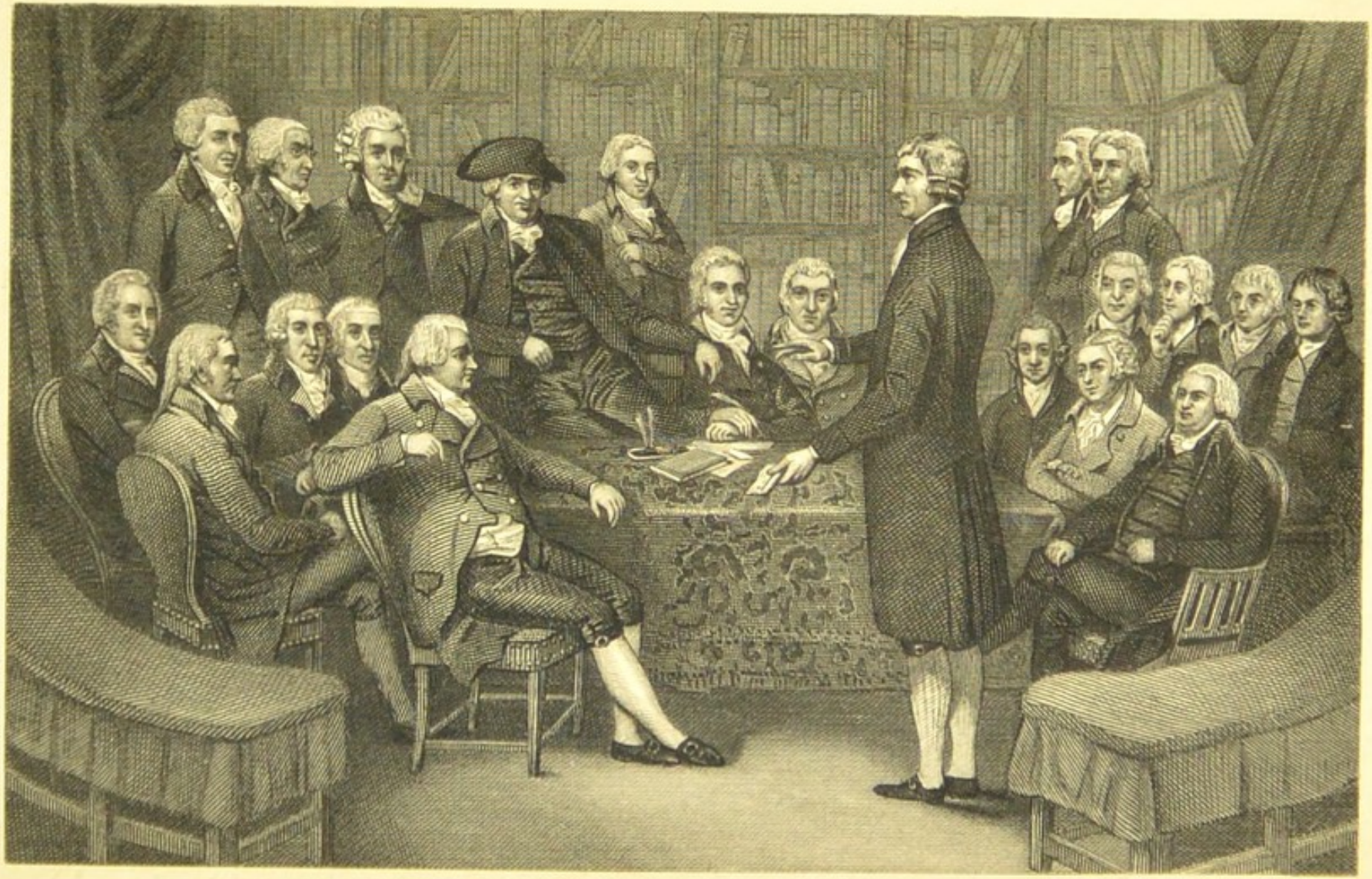
The annual oration before the Medical Society of London, 1882, on the old founders and the new Honorary Fellows.



THE FOUNDERS OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

With the Compliments of the Author.

THE ANNUAL ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

MAY 1ST, 1882,

ON

THE OLD FOUNDERS AND THE NEW HONORARY FELLOWS.

BY

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ORATION.

In the life of a society as of an individual there are stepping stones, by which we may re-cross the stream, and mark the principal incidents of former days.

In regarding the past history of this now venerable Society, I would ask you for a moment to go back with me in thought to the time, twenty-six years ago, when I first attended a meeting of the Society, Dr. Chowne being in the chair, and the indefatigable Rogers Harrison in the secretary's place.

When my late father was President I was too young to feel the honour conferred upon him; and when he delivered the Oration, in 1838, I could not (being an infant) surmise that I should be called upon after the lapse of thirty-three years—when I did not accept the honour—and again eleven years later, to take upon me the same honorable and pleasant responsibility. I have had the privilege of knowing Sir Benjamin Brodie and Sir Charles Clarke, the founders of the old Westminster Society, besides thirty-five past Presidents (not, of course, including my good friend Mr. Mason, the present President); and the figure of *Dr. Clutterbuck*, whose portrait you see yonder, formed a marked feature

in the middle period of our Society. He was for the first time President in 1819, when many of the founders of this Society were active workers, and he continued to advocate what may be almost called indiscriminate bloodletting, until the time of Dr. (now Sir Risdon) Bennett's presidency, when the amalgamation with the Westminster Society was carried out.

Familiarity with the middle ages of our Society, then, must be my apology for bringing before you this evening some facts and incidents of an earlier past than I have just alluded to, rather than any new inquiries of special interest to myself.

No excuse, indeed, seems needed for this course, as you are already oppressed with the labours of the session, and may well in this last day of meeting look for something lighter than the fare supplied at ordinary gatherings.

The session which closes to-night has been characterised by extreme activity, and has been especially marked by the meeting of the International Medical Congress. The unprecedented success of that gathering was enhanced by the brilliant reception given to the Honorary Fellows in this room.

When Virchow and Charcot, Volkmann and Billings were sitting beneath this picture (see frontispiece), the idea occurred to me that I might devote the time allotted for this Oration to a description of these worthies of the present and those of the past.

Time would fail me to record the events of the twenty-five years during which I am proud to say I have been a Fellow of this Society, or to touch upon the subjects which have occupied our thoughts during the past session, varied and valuable as they have been.

If we try and realise the difficulties which our founders had to encounter when they stamped their individuality upon our Society, as well as upon society in its larger sense, we learn the motive power of enthusiasm. When we look at Lettsom and such as he, combining as they did common sense and capacity for work with this enthusiasm, we shall ask ourselves whether if living in those dark ages we should have been generators of light as they were; and thus be stimulated to be light-bearers too.

Then passing across the gulf of a century, let us gaze with no less respect (veneration being perhaps out of date) at the great ones of the present. In our profession we may proudly say that we do not wait for the death of a great man before we lay our honours at his feet. We have living celebrities, English as well as foreign. Let us gather from the stores of accumulated learning, and the results of original research, such helps as may strengthen, enlighten, and inspire.

Let us each strive to anticipate—and shall I say appropriate?—the discoveries and developments which the twentieth century is sure to bring, so that English names and English faces shall be those which the next International Medical Congress will most delight to honour.

To place ourselves in the mental condition of those who have not had the light of modern science is not easy. With individuals as with communities it is hard to retrace steps in knowledge.

A century ago, when the founders of our Society sat round that gorgeous table-cloth, London was very different from London as we know it now; the Society met, where most of the Fellows lived, in the

City, at first in Crane Court, and afterwards in Bolt Court, Fleet Street. It was not until 1850 that it removed to George Street, Hanover Square, taking a lease of twenty-one years, at the expiration of which time we determined, after long and laborious searching, to remove to our present resting place, the best it has hitherto occupied; and arrangements are now in progress by which it is hoped that the present rooms will be made more commodious, and that we may soon find ourselves occupying quarters more complete than those of any other medical society in the metropolis.

