convey less grain to market; do our race-horses run at a slower pace? The general answer will be they do not. For instance the last Derby races were the quickest on record. How does the doctor account for this on his theory?"

There cannot be a doubt but the opposition to blood-letting has gone too far. Just as in the days when it was the general rule "to let blood" in inflammatory diseases, apoplexy, etc., and both the doctor, and patient, and the patient's friends would

have felt dissatisfied if in any case it had been neglected; so now the proposal to bleed in any given case, so far has the pendulum of opinion oscillated, would be received as I have said with disfavour both by many doctors and their patients.

Hence of late it has come upon us as a discovery that small venous bleedings even now may be beneficial in cases where the right side of the heart is burdened and oppressed with too much blood, through severe congestion of the lungs, or other causes, as also in some cases of pneumonia.

In such cases I have prescribed blood-letting; and I think the pendulum of public opinion on this subject will ere long swing back to some moderate and rational point.

Great and much needed changes have also taken place in our medical tariff. During my pupilage, visits to patients in the town where we lived were not charged, and the following may be viewed as a *fac-simile* of a doctor's bill fifty years since:—

*The Executors of the late JAMES THOMPSON**To TIMOTHY TODD, Surgeon, &c.*

			<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
1839.				
Dec.	6	An opening powder—Maid servant . . .	0	6
1840.				
Feb.	23	A diaphoretic powder—Master William . . .	2	9
„	26	„ „ „ „ . . .	2	9
„	29	„ „ „ „ . . .	2	9
„	29	An opening powder—late Mrs. Thompson . . .	6	0
March	1	An expectorant mixture „ . . .	2	9
„	3	An emetic—Miss Mary Thompson . . .	1	0
April	2	An opening draught—late Mrs. Thompson . . .	1	3
„	4	An expectorant mixture „ . . .	2	9
„	7	„ „ „ „ . . .	2	9
June	7	An emetic—Miss Mary	1	0
Sept.	14	An expectorant mixture—late Mrs. Thompson	2	9
„	16	„ „ „ „	2	9
„	17	An opening draught „	1	3
„	19	An expectorant mixture „	2	9
„	20	„ „ „ „	2	9
„	21	A blister and ointment „	1	9
„	21	Six alterative powders „	3	0
„	21	An expectorant mixture „	2	9
„	23	„ „ „ „	2	9
„	24	„ „ „ „	2	9
„	25	A blister and ointment „	1	9
„	25	An expectorant mixture „	2	9
„	27	A visit in the night „	2	6
„	27	A box of alterative pills „	1	0
„	27	An expectorant mixture „	2	9
„	27	„ „ „ „	2	9
„	27	A box of alterative pills „	1	0
„	28	„ „ „ „	1	0
„	28	An expectorant mixture „	2	9
			£3	9 9

It was likewise a common thing for a medical man in those days to pay two or even three visits to intractable patients during the time they were taking one bottle of medicine, or a couple of pills, and receive no payment except for the medicines. Journeys were also charged at one shilling per mile with the addition of the charge for the medicine, as in the town.

The wonder is that such a system of charging was so long in vogue, for it was both derogatory and unjust. It led medical men to send their patients more medicine than was needed that the bill might be increased, and their methods of doing this were often ingenious. Sometimes two pills and a draught were supplied when either would have done; always an ounce dose where a dessert-spoonful only was needed; and I lived with a firm of medical men as assistant, who sent to their richer patients one ounce draughts instead of mixtures, instead of charging for time and skill. Nor was this for the sake of greater accuracy in dispensing, but simply to increase the amount of the bill; neither was it an unjust charge, but under the system then in vogue a necessary procedure, in order that medical men might gain a living by their work.

The change here is very great, medical attendance is charged for, not drugs. In our large towns few medical men now-a-days dispense their own prescriptions. In Liverpool I have heard this plan is

universally adopted—a plan I venture to say which is of doubtful advantage to the profession. It is a vain and foolish notion of the medical man that there is anything derogatory in dispensing his own medicines, and his not doing so has in no way ennobled him or improved his position; but has simply raised the *status* of the chemist. I should not be surprised to find him—the latter—before long, taking the place and performing the functions of the general practitioner, at least to a very great extent in the estimation of the lower classes; and the higher classes will not be long in learning—nay, they have already learnt—to use the family doctor's prescriptions, and very often to dispense with his attendance.

In the country places in England medical men must of necessity dispense their medicine; and in view of the evils named above, and present popular leanings, and along with these things the fact that the wholesale chemists of this day put up drugs in such a form as that they may be readily and accurately dispensed, I strongly advocate a return to old paths, not only in country places, but also in the practice of medical men in our towns.

In other directions great changes have occurred in medicine and allied subjects, which although happening at a later date than at the commencement of my professional life, may be briefly named in connection

therewith. *Hygiene* has made rapid progress even within thirty years, and along with it sanitary laws have been enacted which would have made our forefathers stand aghast. Public baths and wash-houses, the gymnasium (or some equivalent at home), the supervision of slaughter-houses, and of foods for sale; and other measures which need not be specified, having for their object the improvement of the general health of the public.

There have also been important changes in Medical Teaching, Clinical Medicine,* and the Examinations of Medical Corporations tending to more practical methods;† Anæsthetics and the Clinical Thermometer may likewise be reckoned as valuable acquisitions to the Practice of Medicine in my day.

Nurses and *Nursing* have also greatly changed for the better, and the "Sairey Gamp" of Dickens in public work, at least, is extinct. The admirable work of Florence Nightingale among our soldiers in

* Some examples of Clinical Teaching by Sir Andrew Clark have lately appeared in the *Lancet*, which, as one might expect, are excellent models of such teaching. *Vide Lancet*, January 7th, 1893.

