

**Testimonials presented to the ... Lord Provost, the magistrates, and town council of Edinburgh ... when candidate for the chair of the practice of physic / [John Thomson].**

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*B. C. Brodie*  
**TESTIMONIALS**

PRESENTED TO THE  
RIGHT HON. THE LORD PROVOST,  
THE  
MAGISTRATES, AND TOWN COUNCIL  
OF EDINBURGH;

BY  
JOHN THOMSON, M.D. F.R.S.E.

PROFESSOR OF MILITARY SURGERY IN THE UNIVERSITY,  
AND CONSULTING PHYSICIAN TO THE EDINBURGH  
NEW TOWN DISPENSARY,

WHEN CANDIDATE FOR THE CHAIR  
OF THE PRACTICE OF PHYSIC.

---

EDINBURGH:

M.DCCC.XXI.





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# LIST

OF

LETTERS and TESTIMONIALS, presented to the  
Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST, MAGISTRATES,  
and TOWN COUNCIL of Edinburgh, by Dr JOHN THOM-  
SON, Professor of Military Surgery.

## I.

	PAGE
LETTER from Dr Thomson to the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council, . . . . .	1
—— the late Dr Gregory to John Clerk, Esq. . . . .	3
—— Dr Hamilton, senior, to the Earl of Lauderdale, . . .	4
—— the late Andrew Wood, Esq. to the same, . . . . .	5
—— Professor Russell to the same, . . . . .	ib.
—— the late Dr Erskine to J. Allen, Esq. . . . .	6
—— Dr Baillie, London, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	8
—— John Pearson, Esq. London, to the same, . . . . .	ib.
—— Astley Cooper, Esq. London, to the same, . . . . .	9
—— A. Colles, Esq. Dublin, to the same, . . . . .	10
—— Dr Henderson, London, to the same, . . . . .	ib.
—— Samuel Reed, Esq. Secretary to the Medical Board, to the same, . . . . .	11
—— Sir James M'Grigor, Director General Army Medical Department, to Sir H. Torrens, Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, . . . . .	12
EXTRACT from the Minutes of the Royal College of Surgeons,	13

## II.

LETTER from Dr Thomson to the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council, . . . . .	14
—— Dr White, Paisley, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	ib.
—— Sir Everard Home, London, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	16



	PAGE.
TESTIMONIAL by Dr Baillie, . . . . .	ib.
——— John Pearson, Esq. . . . .	17
——— Benjamin Brodie, Esq. London, . . . . .	18
LETTER from Dr Henry, Manchester, to Dr Thomson, . . . .	ib.
TESTIMONIAL by Benjamin Travers, Esq. London, . . . . .	19
——— William Lawrence, Esq. London, . . . . .	20
LETTER from Dr Farre, London, to the Lord Provost, . . . .	21
——— Dr Holland, London, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	23
——— Dr Traill, Liverpool, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	24
——— Dr Bostock, London, to the same, . . . . .	ib.
——— The Medical Officers of the New Town Dispensary to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	25
TESTIMONIAL by Dr Somerville, London, . . . . .	26
——— Sir James M'Grigor, . . . . .	ib.
——— Dr Fowler, Sarum, . . . . .	27
LETTER from James Wardrop, Esq. London, to the Lord Pro- vost, . . . . .	28
TESTIMONIAL by Astley Cooper, Esq. . . . .	29
LETTER from Dr Renton to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	ib.
——— John Howship, Esq. London, to Dr Thomson, . . . .	30
——— Dr Brown, Glasgow, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	32
——— Dr Millar, Glasgow, to the same, . . . . .	33
——— Samuel Cooper, Esq. London, to Dr Thomson, . . . .	34
——— Daniel Ellis, Esq. to the same, . . . . .	35
——— John W. Turner, Esq. to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	36
——— Professor Jameson to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	33
——— Thomas Thomson, Esq. to the same, . . . . .	39
——— Dugald Stewart, Esq. to T. Thomson, Esq. . . . .	40

## III.

LETTER from Dr Thomson to the Right Honourable the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Edin- burgh, . . . . .	42
——— Sir James M'Grigor to the Right Honourable William Dundas, . . . . .	43
TESTIMONIAL by Dr Franklin, Principal Inspector, Army Medical Department, . . . . .	44
LETTER from Dr Theodore Gordon, Professional Assistant, Army Medical Board, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	45
——— Sir John Hope, to the same, . . . . .	46



