

Testimonials in favour of John Argyll Robertson for the chair of Materia Medica, Edinburgh University.

Contributors

Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh

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TESTIMONIALS

IN FAVOUR OF

JOHN ARGYLL ROBERTSON,

M. D. F. R. S. E.

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS,

LECTURER ON MATERIA MEDICA, &c. &c.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY M. ANDERSON.

1832.

*unsuccessful Candidate
Lost by 22 to 11*

R28214

TESTIMONIALS

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

LORD PROVOST, MAGISTRATES,

AND
JOHN ABERCROMBIE, ROBERTSON,
TOWN-COUNCIL

M.D.R.S.E.
OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS,

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

In offering myself as a Candidate for the Professorship of Materia Medica in the University, I beg leave to enclose various Testimonials for your consideration, and, at the same time, to state generally the grounds on which I venture to solicit your support.

After having served an apprenticeship for five years, with J. H. Wishart, Esq., F.R.C.S.E., I received my degree as Doctor of Medicine here, and at the same time became a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons. I then went to the Continent for the purpose of prosecuting my Medical Studies; and after having resided at Paris for two years, I spent another year in visiting the different Medical Schools of France, and also those of Italy and Germany. On my return to Edinburgh,

unimpaired
last 22 to 11

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

THE

LORD PROVOST, MAGISTRATES,

AND

TOWN-COUNCIL

OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH,

PATRONS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

In offering myself as a Candidate for the Professorship of Materia Medica in the University, I beg leave to enclose various Testimonials for your consideration, and, at the same time, to state generally the grounds on which I venture to solicit your support.

After having served an apprenticeship for five years, with J. H. Wishart, Esq., F. R. C. S. E., I received my degree as Doctor of Medicine here, and at the same time became a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons. I then went to the Continent, for the purpose of prosecuting my Medical Studies ; and after having resided at Paris for two years, I spent another year in visiting the different Medical Schools of France, and also those of Italy and Germany. On my return to Edin-

burgh, in the year 1822, I was admitted a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, and commenced practice in this city.

Having particularly directed my attention to the subject of *Materia Medica* and Pharmacy, I began, in the year 1825, a course of Public Lectures on the subject, which I have since continued regularly to deliver. In undertaking this task, I was aware of the difficulty of obtaining students, attendance being required at the class in the University, for the purposes of graduation. I found, however, that from the very close attention which I was enabled to pay to the subject, and the progressive improvements I made on my course of Lectures, that the number of my Pupils steadily increased. During last Session, I had no fewer than 72 Students, being more than double the number who have at any period attended a Private Lecturer on this subject in Edinburgh. You are probably aware that there are three Private Lecturers besides myself on *Materia Medica* in this city.

I have also been, for a considerable time, engaged in preparing for the Press a Treatise on *Materia Medica*. I mention this circumstance, solely to shew that I have been devoting my best attention to the subject.

In regard to my success as a Lecturer, and the advantages which my Students have derived from attendance on my Class, I would beg to refer

to the Testimonials of Mr Fergusson, Mr Wyse, Mr Macansh, Mr Crichton, Mr Jameson, Mr Hogg, Mr Moore, Mr Turnbull, Mr Macdonald, Dr Ross, Dr Hatton and Mr Smith. All of these Gentlemen were my Pupils, and none of them are in any other way connected with me. One of them is now himself a Private Lecturer; five of them had been for years, at the time of their attendance, Surgeons in the Royal Navy; one a Surgeon in the Army, of 20 years standing, three of them are now engaged in practice in this city, one in Falkirk, and the remaining gentleman is still prosecuting his studies. I humbly conceive that such Testimonials will be the more satisfactory, as they proceed from gentlemen who not only are fully capable, from their standing in the profession, of forming a correct estimate of the value of Medical Lectures, but from their regular attendance, had ample opportunities of judging of the manner in which I discharge my duties. Allow me further to say, that, if the almost constant occupation for a period of seven years, in studying and publicly teaching the subject which is embraced within the duties of the Chair now vacant, can be justly estimated as a qualification for filling that Chair, these Testimonials will, I hope, amply shew that I am possessed of that qualification.

I have not thought it necessary to apply for Certificates of a more general kind, because I have been led to believe, that such Testimonials do not

bear so strongly upon the precise point which you have to determine, namely, the peculiar fitness of the Candidate to teach the particular class to be placed under his charge. It might have been easy for me to have obtained from my friends, many of them eminent in the profession, numerous Testimonials as to my attainments in Medical Science ; but it must be obvious, that these are of far less value than the Certificates of such as have been educated under my immediate charge in this department.

In addition to the Certificates of experienced Pupils, I beg at the same time to refer to the very flattering opinions entertained by private lecturers on other branches of the profession in Edinburgh. The greater number of these Gentlemen have occasionally heard my Lectures, and all of them have had an opportunity of ascertaining from such of my Pupils as attended their Classes, the opinion which they entertained of my fitness to teach this subject, while some could also judge, by examination or exhibition, of the proficiency which these Pupils had attained. In particular, I would refer to the Testimonials of Dr Mackintosh, Dr Fletcher, Dr Russell, Dr Thatcher, Mr Liston and Dr Campbell.

I may be permitted to add, that, if experience in Lecturing forms a strong recommendation in general for supplying any vacant Chair in the University, this is more especially the case in *Materia Medica*, a subject so much involved in detail. You must be well aware, that it is of great

public advantage, both to this city and the cause of Science, to encourage Private Lecturers. Upon this subject it is impossible for me to add any thing to the very admirable observations of the venerable Professor Russell, an authority than whom none can be higher in such a matter. I beg also to direct your attention to the opinions of Mr Wardrop and Dr Darwall.