† The General Medical Council has decided that medical students shall, after January, 1892, spend five years in their studies; the first year being devoted to general subjects in Physics, Biology and Chemistry; the last year entirely to clinical work.

the Crimea gave the first great impulse to the improvement of nursing in this country, and now it has a system of training nearly as elaborate as that for the student for medical practice; has a department of its own in many of the larger hospitals; has institutions, clubs, and homes numerous and select; and indeed the art of nursing, though of mushroom growth, from the interest it has excited and the laudable devotion of its votaries must be fast approaching perfection. On this subject let me inject a single note of discord in the midst of this general approval and well deserved praise. Since the employment of nursing has become popular and fashionable, certain Guilds or Sisterhoods have been engaged therein in some of our hospitals. Now, without being censorious or hypercritical, I am bound to say that the result of the experiment as a rule has not been satisfactory.* But I must not dwell here, though the subject is important and tempting.

Though of later date in my experience, I can find no more fitting place than this to mention another most important change in professional opinion, respecting *Infection*, or what has been named the *Germ Theory of Disease*. *This theory* assumes that all infective diseases are directly due to the presence

* "Guy's Hospital has suffered more than any from the pretensions of lady nurses....." *Medical Annual*, 1888.

and development within the body of specific living contagia or germs. The theory is "mainly based on the capacity of such contagia for indefinite multiplication within the body, however small the quantity which is originally introduced; on experimental and clinical evidence that the contagium of any one disease produces that disease and no other; on the latest period which separates the moment of exposure to the contagious influence from the actual appearance of symptoms; on the definite courses of such diseases; and lastly on the experimental causation of at least one infective disease (anthrax), by the inoculation after repeated artificial cultivation outside the body of living organisms originally derived from a similar case."*

The imagination in its highest flight can scarcely follow the speculations of the last few years on this subject. We are now taught that the leucocytes (white blood cells) are endowed with special powers for the protection of the organism against the attacks of contagious microphites (morbific bacteria) and that they first swallow and then digest them; "in a word a protective microcosm," and that the cells are endowed with the power of distinguishing between what is advantageous and what is pernicious, and of appreciating the difference between one micro-

* *Practical Medicine*, 1888. Dr. Alfred H. Carter.

organism and another. Dr. Sutton compares the white cells to an invading army with lines and wards of communication through the blood vessels:—
 “When an enemy” he says “in the form of bacteria gets the best of the fight, messages are sent by means of the nerves to different parts of the body for reinforcements. Fresh cells then hurry up and at last arrive in sufficient force to entirely rout the enemy.”*

The bacterial theory is supported by eminent authorities, and it is generally accepted by medical men; time will prove whether it is “but a theory.” The following parody which recently appeared in a number of “Guy’s Hospital Gazette” may serve to enliven the subject:—

THE LAY OF THE STREP-TO-COKK.

Prologue.	<i>'Twas Sepsys and the nowy germs Did thromb and embol in the hæm, All dropsic where the psorosperms, And the ptomraths outgræme!</i>
His mother admonisheth him.	Would'st slay the Streptocokk, my son! The microbe breath, and pyous death! Beware the macrophage and shun The toxsome albumose.
He setteth forth and pondereth.	He took a pseudopod in hand, Sometime his septic foe he sought, Then rested e'en in the ktonic spleen, And stayed awhile in thought.

* *Our Unseen Foes.* Dr. Wheeler.

He meeteth him.	And as in zymose thought he stood, The Streptocokk, of well-known fame, Came hurtling through the hæmolymp, And fissioned as it came.
He dealeth death.	One, Two! One, Two! With phunk quite blue, Those cyan germs hid in each crack . . . , He slew them dead—each engulfed— And crawled ensquirming back.
His return upsetteth his mother's liver.	Hast slain the Streptocokk, my son Come to my arms! Amcœbish boy!! Oh phagic day! Karee! Karay!! She cirrhosed in her joy.
Epilogue.	'Twas Sepsys and the noxy germs Did thromb and embol in the hæm, All dropsic where the psorosperms, And the ptomraths outgræme.

ΔΤΡΒΑΝ.*

I now come to my true student life to which my memory goes back with great wonder at the consideration of its unique and chequered character. On leaving my apprenticeship, at least a few months afterwards, I went as an out-door Dispensing Assistant to a general practitioner in a small town in North Yorkshire at a salary of about £1 a week. In this situation I remained two years and then I made a journey to London in the hope of obtaining a situation as an Assistant at a small salary, but having

* Koch's *tuberculin* was a most humiliating failure after great promise. Not in this direction must help come to the Consumptive, but rather from pure air—air unbreathed before—with due attention to climatic conditions, as advocated by the late Dr. McCormac many years since.

sufficient time allowed to pursue my studies at a Medical School; *i.e.*, attending lectures, hospital practice, &c., but my expectations were soon cut off. In that day it was the custom for a list of situations to be kept at the Apothecaries' Hall, and pupils or assistants went thither to get the address of any medical man requiring their help, and this they did either until they found a situation or got tired of their pursuit, which latter event I think must often have happened. A small sum was charged for the privilege. Let me here give an example of the sort of situation which was among others offered in those days. Having obtained an address in the manner stated I waited upon a medical gentleman who resided in *Gray's Inn Lane*, and found the place an open shop, not merely an open surgery; for there was indeed a heterogeneous stock of such things as a druggist sells, *i.e.*, perfumery, hair-oil, hair-brushes, patent medicines, etc. The poor doctor was suffering from tooth-ache when I called, and in the midst of his surroundings looked very miserable. On stating my business I learnt that he offered the munificent sum of £25 per annum for an Assistant, whose duties were to attend behind the counter daily from eight in the morning until eight in the evening, and on Saturdays until midnight.

As any one may imagine this was a great blow to my ardent aspirations, and with great haste and little ceremony I said "good morning" and left

the place. It was altogether a new experience for I was utterly ignorant of anything so low and undignified amongst us. I have indeed found since then that in the fierce "struggle for existence" men of culture and high medical qualifications look no higher than such a position as this wherein to gain a livelihood. I am slow to condemn these our necessitous *confrères*. Doubtless they would be glad to change it, glad say, to live in one of the Squares or fashionable Streets of London, to drive a carriage and receive guinea fees; but in past days as now the supply exceeded the demand, and some inevitably went to the wall or were driven to such shifts as these that they might live, "Their poverty not their will consenting."