Years have passed since the orators have spoken of our founders. Meanwhile a new race of Fellows has joined us, to some of whom the details I am about to give may be new, and the older Fellows will forgive me if I enlarge upon the virtues of those they already appreciate, and be the first to admit that every Fellow should realise the debt he owes to those who made our Society what it is.

The picture behind our President's chair greatly helps us here, for Medley the artist was the associate and intimate companion of Lettsom, Sims, Jenner, Babington, Blair and Hooper. It is fortunate that such was the case; so valuable a representation of the characteristic appearance of our founders would not otherwise have been handed down to us. Two of his paintings have also been kindly lent us for the evening by Sir Henry Thompson. One of these is a portrait of Medley's two daughters; the darker one of the two, Sir Henry Thompson's mother, being seen alone in the picture behind me.

We are constrained to admit that the first of these equals any work from Copley's hand, and might well

be attributed to his friend and Master Sir Joshua Reynolds.

As regards the artist himself, it may have been unfortunate for his reputation as an artist that he was so intimately acquainted with many members of our profession, for they all saw his worn appearance, and the earnest devotion with which he applied himself unrestingly to his art, and advised him to renounce it. He did not do so, however, until he had won many laurels, and had given promise of commanding skill.

Dr. John Fothergill, whose portrait has for many years made the Fellows of our Society familiar with his countenance, may well be regarded as one of the chief founders of the Society.

Succeeding generations are reminded of this by the medal struck to commemorate him, and bearing his name, just as they are of Lettsom by the lectures which bear his name.

A memoir of Fothergill was read before our Society (in 1782) exactly a century ago, and gives a graphic picture of his life and character, from which I have chiefly taken this short account of him.

Son of a Yorkshire physician, a member of the Society of Friends, John Fothergill was born at Wensleydale on March 8th, 1712. He worked hard in classics and mathematics till his sixteenth year, when he was apprenticed to an eminent apothecary at Bradford. His sagacity and intelligence induced his master, at an early period of apprenticeship, to entrust patients to his care, and when he removed to Edinburgh, to study systematic medicine, he had already gained a large share of practical knowledge of his profession.

Dr. Monro, his anatomical teacher, recognising Fothergill's unusual powers of mind, persuaded him to remain in Edinburgh, though his natural diffidence and slight appreciation of his own powers had led him to seek the life of a village apothecary.

At this time Fothergill formed the habit of taking notes of the heads of each lecture, and translating them into Latin, at the same time carefully comparing the opinions of the ancient and moderns on the subjects of the lectures. To these notes he added such remarks as his reading and reflection furnished. Thus he gained a knowledge of ancient and modern literature, he enlarged his ideas, early acquiring the habit of examining various authorities, and discriminating between the speculative and the practical.

The value of such a method, bringing with it as it does, powers of reflection and energy of judgment, cannot be over-estimated, and may still be recommended. But the variety of subjects now demanding at the same time the attention of the student, renders such a mode of noting and digesting lectures increasingly difficult.

Fothergill followed a similar method in practice. The poor who applied to him for relief were loud in proclaiming the success of his prescriptions, and he attributed his early introduction to "lucrative business," as he called it, to this source; he was, however, averse from speaking of the pecuniary results of his profession. "My only wish," he declares, "was to do what might fall to my share, as well as possible, and to banish all thoughts of practising physic as a money-getting trade, as I would the suggestion of vice and intemperance."

When thirty-six years of age (in 1748) he published an account of "Sore Throat attended with Ulcers,"

a disease which had swept over London, and excited much alarm. This essay was not a crude production prepared in haste, but the mature offspring of luxuriant genius, and produced a revolution in the treatment of the disease, which has obtained the sanction of enlightened physicians, even to the present time. The reputation of the author being thus secured, he set himself to the abolition of the cumbrous and heterogeneous prescriptions then in vogue; and principally contributed to the change which has made them simple and "elegant" as the chemists would call them.

Professor Huxley has lately called attention to the importance of studying vegetable as well as animal physiology, and Dr. Fothergill showed in his life the value of this extended biology.

He was the means of introducing into England, and also into the West Indies, plants previously unknown. From America he brought the catalpa, kalmia, magnolia, and several species of firs, oaks and maples, and transferred from his garden at Upton the tea plant to the South American Continent, and the bamboo cane from China to the West Indian Islands. He also suggested the cultivation of the sugar cane in Africa.

Dr. Fothergill was the first accurately to realise the properties of hemlock. He introduced astringent red gum from the Gambia. He improved the cultivation of scammony, and procured a cinchona plant from Peru.

It is as hard in our profession to command leisure as it is to secure fame. Happily Dr. Fothergill found, as we do, that in summer there are fewer residents in London and less sickness, and he managed to escape from the toils of practice to Upton or to Cheshire.

Men who are enabled, by sedulous attention to the profits of trade, to retire from it, are seldom to be envied, for they lack the mental culture that makes rural life enjoyable, but with a scientist, studying botany as Fothergill did, the case is far otherwise. He was ever engaged in experiments or observations on the growth of plants and their adaptability to various climates. He kept men employed in Africa and elsewhere collecting rare exotics. In fact, his leisure was merely change of employment, true re-creation.

Of the benevolence of his nature, many instances might be cited. "It was not unusual with him," writes Dr. Lettsom, "under the appearance of feeling the pulse, to slip into the hand of his poorer patient a sum of money or a bank note." In one instance I have heard of, it amounted to £150. In another he gave a thousand guineas to help a worthy man out of the difficulties into which he had fallen.

His language, which from want of time was not always minutely correct, was still easy and fluent, and whether in speech or writing, was generally instructive, bright and amusing.

He had that happy versatility that enabled him to break off from important concerns and enter into familiar conversation with the unpreoccupied air of a man of leisure, and as easily resume his serious engagements as if they had never been interrupted.

His very promptitude in adopting an opinion, and tenacity in retaining it, formed the only censurable part of his life, though the solidity of his judgment prevented him as a rule from coming to a wrong decision.

In person Dr. Fothergill was delicate and even attenuated; his eyes were peculiarly brilliant, his manner

was polite and pleasing, and his dress (that of a Quaker) neat and plain. He lived simply, and his mind remained active and vigorous until his death (caused by suppression of urine) in December, 1780.

It is interesting to notice, in connection with the present difficulty in metropolitan fish distribution, that in the severe winter of 1767 Dr. Fothergill proposed a scheme, and liberally contributed towards a fund, for purchasing fish wholesale ; and to break the monopoly which enhanced the price of fish in the London markets, he first suggested the bringing of fish by land-carriage, and he pushed forward the canal system of England. He also suggested that potatoes and other commodities purchased cheaply in Lancashire should be brought by water to the metropolis.

Dr. John Coakley Lettsom.—Beside Fothergill's portrait you see one of Lettsom as a young man, and another when he was about fifty, presented by our late President, Dr. Cockle, to the Society in 1876 ; his appearance in the last-named picture being similar to the third representation of him in the large picture, in which he is rightly shown standing to address the Fellows, for his communications were more frequent than those of any other Fellow ; he may be in the act of presenting the lease of his house in Bolt Court to the Society, or we may assume that he is giving the record of Fothergill's life, or delivering the oration which he did in 1778 and again in 1804.

By birth he was a West Indian. his father being a farmer and slave owner.

You see from the full-length portrait that Lettsom was tall and thin, his face was deeply lined, indicating firmness as much as benevolence, his complexion was of a dark yellow hue.

He was a quaker, and thus became known to Fothergill, who soon realised his talents, and was his constant friend to the day of his death.

George III also had a warm regard for him, but he refused to appear at Court in any but the Quaker garb.

