

Introductory address, delivered at the Medical School, Surgeons' Hall, Edinburgh, at the commencement of the winter session 1857-58 / by D. Rutherford Haldane.

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INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE

MEDICAL SCHOOL, SURGEONS' HALL, EDINBURGH,

AT

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WINTER SESSION 1857-58.

BY

D. RUTHERFORD HALDANE, M.D.,

LECTURER ON GENERAL PATHOLOGY,
AND PATHOLOGIST TO THE ROYAL INFIRMARY.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY MURRAY AND GIBB.

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INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,—It has been for some years the practice, on our reassembling at this season, for one of the lecturers of this School of Medicine to deliver an address introductory to the labours of the session, and explanatory of the objects of your studies. While listening, in former years, to the addresses of those who have preceded me, I have been strongly impressed with the utility of the practice, and have felt that the hearers could not have failed to derive both pleasure and profit from the admirable discourses which had been delivered. But now that the duty has devolved upon myself, I feel that I would gladly escape from it; for the nearer the time for meeting you has approached, the more doubtful have I become of my ability to carry out the intentions of my colleagues. It is no affectation of modesty which tempts me to use this language; it is a feeling of responsibility, forced upon me by the importance of the occasion.

A difficulty met me in the very outset, in the selection of a suitable subject. It is a general complaint in the present day, that, in literature at least, but little originality is abroad, that the available stock of ideas has been pretty well worked out, and that illustration of old truths is more generally successful than the enunciation of new. So, after selecting, and again discarding, a variety of topics which at first occurred to me, I finally determined to limit myself to some remarks on the spirit in which the study of medicine should be commenced, and on the manner in which your medical education should be carried out. Into the details of medical education I do not propose to enter; for circumstances, in individual cases, often make strict adherence to a particular curriculum undesirable or impossible; and besides, information of this kind is far better imparted in a few minutes' conversation with one of your teachers, or with an experienced medical friend, than could possibly be effected on an occasion such as this. What I have to say, then, is of the most general character; and I crave your attention for a short time, to a consideration of the principles on which I conceive that medical education should be based.

Education is either general or special. In the former case, it aims at the cultivation of the mental faculties of the individual; it seeks to promote his

elevation in the scale of intellect. Various means may be employed to secure these ends—various forms of mental discipline may be made use of; but in whatever way the process of general education be carried out, the development of the intellectual powers is its main consideration, the imparting of mere information is looked upon as of very secondary importance. As in the gymnasium, the athlete is trained in every possible combination of movements, not so much that in after life he may be able to repeat the various exercises he has learned within its walls, as that his constitution may be hardened, that his muscular power may be fully developed, and that he may be able to exert his strength to the best advantage in whatever circumstances he may be placed; so, in the academy, the pupil spends a long and tedious period in studies in which he may discern no prospective advantage, and in acquiring accomplishments which he may cease to exercise so soon as he has left its precincts. This is the reason, gentlemen, why, in all liberal education, so much time is devoted, in this and other countries, to classical studies. The number of men who, in after years, turn these studies to a practical account, or even of those who merely keep up their classical information, may be comparatively small; but this is no proof that the system of education has been defective. Long experience has shown, that one of the best kinds of mental gymnastics is to be found in the study of the noble languages of antiquity; and that, by their aid, the mind becomes expanded, and the faculties sharpened; so as to qualify the scholar for any other kind of intellectual pursuit. Classical study, it is true, is only one such method, and it is possible that it may be too exclusively confided in; but I have merely alluded to it, as an illustration of the principle, that, in general or preliminary education, the development of the faculties of the pupil is the grand consideration, the special information he acquires being comparatively undervalued.

In special, or professional education, on the other hand, the object is different. The pupil has now fixed upon a career for which a special training is necessary. The actual information to be acquired, instead of being a secondary, has now become the primary consideration. The cultivation of the mental powers is subordinated to the becoming qualified for a particular profession.