Without detaining you by a more particular reference to the other Testimonials subjoined, I beg most respectfully to request your attentive perusal of the whole. I feel confident you will be guided in your determination on this important matter, solely by the consideration of having the vacancy supplied by the person best qualified to fill the Chair. If I should be found worthy of your patronage and support, I hope it is needless to add, that the utmost zeal and assiduity will be shown on my part to fulfil the duties of a Chair, which is the highest object of my ambition, and to the attainment of which object I have already devoted so much of my time, by study and public lecturing, instead of confining myself to the more lucrative field of private practice.

I have the honour to remain,

My LORD and GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient and

Very humble Servant,

J. Robertson

53, Queen Street,
18th May 1832.

public advantage, both to this city and the cause
of Science, to encourage Private Lecturers. Upon
this subject it is impossible for me to add any
thing to the observations of the

TETIMONIALS

responsible Professor Russell, an authority than
whom none can be higher in such a matter. I beg
also to direct your attention to the opinions of
Mr. Wardrop and Dr. Davall.

Without detaining you by a more particular re-
ference to the other Testimonials submitted, I beg
most respectfully to request your attentive perusal
of the whole. I feel confident you will be enabled
in your determination on this important matter
to supply the consideration of having the vacancy

supplied by the person best qualified to fill the
Chair. It should be found with my 1832. 1832.

My dear Sir, - Five years ago I printed and
distributed a paper of anonymous testimonials in relation to
certain anonymous allegations which had been
brought forward against the College of Surgeons.
The substance of these testimonials was the basis of
my answer to your question. I might have con-
tented myself with referring you to the paper in-
cluded to, but I thought that it would be more sa-
tisfactory to you to receive a concise statement of
the opinion which that paper contains, the sub-

stance of which is as follows and Gentlemen,
Success in public lecturing, affords the most de-
cided proof of a candidate's scientific knowledge of

Very humble servant,
1834 May 1832.

TESTIMONIALS.

No. I.

From JAMES RUSSELL, Vice President of the Royal Society, F.R.C.S.E., Consulting Surgeon to the Royal Infirmary, Professor of Clinical Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, &c. &c.

30, Abercromby Place,

14th May 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—Five years ago, I printed and distributed a paper of remarks, in refutation of certain unfounded allegations which had been brought forward against the College of Surgeons. The substance of these remarks forms the basis of my answer to your queries. I might have contented myself with referring you to the paper alluded to, but I thought that it would be more satisfactory to you to receive a concise statement of the opinion which that paper contains, the substance of which is as follows :

Success in public lecturing, affords the most decided proof of a candidate's abilities, knowledge of

his subject, and talents for communicating scientific information in a popular and impressive manner. It is immaterial whether he has attained this excellence, by teaching the same subject at another university, or by teaching it in private Lectures ; since, in either case, he would have acquired experience which would qualify him to discharge the arduous duties of an important station, in an efficient manner.

Private lecturing is not so lucrative as extensive private practice ; so that if any medical man has, by the success of his private lectures, acquired a high professional reputation, he will cease to cultivate the art of lecturing, and betake himself to practice, unless he enjoys the prospect of having justice done to his merit, whenever a proper vacancy occurs in a university. The abandonment of private teaching, by a person of capacity and experience, is a loss to the community, by abridging the number of well qualified candidates, and thereby diminishing the chance of procuring an able successor to fill a vacant chair.

It is, therefore, the interest of the public to promote private lecturers of distinguished merit to those situations which are suited to their talents and acquirements. I remain, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

JAMES RUSSELL.

No. II.

From JAMES WARDROP, Esq., F. R. C. S. L. &
E., &c. &c.

London, May 1st, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter, mentioning that you are to be a candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica in the University of Edinburgh, I am gratified to have an opportunity of stating, that, from a long personal intercourse, as well as general opinion, you are in a peculiar manner eligible for such a situation. Your professional zeal, your habits of industry, your taste for that branch of medical science in particular, and above all, the talents you have exhibited, and the success you have met with as a Teacher of the Materia Medica, eminently befit you to fill that Chair to which you now aspire. In this latter respect, the Patrons of the University have a great advantage in making their selection of Professors from amongst those who have already lectured, many very learned men having been found quite incompetent to communicate knowledge to others, and have proved very unsuccessful Professors. Believe me, your very faithful,

JAMES WARDROP.

No. III.

From JOHN MACKINTOSH, M. D. F. R. C. S.,
*Acting Surgeon to the Ordnance in North
 Britain, Lecturer on the Principles of Pa-
 thology and Practice of Physic, &c., &c.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I most heartily approve of your intention of becoming a candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica in this University. Few can be found who possess equal claims to the support of the Honourable Patrons, and I have great pleasure in stating the grounds on which I have formed this opinion.

I have known you for many years, and have had ample opportunities of estimating your talents and medical acquirements. I have been enabled also to judge of your qualifications as a lecturer, from having been a fellow-labourer in the same school for seven years, during which time you have been most successfully engaged in teaching Materia Medica. I have often heard you lecture, and can bear testimony to the clear and impressive manner in which your Lectures were delivered, and to the profound attention paid by your audience. From my frequent and unrestrained intercourse with students, I have been able to learn their opinions, and can state that

no teacher can be more popular and more highly respected. But the best proofs of your powers as a teacher, are to be found in the following circumstances :—The progressive increase in the number of the pupils in your class, attendance on which is quite optional, their regular attendance up to the last day of the session, and the good appearance your pupils in particular have made at my own weekly examinations, on subjects connected with the administration of remedies.