After working at St. Bartholomew's for a year Lettsom had to return to take active charge of his father's property at Tortola. His first step there was to emancipate his slaves, and he would in consequence have been entirely ruined if he had not practised medicine there with such success that, though only twenty-three years of age, he made £2000 in five months. He then returned to Europe, and after studying at Paris, Aix la Chapelle and Leyden (then a famous medical school, where he graduated), he returned to London, became a member of the Royal College of Physicians, and began practice under Dr. John Fothergill's auspices.

At the age of twenty-nine, together with Fothergill and the others shown in the picture, he established this our Society. Five years after he presented the house in Bolt Court, where the meetings were long held, and which is now a valuable source of income to the Society.

It was he, too, who established the Fothergillian gold medal in honour of his friend. This medal was afterwards permanently endowed by Dr. Anthony Fothergill, who left £500 to the Society for that purpose.

It may be mentioned here that this Anthony Fothergill was not related to his namesake, though he succeeded to his house, hoping also to succeed to his practice. Disappointed that such was not the case he

removed to Bath, where he speedily acquired a considerable fortune, which he bequeathed to charitable institutions.

Dr. Lettsom died of low fever in 1815. His name must ever be cherished as among the brightest ornaments of our profession. He was a high-minded, Christian gentleman. Few men were ever more beloved or more regretted. His numerous works sparkle with originality and good sense as well as learning.

Some of us are familiar with the often-quoted distich, which shows the man in one of his moments of light-hearted fun :

> " When patients comes to I
> I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em ;
> Then—if they choose to die,
> What's that to I—I let's 'em."
>
> (I. Lettsom.)

This must not be regarded as evidencing his heroic treatment or recklessness of consequences, but simply marks his lively humour, of which I may give another illustration. An argument having been used against vaccination, that by limiting the mortality from smallpox it tended to increase the population and burden on the community, and that it also tended to make the human race cow-like, he quaintly took up the cudgels thus :—

" As a matter of domestic economy the smallpox doubtless entails important advantages, for, as a family of children is a heavy expense, this pestilential disease, by destroying half of them, renders living much easier ; and as to the charge of burying them, it is only for once, and the little creatures sleep quietly

in their graves and give no trouble afterwards. It is a great saving also to parishes now, which have already expended throughout England only £10,000 for coffins for the poor who have died by the smallpox during the last year, and 20,000 poor children being thus got rid of must prove a great saving in the future. If those who recover should be blind, or have the king's evil and cannot work, it would be no great hardship to the parishes which save so much by deaths to maintain the survivors, and then the poor little deformed and blind creatures might live comfortably in the workhouse, exempt from labour for daily subsistence, and depending like the rest of its denizens on the industry of others."

Again: "It being shown that vaccination converts men into bulls and women into cows, the facility of transforming the female sex into quadrupean cattle must tend to the increase and cheapness of butcher's meat. Also, should husbands of refined feeling wish to be relieved of their wives with profit and without ignominy they have nothing to do but to give them the cow-pox, which renders them horned cattle and fit for market."

The plan of treating disease by means of stimulants and narcotics was brought prominently into notice in the period of which we are speaking by Dr. Brown, the founder of the "Brunonian system," who was twice President of the Medical Society of Edinburgh, and who came to London about 1786 with the view of drawing further attention to a system of treatment which exaggerated the tendencies of men towards intemperance.

Dr. Fothergill struck the note of alarm and realised the danger of treating the sick by wine lest the phy-

sician should thus give the first lessons in fatal inebriation.

Lettsom's letter in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' under the signature "Mottles" (the anagram of his name), "The History of some of the Effects of Hard Drinking," concludes with a scale of temperance and intemperance in imitation of a thermometer. The list of vices, diseases and punishments with which it closes, reads like Hogarth's "Gin Lane":

"*Vices.*—Idleness, Peevishness, Quarrelling, Fighting, Lying, Swearing, Obscenity, Swindling, Perjury, Burglary, Murder, Suicide.

"*Diseases.*—Sickness, Tremors of the hands in the morning, Bloatedness, Inflamed eyes, Red nose and face, Sore and swelled legs, Jaundice, Pains in the limbs, Dropsy, Epilepsy, Melancholy madness, Palsy, Apoplexy, Death.

"*Punishments.*—Debt, Black eyes, Rags, Hunger, Hospital, Poorhouse, Jail, Whipping, the Hulks, Botany Bay, Gallows!"

I will ask you to look next at *Sir John Hayes*, whose silk stockings form so prominent a feature in the forefront of the picture. He was a person whom Medley, the artist, used to speak of as "the most finished courtier of his acquaintance." Born at Limerick, he graduated at Rheims. Then he distinguished himself as an army surgeon and became Physician to the Forces, and L.R.C.P. in 1784.

In 1791 he was appointed Physician Extraordinary to the Prince of Wales, and in the following year Physician to the Westminster Hospital. He was created a baronet when forty-seven years of age, and died twelve years after of acute laryngitis.

You will find in St. James's Club, Piccadilly, under

the north gallery, a small mural tablet to his memory. His son, the second baronet, has kindly put into my hands letters and dispatches from Sir Ralph Abercromby, Lord Moira, Lord Southamptom, Mr. Huskisson and others, which show how much the success of the Havannah campaign was due to the untiring devotion, skill and energy of Sir John, then Dr. Hayes.

Dr. James Sims is rightly represented in the presidential chair, for he possessed to an extraordinary degree the power of ruling the elections of the Society, and managed to be re-elected President for a period of twenty-two years. His constant re-election, indeed, proved unfortunate for the Society, and led to the secession of a number of influential Fellows and the formation of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society.

Dr. Sims was born in County Down in 1741, attended the metropolitan hospitals, and studied at Edinburgh; but like many of his contemporaries took his degree at Leyden. His success in practice as an accoucheur was greatly due to the recommendations of Lettsom, with whom he established the Royal Humane Society. He was Physician to the Aldersgate and Surrey Dispensaries, and wrote much, as our 'Transactions' testify. For instance, one day he recorded a rare case of abscess above the clavicle, communicating with the lung, so as to blow out a candle. He drew attention to the value of nitrate of silver in epilepsy and chorea, giving it in doses of gr. $\frac{1}{5}$, but stated that he had heard of a physician in town who gave it to the extent of eighteen grains a day. In 1795 he spoke of the value of arsenic in intermittent fever, and of elaterium in dropsy.

In 1807 he gave an instance of what we now call "baby farming," which led the Fellows to record

many similar cases. His chief writings are 'Observations on Epidemic Disorders, with Remarks on Nervous and Malignant Fevers,' a 'Discourse on the Best Method of Prosecuting Medical Inquiries,' and 'The Principles and Practice of Midwifery.'

He was a good-humoured, pleasant man, as his sagacious face would suggest, full of anecdote, an ample reservoir of good things, and for figures and facts a perfect chronicle of other times. He had a most retentive memory, but when that failed he referred to a compendium of knowledge in the shape of a pocket-book, from which he quoted with oracular authority.

In the first year of the century our Society purchased from Dr. Sims a large number of books for the sum of £500, and engaged to pay an annuity of £30 to Dr. Sims and afterwards to his widow, should he pre-decease her. Probably no medical society ever expended so large a sum at one time in the purchase of books from a private library.

Of the vivacity of some of the early reported debates, I may introduce this specimen :—

The President (Dr. Sims) having called the attention of the Society to some observations in the 'Times' newspaper on the impropriety of putting brandy into the shoes when wet, an evening was devoted to a discussion of the subject.

The President and some of the Fellows thought that much advantage might arise from the stimulant property of the spirit.

Dr. Clutterbuck opined that cold would be produced by the evaporation, and the water that was left would keep up the cold.

Dr. Pincard suggested that the greater degree of

cold which the spirit caused would excite greater reaction and hence the benefit.

Mr. Lewis said that the spirit applied to the skin .rendered it a non-conductor.

The President further remarked that he thought that while the water would be absorbed by the system the spirit would not be.

It does not appear from the minutes that any of the ingenious debaters spoke from practical knowledge of the matter under discussion.