Now, gentlemen, you might suppose that your medical education was to be purely of the latter character, and that you came within these walls in search only of professional instruction. Professional instruction I hope you will profit by, but I trust you will not be satisfied with it. In the first place, the age at which most young men commence the study of medicine is too early to authorise them to devote themselves to one single branch of knowledge; and, in the second place, the studies you are about to enter upon afford admirable means of mental discipline, independent of the special instruction they convey.

In former times, the qualifications for the doctorate of medicine were of a very different character from the requirements of the present day. A long course of mental philosophy was considered an indispensable preliminary to a medical education. In illustration of this, I cannot do better than quote to you a few lines from *The Golden Legend* of Longfellow, although I cannot

refrain from expressing a hope, that the intention of the preliminary studies has not been quite faithfully represented by the poet. The scene is at Salerno, one of the most celebrated medical schools of the middle ages. A stranger, attracted from a distance by the fame of its professors, has arrived, and requests from a resident student some information as to the discipline of the place. After some allusions to the beauties and advantages of the locality, the following conversation takes place between them. The stranger inquires—

“ And what are the studies you pursue ?
What is the course you here go through ?

Scholar.—The first three years of the college course
Are given to logic alone, as the source
Of all that is noble, and wise, and true.

Stranger.—That seems rather strange, I must confess,
In a medical school; yet, nevertheless,
You doubtless have reason for that.

Scholar.— O yes !
For none but a clever dialectician
Can hope to become a great physician ;
That has been settled long ago.
Logic makes an important part
Of the mystery of the healing art ;
For, without it, how could you hope to show
That nobody knows so much as you know ?”

Now, although in those days the scholastic discipline was carried to excess, and although the system for the imparting of medical knowledge was on the worst possible footing, there is a tendency, in our own times, to the opposite error. Whenever the mind, before its powers have been fully matured, is exclusively directed to a special subject, there is a danger of its energies being warped, or of its acquiring some unfortunate bias, by being obliged to range within a narrow circle. At the present day, the great majority commence their medical studies at an age when the faculties are just beginning to expand—that is, precisely at the period when there is the greatest danger of their full development being checked by an injudicious training. But all danger of this kind may be avoided, if the medical education be conducted in such a manner as not merely to furnish the student with the knowledge required to make him a practitioner, but to become in itself a powerful means of general mental discipline. In many of the subjects embraced in the medical curriculum, you will find abundant scope for the exercise of your highest faculties ; and the pleasure and advantage you derive from your studies will be proportioned to the degree in which you bring the intellect to bear upon them. If anatomy be regarded as a mass of isolated details, if it be looked upon as affording exercise only for the memory, its study will be found insufferably dry and tedious ; but studied, as it ought to be, with reference to the design, the uses, and the mutual connections of parts, it becomes interesting and beautiful ; and the

mind is lost in admiration, where before it shrank back in disgust. Though for the next four or five years, your attention must be principally directed to your medical studies, it should not be so directed exclusively. You should give a portion of your time, however small, to carrying on your general education; and each of you should remember, that, while training to become a physician or a surgeon, you still require to educate the Man.

The means by which medical knowledge may be acquired are various. They consist chiefly in attendance on lectures, private study, and practical instruction. Each of these means possesses a particular value, and it is only by their due combination that a satisfactory result can be obtained.