	PAGE.
LETTER from Sir Thomas Bradford, to the same, . . . . .	47
——— Dr Hennen, to the same, . . . . .	ib.
TESTIMONIAL by James Moore, Esq. London, . . . . .	48
——— Dr Roget, London, . . . . .	49
LETTER from Charles Hatchett, Esq. London, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	ib.
——— William Clift, Esq. London, to the same, . . . . .	50
——— Joshua Brookes, Esq. London, to the same, . . . . .	51
——— Dr MacLagan, to the same, . . . . .	52
——— Dr J. Henry Davidson, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	53
EXTRACT from the Preface to the German translation of Dr Thomson's Lectures on Inflammation, . . . . .	55
LETTER from Dr Barozzi, Pavia, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	ib.
EXTRACTS from Reviews of Dr Thomson's Work on Varioloid Diseases, . . . . .	56
LETTER from Astley Cooper, Esq. to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	58
——— Dr Yelloly, Norwich, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	59
——— Dr Irwin, Sligo, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	60
——— Dr Headlam, Newcastle, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	61
——— Sir Matthew Tierney, London, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	62
——— Dr Skene, Aberdeen, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	63
——— G. J. Guthrie, Esq. London, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	64
——— Summers Higgins, Esq. to the same, . . . . .	65
——— Dr Birkbeck, London, to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	66
——— George Bell, Esq. to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	67
——— Professor Sandifort, Leyden, to the same, . . . . .	70
——— Professor Vrolik, Amsterdam, to the same, . . . . .	71
TESTIMONIAL by Dr Vrolik, . . . . .	71
LETTER from Dr Martin, Paris, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	72
——— Baron Portal, Paris, to the same, . . . . .	73
——— Professor Beclard, Paris, to the same, . . . . .	74
——— Dr Pockels, Brunswick, to the same, . . . . .	76

## IV.

LETTER from Dr Thomson to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	78
——— Dr Hume, Hamilton, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	79
——— Dr Hay to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	80
——— Dr Kellie, Leith, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	82
——— Dr Gairdner to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	84



	PAGE.
TESTIMONIAL by the Medical Officers of the Dundee Infirmary, . . . . .	85
LETTER from Dr Stenhouse, Dunfermline, to Dr Thomson, .	86
——— Dr Mudie, St Andrews, to the same, . . . . .	87
——— Dr Dewar, Dunfermline, to the same, . . . . .	ib.
——— Dr Henderson, Perth, to the same, . . . . .	88
TESTIMONIAL by Dr Macfarlane, Perth, . . . . .	90
——— Medical Practitioners in Perth, . . . . .	ib.
LETTER from Dr Whiteside, Ayr, to the Lord Provost, . . . .	91
——— Dr Donaldson, Ayr, to Dr Thomson, . . . . .	ib.
——— William Newbigging, Esq. to Thomas Blackwood, Esq.	92
——— William Wood, Esq. to the same, . . . . .	93
——— His Royal Highness the DUKE of YORK to the Lord Provost, . . . . .	95
——— Dr Thomson to the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town-Council, . . . . .	97



TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
JOHN MANDERSTON, LORD PROVOST,  
THE  
MAGISTRATES AND TOWN COUNCIL OF EDINBURGH.

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MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

I BEG leave to offer myself as a candidate for the Chair of the Practice of Physic, now vacant in the University, by the lamented death of the late Dr Gregory. I have not yet applied to any of my medical friends for testimonials of the opinions which they may be pleased to entertain of my qualifications to fulfil the duties attached to this important situation ; but if I receive any such, I shall submit them to your consideration. In the meantime, I take the liberty to lay before you a few documents relative to the professional appointments which I have had the honour to hold, and relative to a work, which I published about eight years ago, on the subject of Inflammation.

Permit me to add, that to obtain the honour of the appointment I now solicit, has long been the highest object of my ambition ; and that the hope I might one day be considered as qualified to teach the Practice of Physic, has been



the guide of my general studies, and the principle which has animated my labours in the acquisition and communication of medical and surgical knowledge.—I have the honour to be,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your very obedient humble servant,

JOHN THOMSON, M.D.