I feel confident that I have scarcely over-rated your talents and qualifications, when I recollect how highly your professional character was esteemed by our late lamented friend, Dr Kellie, whose talents were of the highest order, and who, had he been alive, would have evinced the greatest interest in your present application.

I cannot conclude, without stating the important advantages that the Medical School of Edinburgh will derive, should the Patrons of the University think fit to bestow this appointment upon you. It will stimulate and encourage the exertions of all the private lecturers, and have the effect of bringing additional talent into the field, by shewing, that success in teaching, independent of all private and political influence, will be ultimately duly appreciated and rewarded. Every one who reflects on the subject, must be aware, that extensive private practice is

more pleasant and remunerating than lecturing; so, unless talented lecturers can look forward to admission within the walls of the University, they will gradually, as their practice increases, pay less attention to lecturing, or give it up altogether—the effects of which will be severely felt by the Medical School, on the prosperity of which the interests of Edinburgh so mainly depend. Wishing you success, I remain, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

JOHN MACKINTOSH, M.D.

—
No. IV.

From ROBERT LISTON, Esq., F. R. C. S. L.
& E., Surgeon to the Royal Infirmary,
Lecturer on Surgery, &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR,—Understanding that you are to be a candidate for the Professorship of Materia Medica in the University, I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to your peculiar fitness for discharging the duties of that Chair. I know that for many years you have been a successful teacher of that branch of medical science; and, from the nature of the subject itself, it is obvious, that great experience and constant application are required, to enable any one to become a useful practical instructor in a department necessarily involved in

great multiplicity of detail. I have had frequent occasion, in my intercourse with such of my students as have attended your lectures, to hear them talk of you in terms of the most unqualified approbation, and I know no one so well fitted to supply a vacancy in this Chair.

I purposely confine this testimonial to your peculiar claims to become Professor of Materia Medica, owing to your long attention to that subject, and to the success with which it has been taught by you for many years in this city, not because I consider you in any degree inferior in general attainments in Medical Science, but because all general testimonials (which are at any rate so easily procured) are, in my opinion, of comparatively little value, and do not bear directly on the point which I consider the Honourable Patrons have to determine. I remain, my dear Sir, yours truly,

ROBT. LISTON.

No. V.

From JOHN FLETCHER, M.D., F. R. C. S., *Lecturer on the Institutions of Medicine, &c. &c.*

9, Windsor Street, Edinburgh.

MY DEAR SIR,—Deeply interested as I am in the welfare of our Alma Mater, and in the progress

of its medical students, it gave me sincere pleasure to find you named among the candidates for the vacant Chair of Materia Medica. It is almost superfluous to observe, that one who has been so long engaged in teaching this branch of science, must be presumed to be more competent, *cæteris paribus*, for the office, than persons who have either not been engaged in public teaching at all, or *certainly* not been engaged in teaching this particular department. And when, in addition to this *presumptive* argument in your favour, we have the *positive* evidence of your ability, afforded by your progressively increasing class, and the high opinion of you, uniformly expressed by your pupils, we can have little hesitation, I think, in deciding that, in giving you their suffrage, the Patrons of the University will best consult at once its interests, and those of its élèves. All who have been occupied in the business of public teaching, sufficiently well know how very imperfect the earlier courses of Lectures on any subject necessarily are, and how very slowly they arrive, in the hands even of the most talented men, at the excellence of which they are susceptible; and it does seem, therefore, very injudicious, not to say unjust, to appoint to Chairs, attendance on which is compulsory, any but long experienced men; and when such men have been already

eminently successful, where attendance on them was entirely optional, and where, therefore, success could be commanded by merit alone, I cannot conceive any claims by which theirs can be superseded. I do accordingly very earnestly wish you success in the present object of your ambition, and remain yours, very sincerely,

(Signed) JOHN FLETCHER, *M.D.*

No. VI.

From JOHN LIZARS, F. R. S. E., Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, Professor of Surgery to the R. C. S. E., &c.

38, York Place, 9th May 1832.

DEAR SIR,—Understanding that you are to be a Candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica in this University, allow me to say, that I have frequently heard the Students talk most highly of the great advantages they have derived from your Lectures. I beg also to state, that it appears to me, that great benefit would be obtained by appointing a person to the Chair, whose mind has for a succession of years been devoted to the very subject to be taught; whereas, the lecturer on another subject

has to give his mind a new bend, and to prepare a new course of lectures, which requires some years to bring to any thing like perfection. On this point I can speak from experience, having first taught Anatomy, and, secondly, Surgery. From all I have heard, and from personal observation, I consider you most ably qualified for the Chair of Materia Medica, and if you should be the successful Candidate, you will add to the reputation of this justly celebrated University. I remain, dear Sir, yours very sincerely,

JOHN LIZARS.

No. VII.

From ALEX. J. LIZARS, F. R. C. S., Lecturer on Anatomy, and Demonstrator in the Anatomical Rooms, Brown Square.

Edinburgh, 9th May 1832.

DEAR SIR,—Understanding that you are to be a Candidate for the Professorship of Materia Medica in the University of Edinburgh, and having no doubt you will found your claims to that Chair, principally upon your success as a teacher of that science, which I conceive to be the best of all claims, I hasten to add my testimony to those which you must have received from individuals

more capable of appreciating your many qualifications than myself. In my humble opinion, the best proof of the abilities of a lecturer, is the estimation in which he is held by his pupils, and the numbers which attend his class, compared with other lecturers. From the constant and familiar intercourse which I have with a great number of Medical Students, in my capacity of demonstrator in the Anatomical Rooms, Brown Square, I have every opportunity of hearing their opinions with regard to the different lecturers; and as a very great number of your pupils attend my Anatomical Rooms, I can truly and conscientiously declare, that the estimation in which you are held by them, is of the most flattering and honourable description.