Regarding the value of lectures, some difference of opinion prevails. In former days, before the invention of printing, oral instruction was almost the only means by which knowledge could be communicated. Erudition was confined to a few, and students came flocking in thousands, to be instructed from the lips of the learned. Hence we find, that, in the middle ages, the University of Paris numbered 30,000 members; while in Oxford, at the commencement of the fourteenth century, accommodation was provided for students in 300 colleges and halls. An important change was brought about by the invention of printing. Knowledge was diffused; the professor, without moving from his study, might now address his pupils in the most distant quarters of the globe. Lectures, accordingly, lost their exclusive importance, and books, to a great degree, took the place of oral instruction. But it would be a mistake to suppose that lectures have lost all their value, or that any system of private study can adequately supply their place. It is no doubt very plausible to say, that one or two good books may contain all the information which would be imparted in a six months' course of lectures; and that the student masters his subject more thoroughly, and at a much less sacrifice of time, by studying quietly at home, than by listening on the benches of the lecture-room. But there are various other points to be considered. Very few indeed have the perseverance necessary for carrying out a rigorous system of self-instruction; and, to the great majority even of excellent students, the regularity of application produced by attendance on lectures, is found a most material assistance. Further, the lecturer enters into details, he makes repetitions, he employs illustrations, which would be impossible in books, and would be insufferably tedious if they were possible. And such repetitions and illustrations are especially valuable, when, as in medicine, the subject matter is new and unfamiliar. The solitary student is apt to fall into error, to mistake the meaning of the best authors, and to lose time, from failing to apprehend what a little explanation would have rendered clear. Besides, no two or three of even the best works contain all the information to be derived from a good course of lectures. Knowledge is progressive; advances are being constantly made; and a lecturer, if fitted for his part, should always be in advance of the most recent systematic work on his special subject. It is curious to remark, what a length of time is often required for important discoveries to find their way into ordinary manuals; and for the student to derive everything himself from the original sources, would be to prolong his education indefinitely. And, finally,

by means of examination and conversation, the lecturer judges of his student's progress; he sees when his own instructions have been wanting in perspicuity; he clears up doubts, and puts in a new and more striking light truths already apprehended. At the same time, I willingly admit that lecturers have been needlessly multiplied, and that, in particular, many courses are a great deal too long.

Of the importance of private study, I need say nothing. I have only to guard you against one or two errors. The first of these, is a too great dependence on what are called text-books. One great object in the present day, is to popularise knowledge, and to reduce it within the narrowest compass. Hence has arisen a host of manuals or text-books on every branch of your studies. Now, gentlemen, if there is one mistake more fatal than another, it is a too exclusive reliance on such works. They do not profess to be original; they are avowedly compilations; and in the perusal of them the memory alone is exercised—the judgment remains unemployed. The inevitable result of a course of study confined to such works, is a cramping of the faculties, to say nothing of the weariness and disgust produced in all but the lowest order of minds. The study of a good original work has a very different effect. You may not appear to have derived so much mere information from it as from a compilation, but the effect on your mind has been very different. To understand and follow your author, you must string up your faculties, you must prepare to struggle with him. According to the heathen mythology, Proteus refused to communicate information to the mere casual inquirer. To obtain the oracle, the god had to be contended with, overcome, and bound. So it is with a good book. You must first master your author, before you can obtain from him the oracle he has to divulge. In making these observations, gentlemen, you must not suppose me to recommend that you should discard compilations entirely, but only to understand, that their employment should be subordinated to a more wholesome form of mental nutriment. Another error consists in making your reading too diffuse. To thoroughly master one good book, is far more improving than to glance over a hundred. Knowledge, to be valuable, must be accurate, and it is accurate as it is concentrated.

A distinguishing characteristic of the medical education of the present day, consists in the combination of practical instruction with that derived from the two other sources I have mentioned. Even in anatomy, in the study of which it has long been recognised that actual dissection can alone insure proficiency, it is only recently that the student has been able to obtain the facilities necessary for the prosecution of his studies. For ages, religious prejudices and popular superstition forbade the carrying on of such investigations; and even when these had been overcome, it was all but impossible, in this country at least, to obtain the necessary material. Many whom I have now the honour of addressing, must recollect the time when the most disgraceful expedients were resorted to, in order to procure subjects. This state of matters at length worked its own cure; popular indignation against the outrages perpetrated, directed attention to the necessity for an improved system; dissection was formally legalised, and means were brought into operation which have rendered the