I got the address of another medical man* from the Apothecaries' Hall. He lived near the Elephant and Castle, and on calling I found he required a dispenser for a firm of practitioners living forty or fifty miles from London. Having lost heart, and worse than that—patience, I agreed to go into the country, as out-door dispenser, at a salary of little more than £50 a year.

My new masters (partners) lived in Kent and I

* This gentleman was a very candid person. He told me without a blush that *to live* he required a certain number of patients daily, or, to make those he had take the same quantity of medicine, else how was he to live?

went to them when the hop-harvest was close at hand, so that my journey through the hop-gardens which I had not before seen was quite novel and delightful.

My new situation was a very quiet one, and as I gained nothing but the change by taking it, I pass it by with this brief notice. In the following January, or at least, early in the Spring, my old master in Yorkshire who had in my absence taken a partner, sent me a pressing letter asking me to return to him as "*Visiting Assistant*" with some substantial increase of my former salary. I at once closed with his offer, for I was pleased with the confidence reposed in me; but especially because I thought I might thus lay by money towards the cost of my medical education. I returned and remained in the old situation two years, acting as visiting and dispensing assistant, and having an apprentice—the son of my master under me.

At the end of these two years a great chance fell in my way; the chance of obtaining a situation as Physician's Assistant in the Dispensary of a large town where there was an excellent and very popular medical school. I became a candidate for the post and was elected. I had saved most of my salary as an Assistant for the last two years, as I had boarded without charge with a relative, for whose constant kindness I shall ever feel grateful. Now only began

my real student life, for two Assistants (Medical and Surgical) lived in the Dispensary, paying the House Surgeon for their board, and having just enough of their salary (£50 per annum) left for pocket money; and what was of far greater importance these two assistants were permitted, and had time to attend a certain number of lectures at the Medical School, and the Hospital Practice of the Infirmary (Hospital) in each session.

Before passing away from my recollections as a private assistant, I may narrate a very pleasant experience of that time. Dickens was in the spring-time of his popularity. The "Pickwick Papers," and I think "Oliver Twist," had been published, and "Nicholas Nickleby" was being brought out in monthly parts. Our small Consulting-room, attached to the Surgery, was often the meeting place of two or three pleasant inhabitants of the town, who were my master's friends, and who met mainly for pastime and gossip, frequently chatting about DICKENS'S WORKS, and laughing over his wonderful creations and varied characters. Alas, and alas, these men, then young and full of life and energy, have all joined the "great majority." It was in this way, and with these surroundings, that I was introduced to the early writings of the great novelist.

I have often deplored the latter days in the history of Dickens with the rash strain of his lecturing

tours; but for these he might still have been alive and full of years. Ever since the time I have referred to, the spell of his writings has had a powerful hold upon me, and even now, I am glad to say, I can enjoy and grin over "Pickwick" as heartily as in the days of my youth.

Let me now return to my position at the Dispensary—the duties were many and arduous. For the performance of these duties, as I have said, there were three medical officers, the House-Surgeon and two Assistants, the Physicians and Surgeons of the Institution being called in consultation only to the more serious cases. We began to see the patients who were able to come to the Dispensary at nine or half past nine o'clock in the morning, and after they had been seen and prescribed for we started out with a long list of the patients on the books, who were too ill to come out of the house. We divided the town into three districts, which we took in rotation; and we always had between twenty and thirty patients to see daily (among them many Irish), and some night work besides, when there was any such call in our own district. Some of the houses we visited were far from "clean and sweet," for sanitary work, if it existed at all, was in its infancy; but in youth—I was only twenty-one years old—these things are of small concern.

Having all this work at the Dispensary, little time

was left for Lectures, etc., at the Medical School, but I managed so well by rising at six o'clock in the morning for study, and in other ways "redeeming the time," that at the end of the first year I obtained the first prize in *Materia Medica*, and the second in Chemistry.

In my day, Leeds—for it is of this town I speak—could boast of an excellent medical school, and many able teachers. The Heys, Nunnely, the Teales and Smith (Surgeons). Chadwick, Drennan, Pymont-Smith (Physicians), were in the height of their usefulness and fame; and this school still "holds its own" in the provinces.

Through hard work, and much carelessness I fear, at the end of a year of residence at Leeds, my health gave way, and I was obliged to resign my situation; and although I was treated very kindly, and my situation retained for me some time, I did not recover for several months, and so it was of course filled up. This I have always considered the most unfortunate period of my life. I had expended the little money I had previously saved, and now had lost my health through want of due thought and care. What was to be done?

This was what occurred. I had at this time a relative in business as a Chemist; he was an excellent man, for whom I have always had great esteem and affection, and who helped me after my

apprenticeship all through my student life more than anyone else; but at this period of my history he advised me to turn my attention to his business—the business of a Chemist,—and I cowardly yielded to his judgment, but may be excused, for I was weak in health, and low in both spirits and purse.

I was now then a Tradesman, and as assistant and master for seven years I was engaged in this pursuit. If getting rich had been my aim I am quite sure I could have succeeded; but my inclination did not trend in that direction. Doubtless I was unwise and ought to have been contented with my position. The business of a Chemist is respectable, pleasant, and profitable, and requires very little capital to carry it on.

I have often thought, after reflection upon this subject, it would be better for young men of fairish connection and intelligence, *but with only small means*, to turn their attention to this business, rather than to the medical profession; for although lacking the *prestige* of a profession—except among those who follow it—there are in it elements of interest far greater than the mere buying and selling of drugs, etc.; and one might promise them that thus, much of the painful anxiety of professional life, on the ground of ways and means, would be spared them. I may not say that I was discontented, or thought myself in any sense degraded by my employment.