Young gentlemen, for the most part, evince a great dislike to the study of *Materia Medica*, and I scarcely ever yet found a Student who did not sacrifice the class of *Materia Medica*, for the purpose of prosecuting his dissections, with the exception of yours; no sooner did the hour for your lecture arrive, than the dissection (however interesting or important) with which they were engaged was immediately discontinued, and after they have returned, I have repeatedly heard them talking in praise of the clear, distinct and satisfactory account of some difficult point they had just heard. I have further to add, that I am acquainted with

many young gentlemen, who took out the tickets of other Lecturers on Materia Medica, and at the same time attended your lectures, in consequence of the valuable and practical information they derived from them.

In as far as I can judge, I cannot conceive that the Patrons of the University (who must be most deeply interested in its prosperity), could make a better selection than by appointing yourself; for, from the experience which you have had in teaching Materia Medica, from the high estimation in which you are held by the Students, and by the Profession generally, and from the numerous and still increasing class which you possess, I cannot believe that an individual could be found better calculated to support the distinguished character which it has acquired. Wishing you every success, I remain, yours, very sincerely,

ALEX. J. LIZARS.

—
No. VIII.

*From JOHN THATCHER, M. D., F. R. C. S.,
Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians,
and Lecturer on Midwifery, &c.*

MY DEAR SIR,—Learning that you are to be a Candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica and Pharmacy in our University, should it become

vacant by the death of my much respected and talented friend, Dr Duncan, I have no doubt but that you would discharge all its duties, for the extension of science and the credit of the University. Having taught successfully, and devoted much time to this department in our private school, this should justly give a decided claim for a higher object of ambition. The Honourable Patrons of our College will always do well, strongly to inquire into the merits and qualification of the local private Lecturer, who, to rival or be superior to the University Professor, has every stimulus for exertion; if such inquiry be instituted, unbiased by prejudice or party, it would give a favourable bias to your claim, and you have my best wishes on the occasion, and believe me, yours truly,

J. THATCHER.

23, ELDER STREET, May 9, 1882.

No. IX.

From JAMES RUSSELL, M. D., F. R. C. S.,
F. R. S. E., *Lecturer on Materia Medi-*
ca, &c.

30, Abercromby Place, May 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—Having had frequent opportunities of hearing you lecture, I think it but justice, though a rival condidate, to bear testimony, both

to the practical usefulness of the information you communicate, and to the satisfactory nature of your illustrations. Your manner, also, of delivering your Lectures is clear, and more than usually impressive; insomuch that, to the end of the course, you succeed in interesting the attention of your pupils. Your success as a teacher furnishes the best evidence of your talents for that difficult office, and I am confident that the more inquiry is made, the more undeniably will your great popularity with the students be established. I remain, dear Sir, yours very truly,

JAMES RUSSELL.

—
No. X.

From ROBERT LEWINS, M. D., *Fellow of the
Royal College of Physicians, &c. &c.*

Leith, May 8, 1832.

DEAR SIR,—It gives me pleasure to learn that, in the event of a vacancy, you are to be a candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica in our University. I have long been accustomed to express my decided opinion of your peculiar fitness to teach that department of Medical Science, an opinion founded on a positive knowledge of your success and popularity as a Lecturer on the subject referred to, and of which the number and proficien-

cy of your pupils must afford convincing proof to all who are acquainted with the condition of our Medical School. For these cogent reasons, and from a conviction that you are possessed of all the other essential requisites to do credit to the important situation which is the honourable object of your ambition, I have pleasure in expressing to yourself, in writing, what I have often mentioned in conversation to others, that I know no one whom the Patrons of the University can with more propriety select as their Professor of *Materia Medica*, when called upon to appoint a successor to that Chair; especially since it appears to me that the interest of the University, and the realization of your expectations, are in this matter identical. That you may, therefore, be the successful candidate is the sincere wish of, dear Sir, yours truly,

ROBT. LEWINS, *M.D.*

No. XI.

From FRANCIS FARQUHARSON, M. D., F. R. C.
S. E., &c. &c.

2, Elder Street, May 7, 1832.

DEAR SIR.—It gives me much pleasure to hear that you are to be a Candidate for the Professorship of *Materia Medica*, as I know no one better quali-

fied to do it justice. I have several times heard you lecture, and I am happy to bear testimony to the pleasing and clear manner in which you communicated truly valuable information ; you on all occasions commanded the unwearied attention of your Pupils, and they always expressed a very high opinion of your merits as a teacher. It appears to me that many advantages would be gained by appointing a successful private lecturer to fill a Chair in the University.

1. The risk of choosing a talented man who has not the power of communicating his knowledge would be avoided.

2. A stimulus would be given to other private teachers, and additional talent called forth.

3. As Lectures at first are very imperfect, it is quite evident how important it must be to appoint a person who has had opportunities of improving his Lectures, and bringing them nearer to perfection ; that you have done so is best proved by the large number of Students who have optionally attended your class. Wishing you success, I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

F. FARQUHARSON, *M.D.*

No. XII.

From E. W. DUFFIN, M. D., F. R. C. S. L.
& E., &c.

2d May 1832,

3, Foley Place, London.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just heard that you are to be a candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica.