study of anatomy really practical. What has been done for anatomy, has now extended to nearly every branch of medical study. Attendance on lectures on chemistry no longer qualifies for examination, unless combined with actual manipulation. A theoretical acquaintance with drugs is insufficient; the candidate for a medical degree must have been engaged in their actual compounding. In the wards of our hospitals, the student is no longer a passive looker on; he is called upon to exert his own faculties of observation and discrimination; the practical examination of patients now constitutes a portion of every well-devised system of clinical instruction. Of the advantages of this new system, there cannot be two opinions; but I think they are best seen in the higher general standard of acquirements of the modern practitioner. I feel assured that a well-educated student of the present day is better qualified for the immediate practice of his profession, than he would have been under the old system, after two or three years of actual professional life. Penetrated with the value of practical knowledge, I trust that all of you will show the high sense you entertain of its importance, that you will allow nothing to interfere with your attendance in the dissecting-room, that you will spend much of your time in the wards of the hospital.

There is a valuable accessory to your professional training, to which I shall only allude—I mean attendance on societies in which you engage with your fellow-students in debate, on subjects connected with your medical studies. Nothing more effectually sharpens the intellect, and renders precise knowledge more necessary, than taking a part in these discussions. This forms, therefore, an important part of the Medical School of Edinburgh; and I am glad to say, that the flourishing condition of the Royal Medical and Hunterian Societies shows how well these advantages are appreciated.

I have thus, gentlemen, briefly alluded to the means by which your medical education is to be carried out; let me devote the remainder of this lecture to some remarks on the spirit in which your studies should be pursued.

Of those of you who are now for the first time entering upon the study of medicine, I trust that many will be encouraged and attracted by the interest which you will feel in your new pursuits. There is, I should think, no subject which presents such fascinations to the inquiring mind. You begin by making yourselves acquainted with the mechanism of your own frames; and the deeper you proceed, the more wonderful does their structure appear. You next familiarize yourselves with the uses of the parts, the anatomy of which you have investigated. An additional interest is thus imparted to information already acquired. You are now prepared for the study of the injuries and changes to which the body is liable. This constitutes Pathology; and, as its simpler division, you begin with External Pathology, or Surgery. And so you gradually advance from subject to subject, each laying a foundation and paving the way for that which is to succeed. Where there is so much variety, it seems difficult to weary; where there is so much to interest, one would suppose that the attention could not flag. But to profit by this variety, and to maintain this interest, it is necessary that you enter with all your hearts upon your studies. Study, to be agreeable, must be conscientious; for, no matter

how interesting a subject may be, there are always details to be mastered, difficulties to be overcome. There is no more a royal road to medicine than there is to mathematics; and I would impress upon you the great importance of making a good start. Labour indefatigably during your first year; and not only will you thus have laid a firm foundation for your future progress, but you will have acquired habits which make future exertions easy. Many commence stimulated by curiosity, and continue their industry partly from the same motive, partly from the pleasure the exertion itself affords. But presently a still higher inducement presents itself; love for the profession itself gradually begins to dawn upon them. The more they know, the warmer does this feeling become, until at length is kindled that genuine enthusiasm which the idle and ignorant can never know, but which is the stimulus and the reward of the true-hearted followers of medicine.

A sense of duty will, I am sure, prompt many of you to a suitable employment of your time. You are preparing, gentlemen, to assume a vast responsibility; you are equipping yourselves, like a band of warriors, to ward off the attacks and to stop the ravages of the most insidious and the most insatiable of enemies. But you must remember that yours is a very peculiar position. You are not to go forth as a united band, where a steady discipline will maintain you in your ranks, and where you will be cheered by the presence and support of your comrades. Each of you has to march forth alone, and must be prepared to act unsupported in any emergency which may arise. Not in the glare of day, and before admiring spectators, are your laurels to be won; in darkness and in solitude must your struggles be carried on.