Professor of Military Surgery in the University of  
Edinburgh, and Consulting Physician to the New  
Town Dispensary.

5, George Street, Edinburgh, April 10, 1821.

## TESTIMONIALS.

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### I.

LETTER from the late Dr GREGORY to JOHN CLERK,  
Esq. Solicitor-General.

*Wednesday, March 19, 1806.*

DEAR SIR,

\* \* \* \* \*

As to your second question, relating to the qualifications of Mr John Thomson,—I can have no scruple in answering it in the most explicit manner.

I have known Mr Thomson intimately, for many years. I know him to be a man of excellent talents, and great ardour in the pursuits of science; and that he has bestowed extraordinary pains and attention on the study of Surgery, in all its branches. I know also, that, for two years past, he has read Lectures on Surgery in general, comprehending, of course, Military Surgery; and that these Lectures have been attended by a very great number of students, to whom they gave the greatest satisfaction. I therefore can have no doubt that Mr Thomson is peculiarly well qualified to discharge the duties of a Professor of Military Surgery, if such professorship shall be established in this University, or any where else. I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. GREGORY.



From Dr JAMES HAMILTON, senior, Physician to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, &c. to the EARL of LAUDERDALE.

*Edinburgh, March 20, 1806.*

MY LORD,

I AM informed that my testimony respecting the professional abilities of Mr John Thomson, Surgeon in Edinburgh, might be of service to him at this time ; it is for this reason, that I presume to obtrude myself on your Lordship.

Mr Thomson is one of the Surgeons of the Royal Infirmary of this place, and he has been appointed, by the unanimous suffrage of his fellow-members, Professor of Surgery to the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. In the former capacity, his opinions on the cases of the surgical patients are highly respected ; and, in the latter, he reads an annual Course of Lectures to numerous admiring pupils.

For myself, I have been long acquainted with Mr Thomson, and know him to be a man of great ability, industry, and application. He is a proficient in general learning, and is possessed of extensive professional knowledge. I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your respectful

And most obedient servant,

JAMES HAMILTON, Senior,

Physician to the Royal Infirmary  
of Edinburgh.



From A. WOOD, Esq. Senior Member of the Royal College  
of Surgeons, to the EARL of LAUDERDALE.

*Edinburgh, March 18, 1806.*

MY LORD,

\* \* \* \* \*

Many of the professional gentlemen of this place are of opinion, that the appointment of a Professor of Military Surgery, with a seat in the University, would prove highly useful, and would undoubtedly render the medical education here much more complete.

If this proposal shall meet with your Lordship's approbation, and appears to merit your support, from my personal knowledge of the learning, professional information, and industry of Mr Thomson, I have no hesitation in declaring him, in my opinion, a fit person for filling that chair.

The very full attendance and general approbation of those Pupils who have attended the Lectures already delivered by Mr Thomson, for two winters past, may be considered as a proof how agreeable such a nomination will be to them.—I am,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

ANDREW WOOD.

From JAMES RUSSELL, Esq. Professor of Clinical Surgery  
in the University of Edinburgh, to the EARL of LAUDER-  
DALE.

*Edinburgh, 17th March, 1806.*

MY LORD,

I formerly had occasion to communicate my sentiments with regard to Mr Thomson's qualifications to teach Surgery; and I now have the satisfaction to add, that the ex-



perience of two years has fully verified my prediction on this point. His character, as a well-informed, intelligent, and useful Lecturer, is now sufficiently established with the Public; so that his friends are well entitled to recommend him to any situation which may open to a person of merit in that line.

\* \* \* \* \*

I should, therefore, certainly regard the erection of a Class of Military Surgery as a very useful addition to the Medical School of Edinburgh; and, if the Chair were to be filled by a person of Mr Thomson's abilities, I have no doubt but the Lectures would prove extremely advantageous to the young Gentlemen who come hither to prosecute their professional studies; and that they would also contribute to support the character, and extend the reputation, of the University.—I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient, and

Very humble Servant,

JAMES RUSSELL,

*Clin. Proff. of Surgery.*

---

From the late Dr P. ERSKINE, Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, to JOHN ALLEN, Esq. late Lecturer on Physiology in Edinburgh, and now Master of Dulwich College.