The subject (Materia Medica), I am aware, has now engrossed your attention and study for several years, and I have frequently, both by your pupils and others, heard your success as a private lecturer remarked, not only as highly flattering, but equally merited. In one particular, more especially, I have heard you spoken of in terms of the warmest commendation, viz. your mode of imparting information. Now, as the talent of successfully communicating to others, the knowledge which a lecturer possesses, is one of paramount importance, though perhaps much less attended to than it should be, I am sure that, not only on this account, but from your high attainments in Medical Science, you are well qualified to discharge the duties of a public teacher, in a manner no less creditable to yourself than advantageous to the University. Every encouragement, moreover, should be given to lecturers of “home growth,”—the honours of the University liberally bestowed, as the reward

of industry and merit, would prove a stimulus to native exertion, highly beneficial, not only to the institution itself, but to Medical Science in general. From having frequently heard you lecture when I resided in Edinburgh, and from personal acquaintance, I can most conscientiously state, that I consider you, in every respect, highly qualified for the Chair of *Materia Medica*.

With every wish for your success, I remain,
yours very sincerely,

E. W. DUFFIN, *M.D.*

No. XIII.

From GEORGE FIFE, *M. D.*, &c.

Ratho, 8th May 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—Having heard that you are to be a Candidate for the Chair of *Materia Medica*, allow me to wish you the success which, in my opinion, your ability and popularity as a teacher elaim for you.

In proof of my sincerity, I may mention to you, that, when I first came to Edinburgh, it was my intention to have become a lecturer on *Materia Medica*, but in consequence of your acknowledged popularity among the students, I relinquished the idea.

Should you be elected, I am satisfied that such

a choice will reflect credit on the Patrons of the University, and benefit the students who may attend your class.

With every wish for your success, believe me to be, with sincere regard, truly yours,

GEORGE FIFE.

No. XIV.

From GEORGE GLOVER, M. D. &c. &c.

2, Maitland Street, 7th May 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in being afforded an opportunity of expressing the high opinion I entertain of your professional attainments, which, from long personal experience, I know are such as to render you eminently qualified to fill the important and honourable situation of Professor of Materia Medica. I feel confident that you would do so in such a manner as to advance the interests, and maintain the honour of our justly famed University. I have had ample opportunities of hearing the opinions expressed by others, especially my own pupils, who always mentioned the great advantages they derived from your instructions. In fact, the manner in which they discharged their duties at the Dispensary, particularly in the Laboratory, clearly shewed the

truly practical nature of your Lectures. And, from their remarks on the cases which came under their notice at the Dispensary, it was evident that not only the doses and mode of compounding medicines, but their application in the treatment of disease, must have formed a prominent part of your course of *Materia Medica* and Chemistry.

It is unnecessary for me to say more, as the success of your Lectures, and the number of your pupils bear ample testimony in your favour. No doubt, part of your success may, in some measure, depend upon circumstances of less importance than the instructions communicated, although, at the same time, very essential for a public lecturer. I allude to your perspicuous, elegant and distinct manner of lecturing, and the uniform gentlemanly deportment, the kind and conciliatory manner, in which you conducted yourself towards all, even the humblest of your pupils.

With best wishes for your success, and hoping that your exertions, which hitherto have been so successfully employed in teaching this important branch of medical education, may be rendered still more so by the possession of the influential situation to which you aspire, I am, my dear Sir, yours sincerely,

GEO. GLOVER.

No. XV.

From JOHN STEWART, M. D., &c.

Elder Street, May 8, 1832.

DEAR SIR,—Having heard that you are to be a candidate for the chair of Materia Medica, allow me to state that I have had frequent opportunities of hearing you lecture, and that I was highly pleased, not only with the clear impressive manner in which the Lectures were delivered, but also with the practical and truly valuable matter of the Lectures themselves. The best proofs that I have not erred in forming this high opinion of your qualifications, are the great number of students attending your Lectures, and the profound attention which was uniformly paid to them. From having had frequent intercourse with students, I can also say that I do not think there is any teacher more popular and more respected than yourself. I sincerely wish you success, not only on your own account, but also because I am convinced that your appointment would be of the greatest advantage to the interest of the University, and the cause of medical science. I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

JOHN STEWART, M.D.

No. XVI.

From WILLIAM FERGUSSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.,
Lecturer on Surgery, &c. &c.

Edinburgh, May 7, 1832,
2, Queen Street.

MY DEAR SIR,—From my very extensive acquaintance with the medical students of Edinburgh, for many years back, I have had numerous opportunities of ascertaining the estimation in which you are held as a teacher of Materia Medica. The satisfaction which your Lectures have given, appears to me to have been very general, and I assure you that no one can estimate your qualifications as a public lecturer more highly than I do, having myself had the pleasure of attending a course of your Lectures. I am, my dear Sir, yours sincerely,

WM. FERGUSON.

No. XVII.

From THOS. HOGG, Esq., Surgeon, 76th Regt.

Edinburgh, April 17th, 1832.

SIR,—Your very comprehensive, able, and most valuable course of Lectures on Materia Medica, and the numerous branches of Medicine, Chemistry, Botany and Natural History, with which

that interesting department of our profession is so intimately connected, being now brought to a conclusion, I hope you will permit me to offer my best thanks for the honour conferred on me, by your kindly granting me the privilege of attendance on these Lectures; at the same time, allow me to express the high gratification I have experienced, as well as to assure you of the real improvement and advantages which I have derived from your truly judicious, scientific, and most valuable observations, pathological and practical, brought in on every occasion during the course.

In fine, during a long and varied course of study at Edinburgh, London and Dublin, I have met with nothing more truly gratifying, instructive and scientific, than I have observed in the Medical School of which you form so distinguished a member. I remain, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

THOS. HOGG,

Surgeon, 76th Regt. Half-Pay; Member Royal College of Surgeons, London; Licentiate Royal College of Surgeons, Edinr.