Each of you who in after life shall practise his profession, will, I doubt not, hereafter find himself in circumstances, where, humanly speaking, life or death is in his hands. He may be at a distance from all additional assistance, or the danger may be so urgent that the time in his hands must be counted by seconds. A decision as to his line of practice must be come to on the spot; there is no time for consulting others, no opportunity for referring to books. And now, if he be found wanting, he is indeed to be pitied. Losses of almost any other kind may be made good, mistakes as to any other subject may be rectified; but the vital spark once fled, we have only to acknowledge our impotence. I can conceive no situation half so painful, as for a man of ordinary sensibility to be placed by the bedside of a patient, and to have knowledge enough to see that the sick man might be benefited by judicious interference, but to feel his own incompetence to administer relief. He sees his patient writhing in anguish, he hears his heart-rending moans, he marks the gradual failure of the powers of nature, he notes the changing countenance and the glazing eye; at length there is a long-drawn sigh, and all is over. How, think you, does the physician feel? I speak not now of a man so stolid by nature, so steeped in ignorance, or so inflated by conceit, as not to know his own deficiencies; but I speak of a man of every-day life, of an average specimen of humanity. Does he not feel within his own breast a silent but accusing voice? One who has the power to save another from certain death, but who refuses to use his power, is as much that other's murderer as if he slew him

with his hand; and any of us, who, from an ignorance which it was in our power to remedy, shall allow a fellow-creature to die unsuccoured, shall not be clear from blood-guiltiness. Could the student, at the outset of his career, realise this sense of responsibility; could he have a foretaste of what he might afterwards have to suffer on account of neglected opportunities, I feel sure that he would so employ his time as to free himself from such sources of self-reproach. There are but too many cases in which the most skilful must feel how dim is his vision, and how feeble is his strength, where disease comes rolling on, sweeping aside the slender barriers by which we attempt to arrest its progress, or advances so insidiously, that, while we see its effects, we know not where to prepare for its attacks. In many such cases, we feel that we can do no more; we must be silent, though most anxious spectators; we can only trust, that it may please the Great Author of life to rebuke the disease, and to restore from the gates of death. But while too often powerless, our art is frequently the means of preserving from death, and of alleviating suffering. It has of late been somewhat the fashion to express distrust in remedies, and to undervalue the office of the physician; but I am sure, that, as you advance in your career, you will find that a real agency is committed to your hands; and the very knowledge of the limitations of medicine, is the best assistant to recognising in what its true power consists.

Self-interest is probably the most powerful guiding spring of human action; and, within certain limits, it is well that it should be so, for a due regard to our interests is a duty we owe to ourselves. It must be evident to you, that your fitness for practice must be, to a great degree, dependent upon the use you make of the time devoted to your professional studies; and hence your success in life lies, to a great degree, in your own hands. It is true, that it is not always the most deserving who are the greatest favourites of the public, and that popular reputation is not invariably the true measure of professional attainments; but the saying of the wisest of men is true in medicine as in every other pursuit, that it is "the hand of the diligent that maketh rich." There is one department of the profession in which success must now depend entirely on your own exertions—I mean, admission into the East India Company's Service. An assistant-surgeoncy, from the immediate inducements it holds out, from the certainty of a provision for after life, and from the possibility of retiring at a comparatively early age, has, as you are aware, been long regarded as one of the most eligible openings in life. Till lately, the entrance into the service was sealed, except to those who could make interest with directors; favour, not merit, was considered in the distribution of appointments. And I have often noticed the bad effect produced upon those who so obtained the appointments. These young men knew from an early period—generally from the very commencement of their studies—that they were destined for India; that, in due time, they should receive their commissions; and, in many cases, this knowledge acted most prejudicially. Instead of having to look to their own exertions as the means of their advancement in life they regarded themselves as provided for; they took their student life very easily, encouraging themselves by the idea, that, if they only knew enough to pass their examinations, they

need trouble themselves no further. Of course there were exceptions; still I have known many instances, where the certainty of an Indian appointment has had the effects I have described. And I am afraid we must allow, that medical science has not been advanced so much as it might have been by our Indian brethren. Making allowance for some brilliant exceptions—making all due allowance for the difficulties occasioned by climate and mode of life, more might certainly have been accomplished. But now that the appointments are open to all, now that merit alone procures an entrance into the service, I trust and feel sure, that the medical profession in this country will reap the benefits of the additional talent which will be sent out. Since the institution of the examinations, students from this school have gained their due share of distinction; and it is highly gratifying to know, that, at the very last competition, the two highest places were held by gentlemen who but last year studied in Edinburgh.