*Edinburgh, 23d February, 1806.*

MY DEAR ALLEN,

\* \* \* \* \*

With regard to Thomson's claims to such an appointment, (Professorship of Military Surgery,) if it shall take place, they are numerous, and in my opinion unanswerable. He has, in fact, by delivering several full and separate Courses on Surgery, already performed a service of the greatest be-



nefit to the Public ; for, since the commencement of his Lectures, a very material improvement has taken place in the qualifications of the young men, whose education, as Surgeons, has been confined to this place ; and they are now found to possess such a stock of professional information, as, in former times, I am convinced, was rarely to be met with among them. The truth of this, I have an opportunity, as one of the Examinators of the College of Surgeons, in some measure to ascertain by personal observation. It is also, I conceive, no slight consideration, that, in order to do justice to this very important course, he has withdrawn himself, for a time at least, from private family practice ; on which account, he may be considered as fairly entitled to every support and encouragement that can with propriety be offered him ; and, in that view, the institution of the Professorship would not only be a measure of great general utility, but, if the office should be bestowed on him, would also be an act of justice to a most useful servant of the Public.

Of his abilities as a Teacher, I know it will be unnecessary to say any thing to Lord Lauderdale ; but, to those who are not acquainted with him, it may with confidence be asserted, that by his professional brethren, he was universally considered as better qualified than any one else of their number for the office of their Professor, which they considered it as necessary to institute, and which, accordingly, they unanimously conferred upon him. In my opinion, indeed, it may with truth be said, not only that he is well entitled, by his knowledge and abilities, to the appointment in question, but that it is of great importance to the Public to have him placed in such a situation, as will enable him to continue, with every advantage to himself, those exertions, which, for some years, he has been making, more to his credit than emolument.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yours very sincerely,

P. ERSKINE.



FROM DR BAILLIE TO DR THOMSON.

DEAR SIR,

I return you many thanks for the present of your publication upon Inflammation, which you were so good as to make me. I am in the course of reading it, and I think both the matter and the language of your work excellent. The work is so comprehensive, and the discussions upon the various subjects of it so full, that it cannot fail to become a standard book ; and I should think it must lead to that kind of practice which would be most agreeable to you, viz. the business of consultation.—I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your very faithful servant,

*Windsor Castle,*

*November 3, 1813.*

M. BAILLIE.

FROM JOHN PEARSON, Esq. Surgeon to the Lock Hospital,  
and Consulting Surgeon to the Public Dispensary, Lon-  
don, to DR THOMSON.

*London, January 7, 1814.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I fear that you will think me very remiss in not acknowledging your kind present sooner, which I assure you I highly esteem, not only for the sake of its intrinsic worth, but as a flattering testimony of your friendship, which I shall be always happy to cultivate. The Students and Professors of Surgery are greatly indebted to you for the elaborate manner in which you have treated one of the most important diseases that falls within the province of the Surgeon. If you were to undertake some of the other subjects of Surgery, which admit of being discussed in a separate



treatise, your chirurgical erudition and habits of patient investigation, would greatly improve and elucidate whatever you might please to engage in.

\* \* \* \* \*

With every good wish for the increase of your reputation and usefulness,—I am,

My dear Sir,

Always yours most truly,

JOHN PEARSON.

---

From ASTLEY COOPER, Esq. Surgeon to Guy's Hospital,  
London, to DR THOMSON.

*London, Oct. 1814.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I designed to have taken the opportunity of Mr S. going to Edinburgh to write to thank you for your work on Inflammation.

I conceive that any opinion of mine can be of no value to you ; but still I must venture to say, that your work on Inflammation contains all that is known upon that subject, clearly arranged and ably stated. Mr Hunter is under great obligations to you for being the means of introducing his labours also to the world, in a much more intelligible form than that in which he had left them.

\* \* \* \* \*

Believe me your friend,

ASTLEY COOPER.



From A. COLLES, Professor of Anatomy and Surgery to the  
Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin, to Dr THOMSON.