My return to the profession was in the usual acceptance of the term accidental, certainly not from any powerful desire on my part at the moment; and it was in this wise:—A youth in delicate health was on a visit to some relatives in the town where I resided; he was intellectual, and if not a genius yet he courted the muses, and wrote tolerable verses. He would drop in at spare moments to smoke a pipe—Ah, yes to smoke and chat! In fact in a dull town where there was little congenial society, and I having known his father, we sought each other out and spent much idle time together. Well, one day in our gossiping, knowing that I had had some professional training, he said, without any premeditation as I judge, and without having any definite purpose, “I wonder you do not return to your professional studies”! I digress a moment here to say that my mind is often made up as it were instinctively on any given subject placed before it, and the result has been better than on other occasions when I have spent much thought and time upon it; and then, although I have often fallen far short of my ideals I have never entirely failed in any task I have set myself. So at this time without any particular desire, or any special consideration of my companion’s suggestion, I said simply but emphatically “I will,” and certainly without knowing at the time how the purpose should be accomplished. In this simple, some will

doubtless say foolish manner it was settled that I should return to the profession, and I at once began to cast about me as to the way of doing it.

By this time I had an apprentice able to manage my ordinary business, and this helped me in my arrangements. The first thing I did was to consult my old teachers, and especially a fine old Surgeon, the Registrar of the Medical School. He was incredulous as to my being able to accomplish my purpose, but behaving to me in a very kind and gracious manner, he did not altogether discourage me.

I will not dwell on the arduous life of study I now began to lead. The reader may judge for himself when I tell him that I managed to keep on my business, and yet by earnest perseverance succeeded in attending the Lectures, and Hospital Practice, in satisfying the authorities of Apothecaries' Hall, completing their curriculum and passing their examination without much anxiety or trouble.* This qualification—Licentiate of the Apothecaries' Hall—

* A droll thing happened during my examination at "The Hall." The examination was wholly *viva voce*, and as at the College of Surgeons, two examiners sat at each table. I had been told that if a candidate was going astray in the hands of one of the examiners, the other would take him in hand. This was a scarecrow I dreaded, but to my great relief at one of the tables one of the examiners slept until he snored.

was sufficient to enable me to commence in general practice, and satisfied me for a few months; but after awhile I was not content; for I found that unless I possessed the surgical qualification of The College of Surgeons I could not hope to obtain any appointment under the Poor Law Board or other Public Bodies, in competition with those of my *confrères* who had the double qualification. I therefore set about procuring this qualification. I engaged a qualified assistant, for I had, as I have said, commenced practice, and got together a few patients who could not be neglected. In this way I completed the further study required by the College, and in due course I became a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

I have no doubt from the encouragement I received in my new vocation that I could have secured a large practice in the place and neighbourhood where I lived; but my mind was exercised by the doubt whether a practice there was desirable; for it was a wild moorland district in North Yorkshire, and in youth and early manhood my health was very delicate. But a way soon opened out which seemed to me Providential, and never doubting its origin, I unhesitatingly followed it.

Before, however, proceeding with my history, I think it will be very natural for the reader to ask the question,—how did this *poor* student obtain the

means to go into business and pursue his studies? The question I say is natural, and I digress a moment here to reply. It was in this wise:—A relative (by marriage only) advanced what I needed to enable me to go into business, and then in due course my business, which was to say the least remunerative, supplied what was required for my expenditure as a student, and in my many journeys to examinations, etc. I cannot refrain from making a record here of the unvarying and ready kindness of the relative referred to above. His counsel and frequent help are engraven on my heart, and he “though dead,” to me “yet speaketh,” as an ever fresh and pleasant memory.

Again to return to my story. About this time an advertisement in a newspaper caught my eye. It described a Practice in a large town in the West of England, well-established and moderate in price. The thought of getting out of business and away to a more genial climate was very tempting, and I at once entered into negotiation with the owner of the practice, and we speedily came to an agreement. I then got a purchaser for my business, paid back my relative his loan, and the premium of the new practice, and launched my bark on the ocean of time once again.

On looking back I see very clearly that the business I gave up at that time would have, had I

remained in it, enriched me much more than the Medical Profession has on the whole done; and also that my life would have been freer from anxiety and care arising out of the more serious and larger responsibilities of the latter. But I have never regretted the step I then took, for I had a strong attachment to the *Medical Profession*, and in all likelihood had I not returned to it my life would have seemed to me less perfect, and far less full of interest than it has been; and moreover "Mammon" has never been my chief good.

I left the Northern Town bearing with me, and realising acutely the regret and good wishes of the inhabitants. The change in the climate of my new home as compared with the old was very marked. It was November and the weather most remarkable—dry and sunny, with dusty roads,—not unlike a fine September in Yorkshire. I spent 17 or 18 years in the West of England; but I am bound to say I never saw another November such as I have described above; and despite the biting cold and bleak winters of Yorkshire I cannot but think that if a man be in the manner born to it, and start with a fair constitution, its climate is more favourable to health than the warmer but generally damper climate of the West of England.

Thus opens another chapter in my life's history, a brighter one and more in unison with my feelings

and aspirations. I was successful from the first and was able after some years to drive my carriage, and take my place with credit and satisfaction among my *confrères*. The practice I had purchased was very general however, and the work laborious and trying. I held one of the Union Districts and several Clubs, had much midwifery and worked hard for small fees; yet in no period of my life was my work more pleasant or satisfactory.

I see now that I made some mistakes in my busy life at that time, but these were more social than professional; and as they were not particularly hurtful either to others or myself they may be passed by without further reference. I have stated above that I was now satisfied with my position and prospects, but this lasted only for a time and in a few years, alas,—it is written against me in the tablets of my memory—I began to weary of the routine and worry of general practice, and to pine for the rest and *status* which a medical degree carries in its train.*

* It is most desirable that every medical student should know exactly *at what he aims* at the commencement of his studies for this may save him much worry and disappointment in the end. If, for example, he aims only at the Diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons and the Licence of the Society of Apothecaries of England, or the former united with the Licence of the Royal College of Physicians, England, (which now-a-days