Dr. Thomas Bradley being deaf sat as near to the President as possible, and is shown on his right in his accustomed attitude, with a hand behind the ear so as to concentrate the sound. He was born in Worcestershire, and conducted a school there for years, where mathematics—in which he was a proficient—were specially taught. Retiring from scholastic life he took his degree at Edinburgh, settled in London, and became Physician to the Westminster Hospital. He was for years the editor of the 'Medical and Physical Journal.' His deafness, his retired habits and scholarly life, unfitted him for metropolitan practice, to which he proved unequal rather from diffidence than from lack of professional knowledge. He always hesitated in drawing conclusions from uncertain premises, and appeared to little advantage in the sick room. Our President, Mr. Mason, in his compendious and entertaining oration delivered in 1870, records that Dr. Bradley related a case in which he "varnished the belly," to "prevent absorption," which he conceived was a great means of repletion. I find that Dr. Bradley did not withdraw from scholastic life until after 1786, the year when the above somewhat unphysiological treatment was recommended. It

may perhaps have been suggested to his mind by the treatment to which his school boys subjected the frogs of the Worcestershire Marshes.

In the sixth volume of the 'Medical and Physical Journal,' of which he was editor, I find a vigorous article on the evils of practising medicine without diploma or special education, and enlarging on the ignorance of many of the doctors of the day. May not this illustrate the well-known proverb "among the blind the one-eyed is king."

Immediately behind our deaf friend stands *James Ware, F.R.S.*, of whose interest in ophthalmic surgery we are reminded by his gold-rimmed spectacles. He was celebrated for extracting cataract with a success that, it is said, has rarely been equalled. He was introduced to practice by my ancestor, Mr. Wathen, a well-known metropolitan surgeon of that day. Mr. Ware wrote several works on ophthalmology. He founded the School for the Indigent Blind, and like his son, whom many of us must have known, was a man of the truest benevolence.

Next to him stands *Edward Bancroft, M.D., F.R.S.*, author of the 'Philosophy of Permanent Colours,' and an authority on botany and natural history.

And beneath him, next to the edge of the picture, is the Librarian, *Dr. Joseph Hart Myers*.

Placed next to Myers, the thoughtful, earnest face of *Dr. William Woodville*, whose peruke is well shown in the picture, calls for a few words.

Born at Cockermouth in 1752, he took his M.D. degree in Edinburgh in 1775, and first practised in his native county of Cumberland. He settled in London, 1784, and was elected Physician to the Small-pox and Inoculation Hospitals.

He was an accomplished botanist, and in the gardens of the Smallpox Hospital near King's Cross, two acres in extent, he cultivated his hobby, and worked up with artistic accuracy the illustrations for his work on 'Medical Botany,' published in four quarto volumes in 1790-94.

Thus his association with the hospital for a foul and hideous disease, brought him in contact with the most exquisite beauties of nature. He has left us valuable works on smallpox, but his great botanical work is still consulted with profit and pleasure.

It is interesting to think that a century ago such flowers bloomed at King's Cross, but when I hear from our distinguished neighbour, Sir George Burrows, that in Cavendish Square hard by, roses bloomed with brilliancy until twenty-five years ago, I am not surprised; and that moreover in 1812 it was dangerous to walk unprotected through the fields of Paddington or through any part of the five fields between Sloane Street and Grosvenor Place; and that there were even then "wide unpopulated districts" between the end of Tottenham Court Road and Islington, where the citizens resorted for country air at Bagnigge Wells or Merlin's Cave; we cannot then wonder that a Londoner could in Woodville's time pluck the most beautiful flowers in his own garden. One is tempted to deplore the change, though the open spaces for which we are clamouring now were then the scenes of highway robberies, and of murders committed not only at night but even in open day.

Robberies were naturally not infrequent when in the Strand, Oxford Street, and Cheapside, feeble oil lamps glimmered at long intervals, and obstetricians could only safely pay nocturnal visits in Hackney coaches.

William Woodville was secretary of the Medical Society in 1784, when Lettsom established the gold medal as a memorial of Dr. Fothergill, to be given on his birthday (March 8th). His letter acknowledging the gift is printed at the end of Lettsom's life of Fothergill.

Before the second volume of Woodville's work on 'Smallpox' was published, Jenner's happy discovery of vaccination made its appearance unnecessary. No one had greater opportunities of witnessing the ravages of smallpox, so no one was better able to realise the preventive value of the new discovery. Woodville lost no opportunity of testing its application. In some of the early experiments, owing probably to the influence of the variolous atmosphere of the hospital, the results were very different from those described by Dr. Jenner; and Woodville at first vigorously opposed his conclusions.

Availing himself of the introduction afforded here, Jenner called upon him, argued and remonstrated, and the discussion appears to have been conducted with much heat; both, however, were equally engaged in seeking after truth, and, as is always the case under such circumstances, the discussion proved useful in the dissemination of the new practice, and no one eventually did so much as Dr. Woodville to make known the real value of the discovery.

He vaccinated multitudes of people, some thousands of whom he afterwards tested by variolous inoculation, and thus gave the public a confidence in vaccination which could not otherwise have been attained.

Dr. Woodville cultivated the society of his professional friends, by whom he was much esteemed. He died of dropsy in March, 1805, and, being a Quaker,

was buried in the Friends' burial ground at Bunhill Fields.

Dr. Nathaniel Hulme, who sits between Woodville and Dr. Walker, was a vigorous Yorkshireman, who took the M.D. Edinburgh in 1765, at the age of thirty-three, and was appointed Physician to the Charter house, and L.R.C.P. in 1774. He was also an F.R.S. He died at the age of seventy-five from a fall from the top of his staircase to the basement. He wrote works on the prevention of scurvy, on puerperal fever, on gout and stone. The epitaph in Charter-house Church states that "he practised medicine during a long course of years with advantage to his patients and honour to himself."

Dr. Sayer Walker, who sits next, immediately behind Sir John Hayes, was a colleague of Dr. Hulme, at the London Lying-in Hospital. He was at first Presbyterian minister at Enfield, then, when forty-four years of age, took the Aberdeen M.D., and after twenty years of obstetric practice retired to Clapton, and died in 1828. He wrote treatises on "Nervous Diseases," and on the "Diseases of Women." He was the first to give turpentine in Tænia, and stated at a meeting of this Society that it had proved successful in his hands in ninety cases.

As regards the portrait of *Edward Jenner,* who stands on the President's left, it is interesting to notice that this was absent from the original picture when first engraved. After Jenner's grand discoveries had received the acknowledgment of the Society, and he was elected to the Fellowship, it was thought right to add the portrait of one so distinguished to the existing picture. This was accordingly done, but copies of the engraving by Branwhite are still in existence, in which Jenner's figure is absent. It will be noticed that he is put in

the back-ground, and his figure is on a somewhat smaller scale than the others.

The contrast between the men I have attempted to bring before you and the country doctors of the same period is great indeed.

These last were for the most part a rude, vulgar, keen-witted set of men, possessing much the same sort of intelligence, and disfigured by the same kind of ignorance as the country gentlemen expects now to find in his farrier. They were often inferior to the village nurses in experience, and even in medical skill, and their rough and ready ways are graphically described by the pen of Sterne.

The country doctor of the last century always went his rounds on horseback booted and spurred. Any other mode of travelling was impossible to men who had to use bridle paths, drifts, and secluded lanes, as well as the King's highway. Such was the appearance of Edward Jenner, as he galloped across the vales of Gloucester in a blue coat with yellow buttons, buckskins, and well-polished jockey boots, silver spurs, and a smart silver mounted whip. His hair was done up in a "club" and he wore a broad-brimmed hat.

Dr. John Walker, although not seen in the picture, was an office-bearer and a very energetic member of the Society. Here he met Jenner, and was filled with the absorbing desire to carry into practice the lessons learned from the master. He was the bearer of vaccine lymph to Naples, to Malta, and Egypt. He commenced and carried out for years a course of public vaccination in the metropolis. He was Resident Vaccinator at the Central Station of the Jennerian Society, and for more than a quarter of a century he vaccinated six days a week at six of the Society's

stations, and boasted that he had vaccinated more than 100,000 persons. He watched with the care of a parent the cause he advocated, and was willing to know nothing but the object of his early love—vaccination.