*Dublin, April 4, 1814.*

DEAR SIR,

A variety of circumstances has prevented me, until now, from thanking you for your kind attention in presenting me with a copy of your Treatise on Inflammation.

Be assured, that my judgment is not biassed by this mark of kindness, when I say, that, in my mind, it is a most valuable work. To the younger members of the profession, it presents the doctrines of John Hunter in a clear and impressive point of view.

You have anticipated me by announcing the new truths concerning granulation, &c. My attention had been, some time since, turned on this subject, by the phenomena which presented themselves in examining diseases, especially those of joints. And I had actually gone some way in a series of experiments on animals, to confirm and elucidate the more important points; but a variety of other occupations prevented me from following them up. Your work has saved me from the necessity of pushing these inquiries farther, and has announced the facts in a manner far more judicious and impressive than I could hope to have done.

With truth and esteem,

Yours sincerely,

A. COLLES.

From Dr HENDERSON, (Translator of CABANI's Revolutions of Medical Science,) to Dr THOMSON.

*London, July 24, 1814.*

MY DEAR SIR,

\* \* \* \* \*

Although you have probably had to listen to more compliments on your work (Lectures on Inflammation) than were



altogether agreeable to you, I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of expressing the satisfaction with which I have read it. Indeed, I know not any work, in the whole range of Medical Literature, which contains more sound doctrine, is more free from frivolous hypothesis, or (what to my mind is not its least recommendation,) is written in so uniformly correct and elegant a style.

\* \* \* \* \*

I remain, with much respect,

My dear Sir, very sincerely yours.

AL. HENDERSON.

---

ARMY MEDICAL BOARD OFFICE.

20th July, 1815.

SIR,

I am directed by the Board to communicate to you, that, on being made acquainted with the handsome manner in which you resolved to proceed to the Netherlands, for the purpose of assisting the wounded in the late glorious battles, they deemed it advisable to submit to his Royal Highness, the Commander in Chief, the advantage that might be derived from your accepting the appointment of Acting Staff Surgeon; and the Director General having accordingly recommended the measure, his Royal Highness has been pleased to approve of it, in a full assurance of the benefits that would result to the service from the exercise of your talents in the military hospitals. I have the honour to be,

Sir, your most obedient humble Servant,

DR THOMSON,

S. REED, Sec.

&c. &c. &c.



From Sir JAMES M'GRIGOR, Director General Army Medical Department, to Sir HENRY TORRENS, K.C.B. Military Secretary, &c.

*September 9th, 1815.*

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, of the 4th inst. with the memorial from Dr J. Thomson, Professor of Surgery to the Royal College of Surgeons, and Regius Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, praying for the permanent appointment of Surgeon to the Forces.

In returning this memorial, I venture to express my humble hope that the Commander in Chief will be pleased to honour this request with his Royal Highness's sanction. Dr Thomson's eminent acquirements are universally admitted; and the great benefit that numbers have derived from his course of instruction, are equally known and acknowledged. His liberality in giving free admission to his lectures to every gentleman holding an appointment in the navy or army, has been conspicuous. On the late occasion of the severe actions in Flanders, he was the only one of the three gentlemen then honoured with acting appointments, who devoted himself entirely to the professional duties for the relief of the wounded; and the testimonials which reached me of the services he rendered both to the patients and to the Medical Staff by his advice, were most gratifying.

Being strongly impressed with the opinion that great and permanent advantage may be derived from the employment of Dr Thomson, and from the Public being enabled to avail itself of his talents, in forwarding the education of students intended for the army, and perfecting those already holding appointments in it, in the higher branches of Scientific Surgery, I beg leave most respectfully to recommend, for the approbation of his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief, that Dr John Thomson may be appointed Surgeon to the Forces.

(Signed) JAS. M'GRIGOR.



Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, held within their Hall, on Tuesday the 10th day of April, 1821.