No. XVIII.

From DAVID WYSE, *Esq.*, Surgeon, R. N.

Edinburgh, 14, New Street,

April 16, 1832.

SIR,—I cannot leave Edinburgh without expressing to you the immense obligation I feel, for the uniformly kind and liberal manner in which you have acted, not only towards myself, but to all the gentlemen attending the invaluable Lectures delivered by you this Session.

After twenty-two years experience, either in his Majesty's service, or in private practice, I thought it advantageous to renew my studies, previous to rejoining the Navy.

Allow me, therefore, to say, without detracting from any other quarter, that, in no instance have I profited more this season, than by my attendance upon your Lectures on *Materia Medica*, &c., the various articles of which were treated of in a manner peculiarly clear and perspicuous; and their administration and effects in disease were so happily illustrated, that I felt the greatest regret, when circumstances obliged me to be absent even for a single day.

Should it ever be in my power to be of the least service to you, I shall reckon myself highly

honoured by your commands. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient Servant.

DAVID WYSE,
Surgeon, R. N.

No. XIX.

From ANDREW MACANSH, *Esq., Surgeon, R. N.*
&c.

Edinburgh, April 20, 1832.

SIR,—Permit me, before leaving town, to offer you my best thanks for your kindness in admitting me to your excellent Lectures on *Materia Medica*, &c.

I assure you, I shall look back with pleasure to those hours when I listened to the valuable information which you so clearly, and so elegantly communicated, and I shall remember, with delight, the mild, affable and friendly deportment, by which the class were encouraged, in their frequent and important examinations, to approach you, not, as is too often the case, in anxiety and fear, but in confidence and respect. To this feeble expression of my esteem, allow me to add my earnest wish for your health and happiness. I am, Sir your obedient Servant.

ANDREW MACANSH,
Surgeon, R. N.

No. XX.

From JOHN CRICHTON, Esq., *Surgeon, R.N.,*
&c.

Edinburgh, 22d April 1832.

DEAR SIR,—Allow me, before I leave Edinburgh, to express to you my warmest gratitude for the very liberal, kind and generous manner in which you have thrown open your class-room to the Medical Officers of the Army and Navy. I, for one, feel much pleasure in looking back to the time I have so profitably employed in attending your excellent and very practical Lectures on *Materia Medica*. I have attended Lectures on this branch of Medical Science in this city, both within the walls of the University, and beyond them. My recent regular attendance with you, however, will, I conceive, be quite sufficient to convince you of my opinion as to the high value I entertain of your Lectures on this subject.

I am most anxious that you should know I have not undervalued some of what I conceive to be most important parts of these Lectures, and from which I have received the greatest advantage. I more particularly allude to your full and comprehensive illustration of the application of remedies in the treatment of disease—to your invariable

practice of considering at length the symptoms, treatment and appearances, on dissection, of those who have been so unfortunate as to have taken poison, either by accident or design, as well as the antidotes to those substances, together with the manner of their operation on the animal recovery.

As Murray's *Materia Medica* is remarkably deficient in these respects, and as this is the work generally in the hands of students, and, I may add, universally recognised here, you will pardon me, if I express my surprise that you, who, I am convinced, are so well qualified for such an undertaking, have not, before now, put them in possession of a work on this subject, that should be free from so important objections.

I shall ever remember your kindness with gratitude; for, from you I have learned much;—and I beg to assure you, that if there is any way in which I can be of the least service to you, nothing would give me greater pleasure. As I am likely again to go abroad soon, I hope this may in some way or other give me such an opportunity. With every sentiment of gratitude and esteem, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, yours very sincerely.

JOHN CRICHTON, *R. N.*

No. XXI.

From HUGH JAMESON, Esq., Surgeon, R. N.

Edinburgh, 24th April 1832.

SIR,—Having now terminated your invaluable course of Lectures on Materia Medica, &c. &c., I should be wanting in my duty if I omitted thanking you for the liberal manner in which you have granted the privilege of attending these studies to the Medical Officers of Public Services; and also, if I may be allowed the liberty, of expressing my admiration for the clear and eloquent manner in which they have been delivered, for the extent of information and research displayed, as well as for the talent in communicating that information, the result of which I had frequent opportunities of observing, in the examination of your pupils, who, by their clear and explicit answers, fully proved the happy mode of communication of their teacher.

That you may long continue to exercise that duty in which you are so usefully engaged, is the wish of, Sir, your most obedient servant,

HUGH JAMESON,
Surgeon, R. N.

No. XXII.

From MICHAEL MOORE, *Esquire, Surgeon,*
R. N., &c.

16, Chapel Street,
Edinburgh, 22d November 1831.

DEAR SIR,—Having again the pleasure of returning to Edinburgh for further professional improvement, and being, by experience, well convinced of the great advantage derivable from your system of inculcating a knowledge of *Materia Medica* and *Pharmacy*—such indispensable portions of *Medicine* and *Surgery*—I beg leave to inform you, that, as being a perpetual pupil, I will, with your permission, attend your present course, more particularly as your hour of lecturing now does not interfere with that of Doctor Duncan, whom I find I must attend, with a view to graduation.

It will perhaps be immaterial to you, that so unknown an individual as myself should tender any opinion on your merits or demerits as a lecturer, but I trust you will not consider that I act obtrusively, when, with unfeigned gratitude, I assure you, that in my respective examinations hitherto, viz., for the diploma of Surgeon at the Royal College here—two before the Board under which I have the honour to serve, and one at the Royal College of

Surgeons, London—I have to attribute the main of my success to the benefits I obtained from your Lectures on Materia Medica, &c. You, I hope, will believe that I am happy to hear you continue in good health, and with every sincere respect, I am, Sir, your very grateful friend,

M. MOORE, R. N.

No. XXIII.