His life was a curious one, at first an artist, then a teacher of classics and mathematics. A quaker in dress and outward garb, but a disciple of the notorious Paine in heart. Indeed, he translated the 'Manual of Belief,' and was secretary and interpreter to Paine's Society of Theophilanthropists. Finding literary work a failure he determined to study medicine, and the lady to whom he was engaged supplied the means necessary for his studies in Leyden, London, and Paris.

His temper, however, was so irritable, and manners so discourteous, that he readily gave offence, and did not succeed in ordinary practice.

From the very first year of our Society's existence, when Dr. Lettsom read a paper on "Inoculation," that subject held a prominent place. In 1801, Dr. Jenner was himself present on several successive evenings, when cow-pox occupied the attention of the Fellows. Jenner had been a Corresponding Fellow* for twelve years, when in 1802 he was elected an ordinary Fellow; and in the following year the value of his discovery to the world was expressed in a highly appreciative memorial drawn up by the Society.

It would be of interest while speaking of Jenner, to give an account of vaccination, and the important function our Society fulfilled in affording an oppotunity for full and frequent discussion in every stage of the controversy; but this has been done with great care and completeness by my esteemed friend, Dr. Cholmeley. The reproach of having undervalued, or

* For form of nomination see Appendix.

having been slow to appreciate the value of Jenner's work, cannot be passed upon our founders; although the tardy recognition of it by the Houses of Parliament, who voted him only £10,000, and years after £20,000 more, may, by the light of subsequent events, deserve that reproach.

Mr. Hooper who sits as Secretary at the President's left hand, brought before the Society from time to time many interesting cases. He mentioned that of a man who had a pitchfork driven into his head for four inches and speedily got well; and of another person who quickly recovered after having nearly half his cranium taken off in the riots of 1780. Cases as remarkable as the well-known crowbar case of which our American friends have made so much. He wrote on Intestinal Worms and edited a Medical Directory.

Mr. Ford, who sits beside him, read a paper in November, 1779, on "Loss of Voice cured by Electricity;" and the subject was taken up by Mr. Hooper who, in 1783 and again in 1787, reported cases of Periodic Headache cured by Electricity, with particulars of animal magnetism.

Of the four who sit in a row, the one nearest to Lettsom is *Dr. Haighton*. He was an accomplished anatomist, physiologist, physician and accoucheur. His knowledge of the physiology and diseases of the uterus was so superior that he gave this part of Mr. Cline's anatomical lectures by his particular desire. He was one of those practitioners who was prosecuted by the Royal College of Physicians for practising without a license. Dr. Haighton stated that he would willingly submit to the strictest examination and pay the fees, but refused to withdraw from practice, reside for two years at a university, and attend lectures

delivered by men much his inferiors in every department of medicine.

He began life as a surgeon in the Guards, then became Demonstrator of Anatomy in the Borough School of Medicine, and Lecturer on Physiology, and for many years he was regarded as the ablest teacher of midwifery in Europe. He was Physician to the Eastern Dispensary for some years, until obliged to relinquish it on account of the extent of his practice. His manners were abrupt, and his temper petulant, and to this his friends attributed the fact that he never entered the state of matrimony.

He suffered from chronic laryngitis, and published a series of experiments on the laryngeal and recurrent branches of the eighth pair of nerves; also experimental inquiries on the reproduction of nerves and on animal impregnation. His papers in the early volumes of the 'Transactions' of our Society, viz. three on "The Causes of Vomiting," are full of original ideas, and the freshness and vivacity of their arrangement is quite what might be expected from a man having the alert—not to say "wide-awake"—look which the artist Medley has so skilfully rendered in the picture.

Dr. R. J. Thornton was born in 1758 and died in 1837. He took an active part in promoting Jenner's views. He wrote 'A Vindication of Smallpox,' and a work in five volumes on 'The Philosophy of Medicine.' His best known works are his 'Practical Botany' and 'British Flora.' You see him in the picture next to Dr. Haighton, with his hand to his chin, his face is one of remarkable intelligence.

In October, 1806, he related before the Society a case in which he showed much vigour and fertility.

He was called to a man who had hung himself with a silk pocket-handkerchief. The doctor applied a common bellows to one nostril, thus filling his lungs with air. Then he applied boiling water to the stomach, which immediately produced a convulsive groan and gape. Mustard was then applied to the nostrils and a cataplasm to the feet, then a blister to the thorax, and after that leeches. The patient recovered and had suffered no pain!

Next to him is *Mr. Shadwell,* and next *Dr. Aiken.*

Dr. Aiken's face, to the extreme right of the picture, is certainly a remarkable one. His wig, you see, is innocent of powder. He was little fitted by temper or habit for the fatigue and struggle necessary for success in town, and he willingly and wisely followed the bent of his disposition and devoted himself to literary pursuits. He settled at first at Chester, next at Warrington, and afterwards at Yarmouth; but being an ardent Dissenter (son of a Dissenting minister), while at Yarmouth he took an active part in the political agitation connected with the repeal of the Test Act, and was so opposed by the clergy, with whom he had been previously popular, that he found it wise to move to London.

His medical works were not so large or numerous as his general ones, *e.g.* 'Evenings at Home,' the 'General Biographical Dictionary,' 'Monthly Magazine,' 'The Annual Register,' &c. He was the biographer of Howard the philanthropist, and saw much of him at Warrington.

Dr. Aiken, as well as Lettsom, acted in concert with Howard in ameliorating the condition of prisons. It is noteworthy that when our Society was founded prisons were private property let out at heavy rentals

by gentleman, church dignitaries, and corporations to some of the worst specimens of mankind. They were often so dilapidated and insecure that the men and women incarcerated in them were, if for no other reason, obliged to be manacled and fastened to the walls or floor.

I mention this not to discredit those who owned the prisons, but as a necessary part of the history of those strange times, an ingredient in the fantastic mixture of horrors and incongruities which made up our then prison history, a specimen of the things of which English gentlemen remained in ignorance through the long years of hopeless misery endured by those to whom they did not deliberately wish to be cruel or unjust.

Aiken describes Howard as a short, spare man, active in movement, "like a French dancing-master"—"un homme extrêmement actif, vif comme le poudre." His forehead was wide and square, his eyes full and piercing, long, arched nose, and pouting under lip. "There was," Aiken says, "a stamp of extraordinary vigour and energy in all his movements and expressions, with strong and prominent features, quick gait, and animated gestures, giving promise of ardour in forming and vivacity in executing designs." An attack of gout in early life led to extreme abstemiousness; he even surpassed the moderation in eating and drinking of John Wesley and William Cobbett.

Before this time efforts had been made to ameliorate the condition of prisoners, but it needed the fixity of purpose, the persistence and determination of a Howard to coerce legislation. Others had been satisfied with observation and partial palliation, but it remained for the men of the stamp and the time of our founders, by the force of personal character, and by mastery over

facts, to carry out the needed reforms. As in recent years it was known to many that unseaworthy ships were sent to sea and lives sacrificed for the sake of marine insurances, it was only the enthusiasm of a Plimsoll that compelled the Government to interfere. Howard's work was not the vague fancy of a man having, as Carlyle wrote, "a morbid sympathy with scoundrels," but the outcome of experience learned when himself a prisoner of war in France, and by subsequent careful inspection of the Bridewells and the county and borough jails.

It is hard to believe, yet it is true, that prior to 1773 no prisoner could leave his prison till he had paid the gaoler. Howard failed to find a single instance in which the gaoler received a salary, or was paid in any other way than by the prisoners' fees. Hence it happened that thousands of poor debtors and friendless persons remained in prison till death, because they could not buy their discharge (see Dr. Guy's recent book, 'Howard's Winter Journey').