A noble ambition, a desire to leave behind you names which will take their place in the records of your science, may well stir you to enthusiasm. The respect, I may almost say the veneration, in which the names of great physicians have been held, may well stimulate your zeal. The name of Jenner will go down to the latest posterity, and blessings will be showered upon his memory wherever civilisation shall extend. You must not be deterred by supposing that so much has already been discovered, that but little can remain for you to effect, or to think that, had you lived before such and such a discovery had been made, you could scarcely have failed to accomplish it. Discovery very rarely consists in the conception of a single brilliant idea; it is almost always a gradual process; much labour has to be gone through, many facts have to be collected, before the culminating point can be attained. And, in our admiration of him who has made this last and most brilliant step, we are liable to forget what merit is due to those who, by patient investigation, have made this last step possible. The name of Newton is pre-eminently distinguished as the maker of the grandest generalisation in physical science; Harvey will ever be revered as the demonstrator of the circulation of the blood. But in the case of each of these great men, the way had to be paved before him: others had to carry on laborious investigations; the minds of men had to be gradually prepared for the reception of the truth. The Newtonian induction of universal gravitation is incomparably the greatest scientific discovery ever made, yet important advances towards it had been effected by preceding mathematicians. In the words of Dr Whewell,—“As Newton’s laws assumed Kepler’s, Kepler’s laws assumed as facts the results of the planetary theory of Ptolemy; and thus the theories of each generation in the scientific world are (when thoroughly verified and established) the facts of the next generation. Newton’s theory is the circle of generalisation which includes all the others; the highest point of the inductive ascent; the catastrophe of the philosophic drama to which Plato had prologized; the point to which men’s minds had been journeying for two thousand years.” The discovery of the circulation of the blood revolutionised medicine; yet, in order that the idea of it could occur to Harvey, it was necessary that the earlier anatomists should make themselves acquainted with the

mechanism by which it is carried on, with the arrangement of the blood-vessels, of the heart, and of its valves. The domain of knowledge is like one of the gold fields of the antipodes; the surface riches are few and far between, and are soon collected; the bulk of the precious mineral is found in small grains, which must be tediously picked from the soil, or laboriously eliminated from the quartz; yet, in the aggregate, is the value of the scattered grains far greater than that of the more showy nuggets. The progress of knowledge does not consist so much in occasional brilliant discoveries, as in the acquisition of a mass of minute and painfully-acquired facts, which are gradually made to assume their proper place in the construction of the edifice. These remarks are eminently applicable to medicine. We shall seek in vain for a single formula which shall embrace the whole *ratio medendi*; but a calm and dispassionate search after truth, even by the humblest of its votaries, will never be thrown away; inquiries, sincerely conducted, will at least fill up some little gap, round off some little angle, and the modest labourer may thus effect far more real good than many a more ambitious but less conscientious worker.

Now, gentlemen, while there is so much in the study of medicine to awaken your ardour and to stimulate your zeal; while there is so much to reward your most untiring exertions, you would carry away a very false impression, if you supposed that nothing but pleasure and encouragement are to be met with in the practice of your profession. In every human pursuit there are difficulties and annoyances—much bitter is always mixed with the sweet; and in the medical profession, there are many special discouragements. I do not allude to these in order to disquiet or deter you, but that, knowing them beforehand, you may be prepared to meet them. The practice of medicine is sufficiently arduous in itself, even were you sure that your exertions would always be appreciated and rewarded. There are services which the physician is called upon to render; there are anxieties which, in the course of his practice, he must experience, that money could never pay, and for which his only reward must be sought in his own heart, and in the gratitude of his patient. I am proud to say that nowhere is there so much self-sacrificing devotion, so much unselfish and unrequited exertion, as there is in the medical profession; but the very extent of these services makes them but too often be undervalued. The public come to think that they have a special claim upon the time and exertions of the physician or the surgeon; and not contented with the vast amount of gratuitous services rendered in hospitals, in dispensaries, and in private and unrequited attendance upon the poor, they appear to think that there is nothing ungenerous in compelling him to accept a pittance, from which the members of other professions would turn with disdain. The usage which union surgeons every day receive, is a disgrace to the country; the object of the poor-law boards generally appears to be to obtain the greatest amount of work on the lowest possible terms. But the fault does not lie altogether with the public, our own profession must take a part of the responsibility. In the race of life, men are always to be found who, in their zeal to outstrip their competitors, will underbid them to any extent, and who, for a slight personal advantage, will forget their true position as members of a liberal profession.