THE President laid before the Meeting, a letter he had received from Dr Thomson, resigning the office of Professor of Surgery; which being read, the President moved that the thanks of the College be given to Dr Thomson in the following terms:—"In accepting the resignation of Professor Thomson, the Royal College of Surgeons wish to testify the high sense they entertain of the usefulness, the talent, and zeal, with which he has discharged the duties of Professor of Surgery to the College during the last seventeen years, and to express their regret at being deprived of his services, in a situation in which by his labours in teaching, his writings, and his reputation, he has contributed in so great a degree to promote the study and improvement of the Science of Surgery, and to maintain the character of the Medical School of Edinburgh."—Which motion being seconded, was unanimously agreed to, and the Clerk was desired to transmit an Extract from the Minutes to Dr Thomson to that effect.

Extracted by

(Signed) Wm. Scott, Clk.



LETTER to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST,  
the MAGISTRATES and TOWN-COUNCIL of EDINBURGH.

*5. George Street, Edinburgh, April 23, 1821.*

MY LORD and GENTLEMEN,

I have now the honour to transmit, for your consideration, some Testimonials relative to my qualifications to teach the Practice of Medicine. Most of these, you will perceive, are from individuals who have themselves been employed in teaching branches of Medical Science; and all of them from men of such worth and eminence, that as it is my highest pride to have obtained their good opinion, so it shall be the study of my life to endeavour to justify it. I have the honour to be, with great respect,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN THOMSON, M.D.

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## TESTIMONIALS.

### II.

LETTER from JOHN WHITE, M.D. Consulting Physician  
to the Dispensary and House of Recovery, Paisley, &c. to  
the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of EDINBURGH.

MY LORD,

IT having been intimated to me that Dr John Thomson,  
Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edin-



burgh, means to stand candidate for the Professorship of the Practice of Medicine, now vacant by the death of Dr Gregory, I cannot, in justice to Dr Thomson, refrain from expressing, on this occasion, the high opinion I entertain of his eminent talents and professional acquirements, and my perfect conviction of his being fully qualified for teaching that difficult and most important branch of the healing art.

Dr Thomson became my apprentice in the year 1785, and remained with me three years. During this period, his conduct was such as to deserve and obtain my warmest approbation. His zeal in acquiring medical knowledge was ardent and unremitting; and I still recollect, with much satisfaction, the many pleasing hours I passed with him in reading and studying the best authors on medical subjects, and especially in going over with him the excellent MS. Lectures of the late celebrated Dr Cullen. Besides the knowledge thus acquired, he had frequent opportunities of visiting my private patients, and also those admitted to the Public Dispensary. On these occasions, I frequently remarked in him a singular talent in discriminating diseases of the most intricate nature;—a talent which appeared to me almost intuitive.

It may not be improper to mention, that he at this time also cultivated the departments of Botany and Chemistry with great ardour; and I need only refer to his edition of Fourcroy's Elements of Chemistry for a proof of what I state respecting his attainments in the latter science.

It is consistent with my knowledge, that during his studying at the University of Glasgow, he acquired the esteem and confidence of the late worthy Professor Hamilton, and of that eminent lecturer Dr Cleghorn; and, from every thing I could learn from these gentlemen, his improvement kept pace with their zeal in teaching.

I shall only, my Lord, take the liberty to add, that in consequence of Dr Thomson's having taught the Principles of Surgery, I cannot but consider him as better qualified to deliver a Course of Lectures on the Practice of Medicine,



than if he had never attended to the former branch.—I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

Humble servant,

JOHN WHITE, M.D. &c.

*Paisley, 21st April, 1821.*

LETTER from Sir EVERARD HOME, Bart. Vice-President of the Royal Society, Sergeant Surgeon to his Majesty, Honorary Professor to the Royal College of Surgeons, &c. &c. &c. to Dr THOMSON.

*Sackville Street, 15th April, 1821.*

DEAR SIR,

I am at a loss how to answer your letter, otherwise than by wishing you success in your canvas for the Chair of the Professorship now vacant, which I have no doubt you would fill with talents and abilities justifying the choice made by your election. Thirty years ago, I witnessed your ardour in the pursuit of medical science, applauded your zeal, and endeavoured to give you such facilities as were in my power, to encourage you in your labours. Since that time, you have distinguished yourself in the very metropolis to which the professorship belongs, so that your merits must be known to all the individuals on whom the election depends.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Your's truly,

EVERARD HOME.