He found the inmates "expiring in loathsome cells of pestilential fevers and confluent smallpox." The drinking water, scanty and impure, must often have contained the germs of typhoid, the lack of food induced famine or relapsing fever. The perennial and ever-increasing filth and frequent overcrowding originated contagious and destructive typhus, one of the most loathsome, infectious, and fatal diseases. This was conveyed by prisoners to the law courts or the workhouse, the prisoner becoming a focus of infection when discharged in armies and fleets. Jail fever was happily extinguished in prisons in England by the labours of Howard, Heberden, Haygarth, and Lettsom, before the close of the last century. But

until the middle of this century the still uncared-for London workhouses proved for a time its home.

Dr. Lettsom tells us of a large family infected by the clothes of a prisoner who died of the fever in Wood Street Compter. In another case a poor labourer, in debt to his baker, was arrested, imprisoned, infected—died; his wife, who went to nurse him, returned home, sickened, and died; the fever spread, sparing the children but killing the parents, until forty children were bereft of one, and twenty of both parents.

Lettsom mentions another case of jail distemper occurring in a workhouse.

Some wretched paupers were brought for inspection before the local officials who all caught the fever, and half of them died. So sudden and virulent were the seizures that it was thought the poison of copper had found its way into the food supplied to the officials, one only of whom escaped, but he, though he partook of the dinner, was not present during the inspection.

No known cause of disease was absent from our prisons a century ago. Starvation and cold, a scanty supply of impure water, deprivation and pollution of air, exclusion of light, idleness, listlessness, and grief, mustered their forces in one deadly assault on health and life, while every conceivable foe to virtue was busy with its work of demoralisation. This jail distemper originated in prison scenes in which filth, depraving violence, imposition, and the culpable inaction of the State were alike conspicuous. One cannot think of it without horror or speak of it without disgust.

Howard, when thirty years of age, was elected F.R.S. with Benjamin Franklin, but it was after

intercourse with Jenner, with Lettsom, with Heberden, and Aiken, that he had acquired knowledge of disease, sympathy with suffering, devotion to duty, patience in collecting facts, and perseverance in using them, which with his rare tact and sound sense, his unconscious originality and unselfish singleness of purpose, enabled him to accomplish his work as a sanitary reformer, and to do more to preserve health and prevent disease than any man, except, perhaps, Edward Jenner, of this or any other time.

The early debates of the Medical Society of London bring out and emphasise what Howard appears to have been the first to discover, that Acts of Parliament were useless and legislation abortive unless they are carried out, that *systematic inspection* and *periodical reporting* must be practised if success is to be attained.

Dr. Aiken supplied Howard with a series of queries relating to the plague, which he submitted to persons of experience on the Continent during his tours of inspection in the east. The answers to these queries form a large part of his work on "Lazarettos."

Like Lettsom and Fothergill, with whom he worked, Howard had the faculty of concentrated attention to the subject in hand, and practical aptitude for doing things himself which enabled him to get through more work in a week than most men accomplished in a year.

Aiken tells how he was up at 2 a.m. daily taking thermometric observations, and he may be said to have invented systematic inspection and periodical reporting as now so largely practised. Nor was he satisfied with obtaining an Act of Parliament for the amelioration of prisons but himself became an unpaid inspector, and at his own expense printed and circu-

lated reports and inquiries. Throughout life his guiding principles were compassion and duty.

The recent sad revelations as to the sanitary state of the prisons of India show that another Howard is needed there, the annual mortality per 1000, which in some falls to 10 per 1000 rises in others to 345 per 1000.

Even in Ireland the sad fate of Colonel Disney shows that in our own islands inspection is sadly needed.

Like Lettsom and the Fothergills, Howard gave of his substance as well as of his time and strength to the fulfilment of his life's aims. He must have travelled 60,000 miles and spent £30,000 of his own money in the prosecution of his noble ambition—the prevention of disease and the improvement of health. His was not that impulsive philanthropy that expends itself in emotion, or loses itself in words. To quote from our Fothergillian medallist, Dr. Guy, "All he was, all he had were given freely and without stint—a priceless gift followed by a rich legacy of precept and example such as had not been bequeathed to the world for upwards of seventeen centuries."

Mr. Blair who stands behind Lettsom, with the celebrated Dr. Babington at his side, has a classical profile and a look of alertness befitting so distinguished an operator.

He was Surgeon to the Lock Hospital as well as to the Finsbury and Bloomsbury Dispensaries.

He brought a case before the Society in which a piece of meat having stuck in a person's throat, he used probangs without effect; but, by injecting tobacco into the bowel he induced vomiting and thus removed the obstacle. In another case he performed œsophagotomy with success.

In 1805 he gave details of a rare case of hernia in which ascitic fluid escaped through a puncture in the tunica vaginalis. He edited with others a 'System of Surgery,' analogous in its object to Holmes' great work.

Dr. William Babington was born and educated in Ireland, but completed his professional course at Guy's, and was early appointed on the staff of the Haslar Hospital. Being called upon to attend the prisoners of war at Winchester he caught jail fever, and narrowly escaped with his life. After five years of military work he became apothecary to Guy's, and lecturer on chemistry, and under the advice of Dr. Saunders (who sits, you see, in the arm-chair close to him) he took the Edinburgh M.D. degree, and in the same year was elected physician to Guy's. His progress as a physician was rapid, and he very soon had an extensive city practice, so much so that in 1811 he was compelled to resign his hospital appointments.

For many years Dr. Babington was the acknowledged head of the profession in the city. He was universally beloved and respected.

Dr. Gooch wrote of him as a "man who, to the cultivation of modern sciences, adds the simplicity of ancient manners; whose eminent reputation and rare benevolence of heart have long shed a graceful lustre over the profession which looks up to him with a mingled feeling of respect, confidence, and regard." (Perhaps the Nestor of our profession, Sir Thomas Watson, alone has surpassed Dr. Babington in the universal esteem of men of his time.)

He died in Devonshire Street in 1833, aged seventy-seven, of influenza. His statue was erected in St. Paul's Cathedral by public subscription.

The inscription on this monument, by the pen of Dr. Paris, the President of the Royal College of Physicians, records a list of unsurpassed virtues, which time and space will not allow me to reproduce.

He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and one of the founders of the Geological and Hunterian Societies, and was one of the best mineralogists of his time.

Behind Lettsom, seated in the lower row, we see R. Charles Combe, then *John Relph*. He was entered on the physic line at Leyden in March, 1778, and graduated M.D. there in the same year. He became L.R.C.P. in 1784, and physician to Guy's 1789. He wrote a work on 'Peruvian Bark,' and died in Mark Lane in 1804.

Dr. Saunders, who sits in the arm-chair, the last of the twenty-two worthies, was physician to the Middlesex, and afterwards to St. Thomas's Hospital. Like Relph, who was from Cumberland, Saunders was a north countryman. He served his apprenticeship at Penrith, and was then a pupil at St. Thomas's. He became an army surgeon, and when peace was established he settled at Penrith, and took the M.D. of Aberdeen.

He went again with the regiment to Minorca, and while quartered in Edinburgh attended medical lectures there. He then went to America, and was promoted to the rank of physician to the army, which he served with great credit to himself and benefit to the troops. After the successful expedition against Havannah he returned home with broken health. He, however, regained strength during a tour in France and Italy.

He became L.R.C.P. in 1765, and settled in practice

in London, and in the following year was appointed physician to the Middlesex, and in 1768 to St. Thomas's Hospital.

When fifty-one years of age he married an heiress, and gave up his hospital appointments to Dr. Reynolds of Guildford. Three years later his wife died and his own health broke down, but he did not relinquish practice altogether. He was elected F.R.C.S. in 1784. He left two daughters. The elder became Viscountess Melville and the younger Countess of Westmoreland.