I had as I have said set my heart on an easier life than that of the general practitioner, and my eyes were turned to the higher walks of professional life; midwifery and its attendant night work was at this time my great trouble, and I had had a sufficient experience to form a fair judgment as to its requirements. My health also was not robust and this had its influence on my decision. How any rational being can pursue midwifery practice for its own sake, or as his chief professional work, is to me wholly inexplicable! But doubtless my chief motive for seeking a degree at this stage of my life was the inflated idea my imagination had formed of the position and privileges it offers. And even now when all the glamour of worldly position and distinction has faded away, I will venture to say that the position of the "Doctor of Medicine" whose University carries with it the trust of his medical *confrères*, in dignity and interest, is second to none

many young men prefer, despising the name Apothecary), any ordinary medical curriculum will serve his purpose. But should the medical student look higher, and wish to obtain a Degree in Medicine either during his student life or in after years he will do well, as a first step, to study with care the requirements of the Universities of the United Kingdom, since the regulations of The Royal College of Surgeons and the Society of Apothecaries are insufficient to secure his introduction to the higher grades of the profession.

of the coveted distinctions the world has to offer. Having then made up my mind to obtain a Medical Degree the next question to decide was this, what Degree and where? For, alas, that one has to say it, there are "Degrees and Degrees."! Durham, St. Andrews, and other Scotch Universities will grant a man a Degree—after a little "furbishing up"—on the ground of age, but this did not commend itself to me; indeed to go North at all to obtain a Degree was abhorrent. To obtain a Medical Degree at the older English Universities, *residence* for a certain number of terms is required, and to these regulations I had not conformed.

Let me say here that were I young again with my present knowledge and ideal of Life—which of course is impossible,—I would move heaven and earth in order to pass through the Curriculum of one of our English Universities, in my estimation the discipline and associations being to any man invaluable. As to "Foreign Degrees" I always held them as valueless as the paper on which they are written. I had heard of the wholesale manufacture of *Bogus Dégrees*, which could be purchased for a few pounds, and I scorned them. I also had had before me the sad experience of a professional man who had practised on the authority of one of these Degrees for many years, and then came a scandal and exposure at last which almost killed him.

What was there then among the various medical institutions to commend itself to the ideal I had formed in my mind? One Institution alone, with its *prestige* and inexorable examinations, stood out from all the rest as trustworthy and honourable, namely, "The University of London." But dared my ambition soar so high? In full view of the difficulties which presented themselves—as chiefly, the arduous duties of the present, and in the face of the severe discipline and wearisomeness of future study—I decided that I would strive with all my might to obtain the M.D. Degree of the University of London, and I had faith in myself as to its accomplishment. Thus in the year 1859 or 1860, I again returned to my professional studies, and as I never was an idle man, they were neither irksome nor unfamiliar. Let it be clearly understood that I set about this great work clogged with the duties and responsibilities of a large general practice.

During six years at least I gave myself little rest or ease, but brought every faculty of my mind to bear on the great object I had in view; nay, in truth, I may say that the mainspring of all that I have ever done in the pursuit of knowledge is to be set down to the account of a *perseverance that never flagged*. In those days I could apply myself to severe study at least for six hours daily, and these hours I secured by early rising. From the time that I came

to the decision to work for the Degree of the London University, until I obtained it, I rose with rare intermissions, at four o'clock every week-day, studying until my breakfast hour at eight or half past eight, and after that I went about the work of the day in the general practice. Often enough I was sorely fatigued, and even slept over my studies, but my head never failed me; I never *threw up the sponge*, and my eyesight bore the strain put upon it without once failing me; indeed, in the providence of God it has always been excellent. But occasionally I was very tired. I call to mind a very amiable and learned Doctor of Divinity, who gave me a little coaching in logic, two evenings in the week; and that on one occasion when at his house, I fell fast asleep while we were at work, the spirit being more willing than the flesh.

Here I may state, as showing my self-dependence, that my whole medical coaching for the examinations of the London University was in the shape of some correspondence with a young and able physician, who in this way eked out a livelihood; and which greatly helped me, inasmuch as it brought my knowledge of medicine up to date, and this in itself was valuable. Further than this I had no special teaching, unless two *séances*, for which I went twice to London, may be so called; one to perform the chief operations on the dead body; and the other

for ordinary microscopic work. I always felt that what money these *séances* cost me might have been much better employed. I may say here that all my life long I had had a strong aversion to all *cramming*, deeming it a sign of weakness and want of self-respect, but I can see now that in this I was unreasonable and singular; and doubtless, if I could have added to my own studious habits and perseverance, the help of an able teacher, I might have prepared sooner and more easily for my examinations. To *cram*, however, in the strict sense of the term, had I been ever so much inclined, was out of the question in my circumstances—far away from London and all medical teachers—and therefore my readiness for the examinations was all guess work, and I simply went up for them when in my own judgment I was prepared. I had in great measure to feel my way, taking stock of myself and my attainments as it were, and from my experience of the first M.B., to form some idea of the second M.B., and from both the probable character of the final or M.D. examinations; and so I plodded on without much help from any quarter.

My failures—for I failed more than once—were in my judgment in the following subjects: practical chemistry, chemical experiments, microscopy, and mechanical midwifery, *i.e.*, measurements of the pelvis, positions of the foetal head, etc.; but this too

is all a guess, for the failures may have been quite in other directions. I have also thought that I was not *au courant* with written questions and their management, and these were numerous, both in the M.B. and the M.D. examinations. At the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Society of Apothecaries, the examinations in my day were only *viva voce*, so that the form of written questioning at the University was new, and probably therefore difficult to me. In the last examination for the M.D. degree I recollect being asked in the *viva voce* part, "What is Ozone," by Dr. Billing, a popular physician, with whose work on "The Principles of Medicine," I was familiar. He was an aged and venerable man. Ozone was a substance which had been lately discovered in the atmosphere, and at that time but little understood. I have also a most vivid recollection of the surgical examination at the second M.B., the subject for our drill was simply on the trunks of bodies, the extremities being all removed beforehand; and I was in such a nervous state that until after some minutes I am sure I was not able to tell which was the upper and which the lower part of the subject! But I got on swimmingly at this surgical examination. One of the Examiners—a surgeon of great repute—said benignly that I knew all about Hernia, on which subject he had examined me. In the operations also I acquitted

myself creditably—diligation of the femoral artery and amputation of the leg, falling to my share. The operative parts of the examinations I had feared most, for in provincial towns the general practitioner sees very little surgery, injured workmen and others being generally sent to the hospital, and the surgery of the place falls chiefly into the hands of the hospital surgeons. It was this fact connected with my abhorrence of midwifery, which had great influence in leading me to seek a medical degree, for surgery became, from its rarity, an unaccustomed kind of work, and therefore imperfect and unsatisfactory.