From THOMAS TURNBULL, *Esq. Surgeon, &c.*

Falkirk, 1st May 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—I last night heard from Mr Smith that in the event of a vacancy, you intend becoming a candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica in the University. Nothing could give me greater pleasure than the intelligence that you were elected. I believe that there is not one of your former pupils who would not join with me in a similar expression of their feelings.

The high opinion which I formed of the great value of your Lectures, has been fully confirmed by the increase in the number of your pupils, and by their great attention and regularity of attendance. The style of your Lectures is easy and appropriate—the subject-matters concisely and perspicuously expressed, and your delivery impressive. Such is the general, and perhaps inadequate

expression of my opinion, as it is I shall always bear about with me the recollection of the great benefit I derived from your instructions, and be happy to be reminded of my being your former pupil. Believe me, dear Sir, yours affectionately,

THOS. TURNBULL.

No. XXIV.

From T. MACDONALD, Esq., Surgeon, &c.

Edinburgh, May 8, 1832.

Having attended your Lectures on *Materia Medica*, I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the many advantages which I received from them, to the distinctness and accuracy with which you taught the details of that branch of Medical Science, and to the admirable manner in which the Lectures were delivered, and I may add, that this was the opinion universally entertained by your pupils.

T. MACDONALD, *Surgeon.*

No. XXV.

From WILLIAM ROSS, M. D., &c.

May 8, 1832,

54, Rankeillor Street, Edinburgh.

Having attended your Lectures on Materia Medica for two Sessions, I have much pleasure in testifying, that I received great advantages from them. The arrangement of the articles of the Materia Medica, in these Lectures, was *new*, clear and comprehensive, and the Lectures on Therapeutics were particularly *practical*.

WM. ROSS, M. D.

No. XXVI.

From DAVID SMYTH, Esq.

Edinburgh, 28th April 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—Having now completed my fourth session in the study of Medicine, I could not acquit myself of ingratitude, if I did not return you my warmest acknowledgments for the many obligations I owe you, as a teacher from whom I have derived the greatest advantages. I shall ever retain a grateful remembrance of the great benefits I have derived from your Lectures, which

indeed were so highly valuable, and so applicable to the treatment of disease, that I was induced to attend your class more than one session. Your classification and mode of teaching, which are new and different from those followed in general, evince that you have formed, from having been long engaged in practice, those opinions you enforce with respect to the application of remedies, and every deduction appears to be the result of the careful investigation of facts, and attentive observation of disease. By following up the description of every medicine, and the different preparations into which it enters, by such practical observations, as your experience as a general practitioner has enabled you to amass, you render the study of *Materia Medica*, which in itself is but dry and uninteresting, one of the most interesting and attractive. It is this combination which renders your mode of teaching of the greatest possible advantage to your pupils. Your numerous class is a public testimony of your abilities and success as a teacher, and a convincing proof of the estimation in which your lectures are held by students. The many individual applications made to you, to publish outlines of your Lectures, must have been gratifying to you, and it is to be anxiously hoped that you will no longer delay giving to the student a work so much desired, and the want of which is so severely felt by him, owing to the imperfection

of the books on *Materia Medica*, already in his hands. It will afford you an opportunity of gaining credit to yourself, of promoting Medical knowledge, and a work of such a nature will prove acceptable to practitioners at large. In thus meeting the wishes of your pupils, you will lay them under deeper obligations to you than ever, as it will enable them to render permanent those impressions you made upon them in the class-room, and it will prove a useful assistant to those still young and inexperienced in practice.

With warm wishes for your health and prosperity, and with profound respect for your zeal, abilities and success as a teacher, I have, Sir, the honour to remain, yours most obediently,

DAVID SMITH.

XXVII.

From DAVID HATTON, *M. D., &c. &c.*

Stockbridge, 1, Dean Terrace, 11th May 1832.

DEAR SIR,—I understand that you are to be a Candidate for the Professorship of *Materia Medica* in this University.

As your former pupil, allow me to take this opportunity of expressing the high sense I entertain of the important advantages I have derived from attending your class; and above all, the vivid

and forcible impression your Lectures have still left on my mind. I remain, dear Sir, yours truly,

DAVID HATTON, *M.D.*

No. XXVIII.

From JAMES BEGBIE, M. D., F. R. C. S., *one of the Examinators of Candidates for Diplomas, &c. &c.*

124, George Street, May 16, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the success which has attended your labours as a Lecturer on Materia Medica. I have always understood that your students express themselves as highly pleased with your mode of teaching; and I have no doubt, from your general acquirements—from the attention you have paid to this particular branch—and from the clear and distinct manner you have of conveying information, that you are well calculated to discharge the duties of the Chair to which you aspire. I am, my dear Sir, faithfully yours,

JA. BEGBIE.

No. XXIX.

From JOHN CAMPBELL, M. D., F. R. S. E.,
Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons,
one of the Examinators of Candidates for
Diplomas, Surgeon to the Royal Infirmary,
&c. &c.

17, Albany Street, 14th May 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—Understanding that you are a candidate for the vacant Chair of Materia Medica in this University, I have much pleasure in expressing the very high opinion I entertain, not only of your general abilities and professional acquirements, but more especially of those qualifications which particularly fit you for the discharge of the duties of the situation to which you aspire.