In the notice of Fothergill's life and character it was mentioned that he was disinclined to speak of the pecuniary results of his practice; such is ever the case with men who regard their profession from another and far higher standpoint than that of mere money-making. The result, however, of this reticence is that, whilst business men, lawyers, and I may add, even artists and literati, have taken care that with the general increase of wealth and diminished value of money their claims should not be neglected, the remuneration of metropolitan physicians has remained practically unchanged.

Yet some change is clearly required, since the fee which was deemed a sufficient honorarium a century ago is quite insufficient adequately to compensate the modern physician for the time and skill devoted to patients residing in distant parts of this vast city.

Sir G. Burrows observed in his address to the Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians, 1875, that a century ago a physician's town practice rarely extended beyond a radius of a mile from his own house; if it did so, the physician received an extra fee. We are now expected to call in fashionable quarters two or three miles away and no extra fee is offered.

The advanced rent of houses in suitable neighbourhoods, increased expense of horses and carriages, the rise in wages, &c., place the physician of to-day at a great disadvantage. In the histories of our founders allusion is often made to their professional incomes. So far back as 1644 I find it noted that Dr. Robert Wright, who died at the early age of twenty-eight, was in the receipt of about 1000 coronati per annum.* When we remember that the broadpiece or coronatus was worth £1 2*s.*, this seems a good income for a man of twenty-seven, who had been settled in London only three years.

Radcliffe, who died in 1714, had, some ten years previously, acquired by practice (and no one could call him sordid) upwards of £80,000, which he devoted to the service of the public.

He retired from practice on becoming member for Buckingham, and transferred his goodwill to Dr. Mead, with the "gold-headed cane," a walking stick in which I take an especial interest, as it resided when in the possession of Dr. M. Baillie for many years in my present house in Cavendish Square. For several years Dr. Mead made from £5000 to £6000, and during one year received £7000. His hospitality was unbounded, and his expenses immense, so that he did not die rich. He left about £40,000. It was said of Mead that of all physicians who had ever flourished, he gained the most, spent the most, and enjoyed the highest fame during his lifetime (not only in his own but in foreign countries). When not engaged at home he spent his evenings at Batson's Coffee House; apothecaries came to him at Tom's, near Covent

* Wrightus vixdum trimulus doctor, mille admodum coronatus, anno spacio lucaretur. E. H. C., 47.

Garden, with reports of cases, for which he prescribed without seeing the patients and took half-guinea fees.

Dr. Matthew Baillie, who was the last possessor of the gold-headed cane, and who left it to the Royal College of Physicians, was a blunt, clear-headed Scotchman. He saw at once the salient features of a case, and, neglecting minor details and avoiding everything subtle or far-fetched, aimed at simplicity in treatment and in description. He made for many years an income of £10,000 a year, and gave to the College of Physicians his valuable collection of anatomical preparations and an endowment for their preservation.

Sir Astley Cooper received for several years more than £15,000 per annum, and in one year £21,000, but when he left Broad Street for the West End, though his practice became more aristocratic his income diminished. He received from one patient a fee of £1000 for an operation, the physicians, Dr. Lettsom and Dr. Nelson, receiving £300 each. I have authority for stating that another distinguished surgeon, a contemporary of Astley Cooper's, received in professional fees during his lifetime no less a sum than £345,000.

Time was, and that not long ago, when £1000 a year was synonymous with affluence, if not opulence; anything more than this in any of the great professions was considered exceptional. It is but thirty-five years ago that the Legislature awarded this amount to the County Court Judge in order to impress the public with a sense of the dignity of the office. These Arcadian days have passed away, and now £1000 a year is hardly more than equivalent to half that sum at the commencement of Her Majesty's reign, and the standard of middle-class competence has rapidly advanced.

Two centuries ago, in 1670, it became customary for physicians to pay their visits in a carriage, and they then began to expect a double fee—"two angels," *i.e.* a sovereign. Prior to this time physicians in active practice had to visit their patients on horseback, riding sideways, like women. Dr. Simeon Fox was the last President of the Royal College of Physicians (1634-40) who visited his patients thus. The guinea or "two angels" fee has therefore been the customary fee for more than two centuries. It is true that we are told in 1700 that "To a graduate in physic his due is about ten shillings, though he commonly expects or demands twenty shillings." We hear at the same time, "A surgeon's fee is twelvepence a mile, be his journey far or near; ten groats to set a bone broke or out of joint, and for letting blood one shilling; the cutting off or amputation of any limb £5, but there is no settled price for the cure."

A century ago the physician felt the pulse, examined the tongue, made a shrewd guess at the patient's malady, and wrote a prescription. Now we must needs examine our patients with all the instruments of precision which modern discovery has put within our reach—the stethoscope, the microscope, chemical analysis, the thermometer, the ophthalmoscope, laryngoscope, and perhaps the sphygmograph, are put into requisition, and at the end of an hour's investigation the same fee is put into our hands as was given for a few minutes consultation last century, when money was double its present value.

Again, we remind ourselves that London has now spread its borders far and wide to regions previously entirely country. When we read of Fothergill receiving five guineas for a journey from the city to

Stratford, the question naturally arises—why, had he been living at the present day, should he receive less for a journey from Savile Row to Earl's Court? Has not the time arrived for some modification to be made in our system. The practice of giving a double fee at the first visit, as well as in consultation, is recognised by the public, but surely the leaders in the profession, whose houses are beset from day to day by persons clamouring for advice, might rightly fix five guineas for the first and two for subsequent visits, and thus, to their own and their patient's advantage, have time to give more undivided attention than is at present possible in the rush and turmoil of life.

Compare for a moment the income of a popular artist with that of a distinguished physician of the present day. While the artist receives 500 or 600 guineas for painting a portrait which requires six visits of an hour each, the physician receives for the same number of visits not 600, but six guineas. It is open to us to say that surely the re-established health or the saved life of a loved member of a family is worth more to her relations than a perfect representation of her face upon canvas. I would not seem to indulge in any apparent Philistinism in estimating the value of pictures, and would acknowledge to the full the worthiness of a good artist of any reward that may be given him, yet at all events we may compare past estimates of the value of the artist's and the physician's work so far as a few instances prove anything.

Thus I venture to doubt whether Sir Godfrey Kneller, successful though he was, made so large an income as his neighbour and contemporary, Dr. Mead, or whether Sir Joshua Reynold's professional income equalled that of Dr. M. Baillie or Sir H. Hal-

fourd. Coming to recent times, Sir Edwin Landseer left a larger fortune than Sir Henry Holland, and should Millais or Leighton live to the same age their fortunes acquired by their profession will probably be vastly greater than that of any contemporary physician.

By means of this picture our illustrious founders have, during the session, been brought face to face with other illustrious men, gathered from the old world and the new, who assembled here on August 5th, 1881, at the bidding of the President, to receive the Honorary Fellowship of our ancient Society.

My duty would be ill fulfilled if I neglected to call to your remembrance some of those great ones of our times who have graced this hall.

Under the shadow of Dr. Sims, and on the right of our President, Dr. Broadbent, stood Virchow, the father of our present race of pathologists. His face beamed with *bonhommie* and universal goodwill as he spoke of himself, with just pride, as "a citizen of the world, whose children were Englishmen and Frenchmen as well as Prussians, and that from this time forward he was confident we should all be united more closely than ever in science and in life." How much of the progress made in pathology during the last quarter of a century may be traced to the teaching of our great master, and the fervour gained at his altar.

Virchow has happily avoided the errors of the Viennese School, of which Rokitansky was the leader, and insisted on facts and experiments as the sole basis of scientific medicine, while at the same time no man was ever more honest in collecting the medical records of past ages and giving credit to older teachers. For he realised that the present state

of medical knowledge could not be justly appreciated without familiarity with the history of its progress. Is not the history of human progress in part the history of errors found out and overcome? Virchow's name will always be connected with the views of cellular pathology established by him, and especially as regards the nature and origin of morbid growths. He may justly be commended for reserving his opinion and not expressing himself hastily in favour of any new fangled idea, however specious, and he has ever withstood the attempts of numerous writers to bring science and theology into collision. In his high character, his public spirit, and his practice charity, Virchow is second to none.