I had now succeeded in obtaining a Medical Degree,—and one I had from boyhood declared it should be if I ever gained it—at which none could scoff, or say in irony “Where did he get his Degree”? A Doctor of Medicine of the University of London has nothing to fear for his degree by comparison with any other; his *alma mater* gives it the indubitable stamp of worth and dignity. I stand by my order, and will not allow that there is any exaggeration in the following quotation from an article in *The Times* newspaper many years since, where the writer says:—“To be a graduate of the London University is equivalent to being able to write F.R.S. or C.E. after one’s name. It is notorious that no pretender, no sciolist, no carpet-knight of the Battle of Intellect can be a Member of the Royal Society, or of the

Institute of Civil Engineers. To obtain admission to these associations *il faut donner ses preuves*, and the same rule holds good as applied to the University of London, knowledge is the one and imperative power required to obtain its degree. The University does not enquire what a man is; but it rigidly seeks to know what he can do."

Before leaving the subject of my examinations, I may mention that after I had passed the first M.B. examination, I was greatly concerned to learn from the Registrar of the University that I lacked six months surgical Hospital Practice before I could attempt to pass the second M.B. examination. It was a great and unexpected blow, for I had thought that all preliminaries were completed. My courage, however, did not long give way, but I soon engaged a qualified Assistant and *walked the Hospitals* again for six months.

I had now gratified my yearning for a Medical Degree, and I may say without egotism that I was fully satisfied, nay, I was even jubilant at my success, for my achievement under the circumstances narrated above was a great thing—a thing of which any man might justly be proud. As I promised myself when I took this work in hand, I write of my mistakes and some of the difficulties of my medical life as freely as of all the rest; for I hope thus as in other ways to serve those who shall come after me in the same calling.

I was now in mid-life and full of energy, and well tried practical knowledge, and I flatter myself with some tact in my profession, but I lacked worldly wisdom. One mistake I made at this time was in commencing practice as a *Consultant*, in the town where I had practised as a general practitioner. It was a difficult position to maintain in a wise and dignified manner. What I did was this:—I gave up dispensing, and all Clubs and Union Practice; then I prescribed for my old patients without dispensing, charging the same fees as I had charged both for attendance and medicine when I was in general practice. This I see now was a short sighted and a timid policy. On a retrospect of my position, I ought it seems to me to have done one of two things, either remaining in the same town boldly to have given up general practice, and become a pure consultant, or to have removed to some other place and begun *de novo* as a consultant.

At this crisis of my history also a chance came in my way, such as scarcely happens twice to any man in his life-time, and on looking back I am full of wonder that I did not embrace it. It was in this wise:—An influential medical man of the town, connected both with the Hospital and Dispensary came to me, and with much kindness informed me of a vacancy in the staff of Honorary Physicians in the latter institution; and offered, if I became a candi-

date for the post to use his very great influence on my behalf. What hindered my acceptance of this advantageous offer I have no knowledge; but probably an immediate answer was necessary, or I was taken by surprise, and was ignorant of its value; at all events I refused, and lost the golden opportunity. I must, however, say for myself in this matter that the appointment would have necessitated the giving up of all general practice, and probably I thought that between the two stools—the giving up of the *old* practice, and beginning the *new* practice, as Consultant I might fall to the ground. Whether it would have been so or not will never be known; but I am sure of this that the difficulties attending the stepping out of a general into a consulting practice *in the same town* are very great unless the town has a very large population; and I would advise no man to encounter them who has not a fortune at his back.

The difficulties of the situation arise principally from two sources. On the one hand you have to contend with the jealousy, or shall we say simply the indifference of your *confrères*; and on the other with the discontent of your patients, who do not like the change, partly because it is a change, but chiefly on the ground of the extra expense of medical attendance it involves; for even if the same fees are charged as before, the cost of the dispensing of the prescriptions by the chemist is to be added.

Thus, in the way already described I continued in general practice, and I have every reason to speak well of the attachment of my old patients. Some few left me as I always expected simply on the ground of the position I held. On the whole, however, my practice did not suffer to any appreciable extent. I took my place quietly among my compeers; rode in a carriage instead of walking to do my work; and having thrown off the pressure and weariness of study I found my professional life easy and pleasant.

I remained seven years in the same place after taking the M.D. degree fairly holding my own practice together, but failed to make headway as a consultant, mainly for the reason already stated; that is, remaining in general practice instead of boldly settling down as a consultant after I had obtained my degree, as I might well have done, especially with the prestige of the appointment which as before stated was practically offered to me.

Here it may not be out of place to mention that I found time in the midst of the busy life I led to write for the press, being the author of some medical works, and several articles in the medical periodicals, but chiefly in "The Lancet," and to the fairness and courtesy of the editor of the latter journal I can bear ample testimony. As this Autobiography must bear no names, the subjects on which I wrote in those

days must be concealed. From my experiences of medical authorship, I am disposed to think it an unprofitable pursuit, except for those who are either medical teachers, or for men who give up all their time to it, and thereby get themselves a name. From advertisements I have observed in various directions, I am inclined to think that many valuable WORKS were never written by their reputed AUTHORS, but by writers of more facile power of composition, whose authorship is their living.

I have said above that medical authorship is an unprofitable pursuit, but let me not be misunderstood. The consciousness of being able in this way to add to the knowledge and utility of our noble ART, and the mental discipline authorship brings with it, ought in many instances to be looked upon as a sufficient recompense, to set against any mere pecuniary loss sustained thereby.