The circumstance of your having formed and taught with increasing success for some years past in Edinburgh, a class of Materia Medica, is in itself a most honourable testimony to your talents and professional merits, and forms a claim, which, in my opinion, ought to have great weight with the Patrons of the University upon the present occasion. I have frequently been informed of the very great satisfaction which your lectures have afforded to those gentlemen who attended them, and I can bear testimony to those of your pupils whom I have come into contact with

officially, having been well instructed in that particular branch of the profession which you teach. I remain, dear Sir, very sincerely yours,

JOHN CAMPBELL.

No. XXX.

From ROBERT ROLLAND, *Esq., B.A., St Mary Hall, Oxford, late of the Madras Medical Establishment.*

Edinburgh, 15th May 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just heard that the lamented death of Dr Duncan has caused a vacancy in the Chair of Materia Medica in this University, and that you are one of the candidates for that Chair.

Having been so long your fellow-student, both here and on the Continent, and having been a close observer of the eagerness with which you pursued the study of that department of your profession, I have felt fully assured that such assiduity, aided by great natural abilities, would afford you every chance of success in the present object of your ambition, more especially, as I am sure that the Electors will bestow this most honourable appointment upon the most deserving candidate.

I would most willingly add my experience of

you as a practitioner, were it not foreign to the subject, the question being not so much as to your general professional attainments, high as these undoubtedly are, but as to your qualifications as a teacher. Allow me to suggest the propriety of trusting to your eminent success as a *lecturer on Materia Medica*, as the best and surest claim to the support of the Patrons in the election of a Professor, and it must be a very strong claim, when we consider that there are a great many men of the highest talents, who have completely failed as teachers, and even that a popular Professor of one branch of Medicine, has often proved the reverse, when he has left the subject to which his mind had been for years directed, to lecture upon another, to which of course he had paid comparatively little attention. Besides, it must be evident that the first courses of lectures upon any subject, must be comparatively imperfect, and that it is of great consequence to appoint a person who has been enabled, in the course of many years' experience in teaching, to bring his lectures nearer to a perfect state. With every wish for your success, I am, dear Sir, very faithfully yours.

ROB. ROLLAND.

No. XXXI.

*From G. C. HOLLAND, M. D., Lecturer on the
Practice of Physic and Physiology in the
Sheffield Medical Institution.*

Sheffield, May 14, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have just heard that a vacancy is likely very soon to occur in the University of Edinburgh, in the Professorship of Materia Medica, a circumstance of no ordinary importance to the well-being of this distinguished school. Its future character depends altogether on the judgment exercised by the Town-Council in the election of Professors. I feel, indeed, justified by experience, both as a student and as a teacher of Medicine, in declaring, without reserve, that those persons alone can be properly qualified for discharging, in an efficient manner, the duties of a Public Professor of any science, who have already been some time engaged, not only in lecturing, but in lecturing on that particular science; and that it is only by selecting, as Medical Professors of the University of Edinburgh, the most competent among the private teachers of the several medical sciences, that its Patrons can hope at once to stimulate these private teachers to increased exertions, and to benefit Edinburgh as a School of

Medicine in general. The very handsome reception with which my Physiological works have been honoured by the public—I allude to the *Experimental Inquiry into the Laws of Life*, and the *Physiology of the Fœtus, Liver and Spleen*—will perhaps be allowed to make this expression of my sentiments appear less presumptuous than it otherwise would have done. Believe me to be, in great haste, most truly yours,

G. C. HOLLAND, M. D.

No. XXXII.

From SAMUEL MALINS, M. D., *Lecturer on Midwifery in the Liverpool School of Medicine, Bachelor of Letters in the University of Paris, Member of the R. C. S. L. and E., &c. &c.*

Liverpool, May 1832.

I consider the art of communicating knowledge to be entirely distinct from the possession of knowledge, and that it can be effectively acquired only by habit and assiduous exercise. It is the primary and essential qualification of a public teacher, without which he cannot be impressive, nor therefore useful. Every department of knowledge requires, in teaching, a peculiar aptitude, which cannot be discovered but by trial, and which, in ac-

cordance with the general rule, is elicited in perfection by the sole means of long and express cultivation.

As, therefore, Dr Robertson is acknowledged to combine, with the amplest information on the subjects of *Materia Medica*, a full and successful acquaintance with the art of teaching it, he must be thought especially worthy of the suffrages of thinking men, and perfectly adequate, in the capacity of Professor, to the task of maintaining the high character, and supporting the interests of the celebrated School to which he seeks to become attached.

SAMUEL MALINS, *M.D.*

No. XXXIII.

Extract of a Letter to Dr Fletcher, from
 JOHN DARWALL, *M.D.*, *member of the Royal*
College of Surgeons, London; Physician
to the General Hospital, Birmingham, &c.

Birmingham, May 8, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,—Interested as I feel in the welfare of the University from which I have received my degree, I cannot but express my hope, that the gentlemen who have the appointment of the professors, will look first among the private lecturers. Nothing can be better calculated to support

the fame of the University, than the selection of those among the private lecturers who have distinguished themselves, to fill up the vacancies which may occur in the College. Not only in this way, will they for the time obtain high endowments for the University, but they will ensure a continual emulation. They who are appointed will labour to support their reputation—they who are still private lecturers, will labour the more assiduously, that they may have a well grounded hope of succeeding to a professorship, should they be able and successful private teachers. Thus a perpetual series of great men would be provided for the University.

I entertain a very high opinion of the qualification of students for judging of their teachers, and unless some very strong reason could be adduced, I should, without hesitation, give my suffrage in favour of that individual who had succeeded, by the fair exertion of his abilities, in obtaining the suffrages of the students. I remain, my dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

JOHN DARWALL, *M.D.*