His beaming face and cheery words added much to the social success of our gathering.

Our newly appointed Honorary Fellow, *Dr. Billings*, of Washington, the greatest scientific bibliographer of our time, who unites with a knowledge of books, a power of trenchant utterance, born in the land of Lowell and Oliver Wendell Holmes, stood forth tall and commanding, with military air and keen observant eye. As he spoke the treasured names of our Lettsom and Fothergill a flutter of satisfaction seemed to pass over the faces in yonder convass. Some of us, perhaps, had almost forgotten what Dr. Billings so gracefully told us, that it was he, our illustrious Fothergill, who gave the first impulse to the library of the Pennsylvania University, now the largest University of the United States, numbering over 1000 pupils. It was he who set those wheels in motion, which, revolving with increasing energy, led to the establishment of the first medical school in America, and thus to the foundation of a school of

medicine, which in vigour and originality is pressing very hard upon our own. It appears from the recently issued list that there are now eighty-six medical schools in the United States.

Dr. Lettsom, who was a Fellow and Associate of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, sent in 1800 a number of valuable books to the College, which was then in a state of suspended animation. the managers of the Public Medical Library of Philadelphia seemed sluggishly content with a very tardy increase of its books, fearing that additions to their number might crowd the scanty bookshelves. In seven years from its formation not sixty pounds had been spent on the library, and in the six succeeding years before Lettsom's gift nothing had been laid out in this way.

In Dr. Fothergill's time the number of really good medical books was very small, and a library did not need to be large to hold them. Dr. Billings now tells us that medical books number about 120,000 volumes, and are increasing at the rate of 1500 volumes a year, and that a library to hold the medical books of next century must be built on the scale of the British Museum. Instead of depending as before on reprints and imported books, the citizens of the United States have raise a literature of their own, and their medical works are taking a deservedly high place in European schools.

Their industry, fertility of invention, boldness of action, practical and patient scientific investigation, have enabled the medical men of America to advance our knowledge by rapid strides. There has been none of that paralysis which sometimes affects the older schools, nor that tendency to reduce intellectual

operation to the perfection of the military drill so characterised by the German mind.

Their institutions enjoy freedom of action and are determined to continue untramelled by rule and unfettered by the conventionalism of historical establishments.

Of the 180,000 doctors in the world about 12,000 are producers of books. If we go on as heretofore, Dr. Billings calculates that ere long our libraries will become large cities and the services of every one in the world not engaged in writing will be required to catalogue and care for the annual product!

In *Charcot's* calm face we seemed to see that keen sagacity which has made plain much that was previously vague and undefined. His work in connection with the diseases of the nervous system marks an era in cerebro-spinal pathology, and has stirred the very roots and groundwork of the whole subject, so that, to use Dr. Broadbent's words, "many of the pages of our knowledge need to be written afresh."

Our minds must be pliant in these days, ready to be adjusted to changed conditions, if we would gain all that is possible from the new lights.

To Charcot we owe the identification of disseminated sclerosis of the brain and spinal cord, and in great part our knowledge of the symptoms attending sclerosis of the lateral columns of the cord, whether as a primary affection or as consecutive to lesions of the motor ganglia or tracts in the brain.

The trophic affections, too, of the bones and joints in locomotor ataxy were first made known by him, and he and his pupils have contributed largely, both by chemical and experimental evidence, to the locali-

sation of the motor centres, in the cerebral cortex and the sensory tracts.

Charcot's studies of hystero-epilepsy first brought out the remarkable features of the affection.

As professor of pathology, he has also contributed greatly to our knowledge of tubercle and of morbid processes in the liver and kidneys.

Of *Volkmann*, with his penetrating eyes and ambrosial locks, I need say no more than that he too adds to the glory of this Society by bringing to our roll an illustrious name.

His address on 'Modern Surgery,' delivered at the Congress, will have a historic value, marking as it does certain vastly improved conditions, and showing by numerous facts that where fifty years ago thousands would have died, they now with similar disabilities, through the power of surgery, live and lead useful lives.

Professor *Verneuil's* paper before the Congress on "Primary Union" was highly appreciated in the surgical section, and his communication on "The Modifications of Syphilis in the Tuberculous, Gouty, and other Constitutions," gave evidence of that breadth and accuracy which have marked his former labours.

The new Honorary Fellows collected here, under the guidance of Sir James Paget, have done and are now doing their noble work.

Ought not this direction of our thoughts to the worthies of the past and to the great men of the present stir us up to a higher appreciation and reverence for all that is great and good. Reverence is the intuitive acknowledgment of a higher presence, the absence of it is a great moral loss. As a child his

father, and as a student his master, so all reverence something above them—to reverence nothing is to fall back upon self—for irreverence is possible only to the superficial.

Even in this nineteenth century, which is certainly remarkable for the absence of this virtue, we find that our greatest men are reverent men. Those who talk in sounding phrases and for the moment seem to influence the public ear, are soon found to have uttered nothing that was worthy, but only to have soared in verbose platitudes to the regions of mediocrity.

The most notable gathering of the disciples of Esculapius has passed but its influence lives. From the Congress of 1881 will date many a new and successful crusade against disease and triumph over death. Men of vast experience have exchanged ideas and communicated to each other facts of the greatest importance, facts brought home with that freshness and fervour which comes of personal contact. New paths of experience have been surveyed, fresh ways of looking at facts suggested. Many of the 4000 who met in August last, have been encouraged to renewed efforts, and set in the way of new discoveries. The knowledge of isolated individuals has become common property. Thoughts, timidly held by a few, have been discussed, and are now being utilised by the medical world. Little more than three centuries ago, the great fact of the circulation of the blood was unknown. Let us rejoice in the progress we have made, and trust with renewed confidence that earnestness of purpose and accuracy of aim will enlarge continually the domain of truth

APPENDIX.

It may interest the Fellows to see a copy of the form of nomination in use at the end of last century when Edward Jenner was elected Corresponding Fellow. This has been placed in my hands by Mr. Vise, of Spalding, to whose great-grandfather the letter was addressed. The Latin form is printed, and the translation accompanying it is in the handwriting of William Chamberlain, of obstetric fame.

My friend, Mr. Christopher Vise, of Spalding, represents the sixth generation of the family in practice in or near that town.

"*Viro Celeberrimo* Gulielmo Vyse, Chirurgo *Præses et Societas Medica Londinensis, S. P. D.*

"Nominis Tui fama, tot ac tanta, quæ in Arte nostra illustranda, promovenda, amplificanda edidisti specimina, nos impulerunt, ut in sociorum exterorum, quos Correspondentes vocant, numerum Te adscriberemus; id quod die Lunæ, tertio Augusti, 1789, factum esse præsentes testantur litteræ.—Quare benigno accipe animo hoc amicitiæ & reverentiæ nostræ erga Te testimonium, atque pro benevolentia Tua, ea, quæ ad artis incrementum aliquid conferunt, nobiscum communica. Vale ac nobis fave.

"GULIELMUS CHAMBERLAINE.
"ad epistolis ad exteros.

"Londini
"Ex ædibus Societatis,
"Bolt-Court, Fleet-Street,
"Die Martis, 4to Augusti, 1789."

Translation.

"The President and Members of the Medical Society in London wish much health to the most renoun^{d} WILLIAM VISE, Surgeon.

"The greatness of your reputation, in so many & great instances, which you have given in illustrating, promoting, & enlarging our Art, have induc^{d} us, to admit you into the number of our absent members, whom we call Correspondents; which this present Letter testifys was done on Monday the 3^{d} of August, 1789. Wherefore receive kindly this testimony of our friendship and regard for you, and out of your good will communicate to us any occurrences that conduce to the improvement of the Art. Farewell and think well of us.

"GULIELMUS CHAMBERLAINE.

"LONDON,
"BOLT COURT, FLEET STREET,
"Tuesday, 4th of Augst, 1789."

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