At this time, and about six years after practising as a consultant, I fell into a sea of troubles, some of which must not be divulged here. But one sore personal trouble, occurring at this time was a severe attack of illness, which although it did not entirely lay me aside, made my work irksome and trying. This illness held me all one winter, and did not pass away even with the return of warm weather, and in the end I was obliged, for my health's sake, to seek a "change of climate." I

must confess here that in making arrangements to go away I again fell into a grave error in disposing of my practice out and out. For bearing in mind the fact that I had been nearly twenty years in practice in the town where I lived, and during that time had established a good connection, and become well known; when ill-health forced me to retire it should have been my object to leave the door open behind me, so that on my restoration to health (if restored), I might have been able to return and recommence practice. Instead of doing this I made a complete transfer of the practice, thus shutting myself out of the place for ever. By assistance the practice might to a large extent have been kept together, if it could not have been increased.

Except of urgent necessity it may be safely said that it is unwise, and a great risk for a medical man in mid-life to retire from a place where he is well known, and begin his professional life afresh in a new place and amongst strangers. I have often thought on looking back that the mistake in this stage of my history was due to mental worry caused by illness and other troubles.

In the autumn of 1873 I crossed to the CONTINENT, taking for my definite *route* the towns famed for their SPAS and BATHS, and thus seeking the restoration of my health. Much travelling is irksome to an invalid, and not less so is enforced idleness from

such a sudden interruption of a life so active as mine. I was not, however, altogether idle. I spent a month or five weeks at Heidelberg, so famous for its student-life and student-manners, and through the courtesy of my foreign *confrères* was permitted to see their hospitals and hospital practice; and at the University, through the like courtesy of the profession, I did a considerable amount of microscopic work during my visit at Heidelberg.

My impressions of Germany are pleasant, and although student-life at its Universities is wild and reckless, still it was at least new and interesting. The peculiar INSTITUTION of duelling was in existence in that day, and is, as I am informed, still kept up. The students meet in secret for the purpose, and "the powers that be" wink at it, and do not interfere, but the students are chary of admitting strangers when the duels are fought. At places of public resort, however, I saw enough of their results to cause me greatly to wonder; for as all the body, excepting the face, is protected by padding beforehand, and during the battle, the students show themselves at such places with apparent pride, having their faces covered with adhesive plaster, and apparently pre-eminently satisfied with themselves.

I spent five weeks at Wiesbaden, another popular German bathing place. It lacks the romantic ele-

ment of Heidelberg, with its University life, its Castle, and its celebrated river, the Necker. But the gardens and grounds surrounding the KURHAUS are very beautiful, and from rising ground half a mile from the town, there is a capital view of the river, of which the Germans are justly proud—the Rhine. I went over the hospital at Wiesbaden; it is badly situated, and badly built, and in that day the sanitary arrangements were defective, but it would not be just to speak in further depreciation of a place I only saw once; it should also be borne in mind that twenty years ago cleanliness, pure air, and sanitation generally, were considered and treated as things of minor importance in the arrangements of many hospitals.

The German people did not impress me favourably, more especially the LORDS OF CREATION. They have the appearance of courtesy in public, in raising of the hat when they meet, and so forth, but their manners in private life and social intercourse appeared to me to be uncouth and overbearing; it would, however, be unfair to them not to add that I saw them in circumstances which had greatly influenced their national life, and probably raised in them a boastful spirit, for in that year, 1873, their great victories over France were still fresh in their memory.

I went up the Rhine, starting from Bonn on the

evening of the anniversary of the capture of Sedan ; bonfires were blazing, and fireworks were seen in all directions, infusing into me—at all times a quiet man—some of the general intoxication. I most gladly except the women of Germany from the charge I make against the unpleasant boastfulness of the men. Whether I met them in the hotel, where at eventide they were found in family groups, or in private, I found them bright, intelligent and courteous; and from them I learnt that even the harshness of their guttural language in issuing from their lips, might become as smooth and pleasant as soft and sweet music.

So far I have omitted all mention of Bathing as a German Institution. In most of the towns I visited—as Wiesbaden, Heidelberg, Homburg, etc.,—Public Baths are established, and the mineral water is likewise laid on in all the principal hotels; and the visitors seem generally to avail themselves of these facilities for bathing I have named. I need scarcely say that the mineral water is likewise employed internally as a remedial agent. But for my part I question if the benefit attributed to its use in various diseases is not rather due to its being taken in combination with change of air and scene, restrictions as to diet, and the more regular life enjoined, than to the virtues of the water that is drunk.

It is an interesting sight to watch as early as six

o'clock on a summer's morning, a number of people of both sexes, in the pursuit of health walking under *Colonnades*, and sipping the fresh sparkling water—which springs out of the earth quite hot,—in some places at a Temperature of 152° F. and upwards—from glass or china cups as it cools; meanwhile listening to the music which the authorities of the place have provided for their delectation. The mineral water has the taste of weak chicken-broth and there is extant a speculation by some genius as to the number of fowls which have already been killed in the bowels of the earth, where the hot springs exist, and as to the number still remaining, *i.e.*, whether the supply may not soon run out!

But what of the cost? What an irrelevant question! We have come abroad for health's sake and for enjoyment and what matters the cost?*

I returned to England, via Paris, about Christmas 1873, having first visited Strasburg and Metz; and having of course seen the celebrated Clock of Strasburg Cathedral, and also numerous reminiscences of the terrible Franco-German War, which

* Harrogate, in Yorkshire, is a typical spa town, I am afraid to say how many mineral springs are found in the bog-field there, but they are very numerous, and vary greatly in their qualities. The sight of "all sorts and conditions of men" and women drinking the morning draught of the odoriferous sulphur-water at the spa is a thing to be remembered.

ended about two years or so before my visit to the Continent. In passing from the subject of my Continental tour I cannot refrain from saying that, from observation and reflection on the military organisation of the German Nation, I opine almost with the strength of prophetic insight, that France has no chance against Germany in any future warfare, but must go to the wall. France is *Celtic*—Germany *Teutonic*! In my judgment it is a Providential arrangement that the former nation should not be permitted to overrun the earth.