This has been too much the case in medicine; competition is very keen; and the public are scarcely to be blamed, if, instead of considering the fair value of the work required, they accept the services of qualified practitioners on their own terms. The remedy for many abuses lies with ourselves; we should never forget that, in lowering ourselves, we compromise, at the same time, the dignity of our profession.

Another discouragement you must be prepared to meet, is the slowness, or even the uncertainty of success. There is no doubt that, as a general rule, talent and assiduity are ultimately rewarded, and that the surest way to obtain confidence is to merit it. But in medicine, there is a special difficulty to contend against. The human mind is largely gifted with credulity, and successful imposture has been a feature in every age. In the middle ages, the belief in astrology was all but universal; a hundred and fifty years ago, the South Sea bubble attracted its dupes by thousands; we have seen in our own day the success of table-turning and spirit-rapping. In every thing connected with medicine there appears to be a special tendency to credulity. Let a theory be started, no matter how monstrous in its dogmas, no matter how repulsive to the principles of common sense, or to the data of every-day experience; let the supporters of it be loud in their acclamations and unscrupulous in their assertions, and it is certain to be temporarily successful. And it will make converts not only among the poor and ignorant, its chief supporters will probably be found among the rich and educated. You often see a man regarding whose abilities and shrewdness there cannot be two opinions, cease suddenly to be guided by these, and repose implicit faith in a drunken cobbler whom he would not trust to mend a pair of shoes, but who calls himself a bonesetter. Much of this, no doubt, is inherent in human nature; but even here the medical profession is not altogether innocent. The mistakes of the profession in one age often lay the foundations of quackery for the next; had it not been for the abuse of drugs during the last century, the doctrine of infinitesimal doses would have been impossible in the present. But even within the profession itself there is much quackery, and it is this which is most dangerous. We may smile at the pretensions of Professor Holloway; we may treat with contempt the assertions of the establisher of the College of Health; but what is within our ranks is far more dangerous, because more insidious and more difficult to be guarded against. Traitors in the camp are much more to be dreaded than foes in the open field; the worst enemies of legitimate medicine are often its professed friends. From all such crooked paths let me most emphatically warn you; in after life, let it be your object never to commit an action, or to say a word you could afterwards be ashamed of. The risk of detection is a poor safe-guard to morality; the dread of wounding your own conscience should be your restraining motive. By taking this for your rule of conduct, by never making professions you do not conscientiously feel that you can fully carry out, by never seeking to advance your own interests at the expense of another, you will preserve your own self-respect, and you are sure to merit and to obtain the approval of others. But even this is a subordinate consideration; you will, I hope, have even a higher standard to refer to. For, though it is well to gain the good

opinion of your fellow-men; though it is well to preserve your own self-respect, you must ever remember that you have an account to render to your God. There was a time when medical studies were supposed to foster infidelity, and when the title of physician was almost synonymous with materialist. But that time is long gone by. Some of the brightest ornaments of the Christian life have been members of the medical profession; and medicine, united with religion, has engaged in a new field of missionary enterprise. Yet, while we always bear these things in mind, we are not to neglect our temporal interests, nor to abstract ourselves in the seclusion of ascetics. The sentence of labour, though originally a curse, is, if the labour be earnest and well directed, turned into a blessing; and our solicitude for higher objects is best evinced by the zeal with which we fulfil our ordinary duties.