My personal history is nearly finished, and there is little more to tell of myself. On my return from the Continent I endeavoured to establish myself in the South of England, but all my attempts failed, and I suffered much loss in a pecuniary sense; but I try to forget these attempts or at least to look upon them as merely parenthetical. For more than a dozen years after these failures I was sole *Physician* on the staff of one of our Provincial Hospitals, and practised as a *Consultant* in the town where it was situated. This work of my life is also ended, and although I am not exactly seeking the *otium cum dignitate* due to all who fight life's battle bravely, I am gradually retiring from the profession which I have ardently loved and to which I have given the best of my strength and years. Should God please in his goodness to spare my life yet a little while I

shall still find some work suitable to my state; for if we do but look upon this world in a right light and with reference to another we shall more and more incline to Carlyle's *dictum* that "Work is Worship."

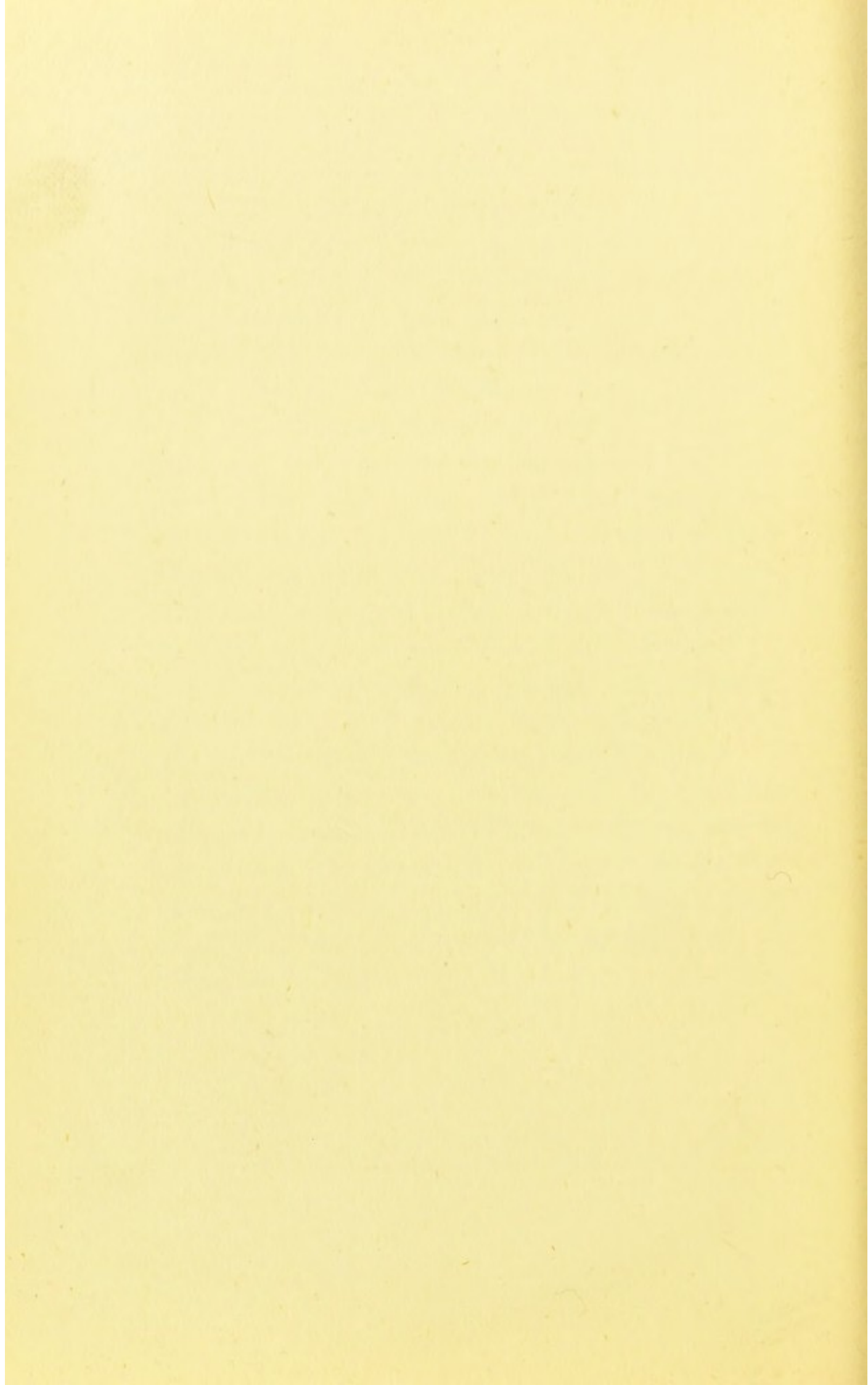
I have sought to gather up the threads of a long and busy life, that others perhaps ready to despair may take heart again, and manfully striving against the obstacles and difficulties in life's pathway, may by persistent effort and application bend them all to their service and profit.

The history of my professional life, as here traced, is by no means held up as an example. Alas! it has been full of mistakes and inconsistencies. But in one thing it has been consistent and firm as a rock, and it is this that all students, medical or others, may imitate with advantage; namely the resolute and dogged battle against circumstances that has been maintained.* To the industrious student imitation will be natural and easy; but to him who has been idle and self-indulgent, to begin and continue the battle in order to gain habits of thoughtfulness and application will task all his mental and moral powers. There are medical students who will never pass their examinations. As one writer has said "these have passed so often under the plough that they feel it only as an exciting titillation."

* "Success is like the robbers' cave in 'The Forty Thieves' there is only one key will open it—*perseverance*."

Some I have known who have cost their friends a small fortune and have made no return to them in work or success. These are asleep in self-indulgence and sloth, and will never awake again to be living men. Parental counsels and authoritative enactments or laws will never rouse their dormant powers. But I would fain hope that others though surrounded by difficulties, and opposed by obstacles great and high, may be stimulated by the perusal of these pages to renewed endeavour in their rough, and oftentimes weary road, and so gain the goal of their wishes. And some who have, hitherto, wasted precious time and opportunities may be turned aside from the course of idleness and folly indulged in, and straining every nerve, may yet gain habits of attention and steadiness in work, and so do their best to make up for the deficiencies of the past.

Should the frequent recurrence of the personal pronoun in this little book prove offensive to any of my readers, I would remind them, that in the preparation of a Monograph such as this, some amount of egotism may be expected to appear,—nay, is perhaps unavoidable.



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