TESTIMONIAL by MATTHEW BAILLIE, M.D. F.R.S.,  
&c. &c. &c.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery, for many years, and have read



his various publications. Upon this foundation, I can say, with the firmest conviction, that I believe him to be extremely well acquainted, not only with the surgical, but with the medical department of his profession; and that he is most fully qualified for the office in the University of Edinburgh, which he is anxious to obtain.

M. BAILLIE.

*Cavendish Square, 17th April, 1821.*

---

**TESTIMONIAL** by JOHN PEARSON, Esq. F.R.S. Consulting Surgeon to the Lock Hospital, and to the Public Dispensary, &c. &c. &c.

*London, April 16, 1821.*

I HAVE had the pleasure and advantage of being acquainted with Dr John Thomson during many years, and have always considered him as possessing a much larger measure of professional erudition than is commonly attained in the present day. His large work upon Inflammation, with his other medical and chirurgical writings, give an advantageous representation of his talents, industry, capacity of patient and laborious research, sound judgment, and powers of accurate discrimination. The zeal, activity, and unwearied diligence, which have been displayed by Dr Thomson during many years, in acquiring and communicating professional knowledge, qualify him eminently for the important distinction he solicits. These useful qualities, with his known attachment to medical pursuits, offer very powerful reasons for believing, that he will exhibit an unabated ardour, persevering industry, and conscientious fidelity, in fulfilling the duties of that honourable station for which he stands a most worthy candidate.

JOHN PEARSON, Chir. F.R.S. &c. &c.



**TESTIMONIAL** by B. C. BRODIE, Esq. F.R.S. Surgeon to St George's Hospital, Professor of Anatomy and Surgery to the Royal College of Surgeons, Author of "Pathological and Surgical Observations on the Diseases of the Joints," &c. &c. &c.

DR THOMSON, Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, has been known to me by his writings, and I have also had the pleasure of his personal acquaintance, for many years. I can, in the most unequivocal manner, give my testimony as to the distinguished talents, zeal, and unwearied diligence, which he has uniformly displayed in the pursuit of his profession, and his extensive knowledge of medical subjects. In particular, Dr Thomson has interested himself in pathological researches; and I must consider him as one of the best pathologists of the present period; and I conceive him to be well calculated to add to the reputation of any Medical School in Europe.

B. C. BRODIE.

*Saville Row, London, April 14, 1821.*

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**LETTER** from WILLIAM HENRY, M.D. F.R.S. late Physician to the Infirmary, Dispensary, and Lunatic Hospital at Manchester, Author of "Elements of Experimental Chemistry," &c. &c. &c. to the Right Honourable JOHN MANDERSTON, Lord Provost, the Magistrates, and Town Council of Edinburgh.

MY LORD and GENTLEMEN,

AT the request of Dr Thomson, I take the liberty of offering my testimony in favour of his qualifications for the office of Professor of the Practice of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, which has lately become vacant by the



lamented death of Dr Gregory. From long personal knowledge of Dr Thomson, and an acquaintance with his writings, I entertain a high opinion of his talents, and professional acquirements; and I have no doubt, that, should he be appointed to the Chair, he will fulfil its duties with credit to himself, and that he will sustain the reputation of the University, as a School of Medicine, which it has so long enjoyed, by a title founded on the just claims of its distinguished Professors.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD and GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

WILLIAM HENRY, M.D. F.R.S.

*Manchester, 15th April, 1821.*

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TESTIMONIAL by BENJAMIN TRAVERS, Esq. F.R.S.

Surgeon to St Thomas's Hospital, Author of "An Inquiry into the Process of Nature in repairing Injuries of the Intestines," &c. &c. &c.

MY acquaintance with Dr John Thomson commenced during my attendance as a student at the University of Edinburgh. The value of his public Lectures, which I diligently attended, and of his conversation and practical remarks upon professional subjects at the Infirmary and elsewhere, led me to conceive a very high opinion of his erudition and talents, and to regard, with sentiments of unfeigned esteem and gratitude, his zealous and indefatigable exertions for the improvement of his Pupils, and of Medical Science.

A frequent epistolary intercourse, which has ever since subsisted between us, and an attentive perusal of the valuable works published by Dr Thomson, especially of the Lec-



tures on Inflammation, have contributed to confirm the impression which I received as his pupil.

And I beg leave to add, that, independently of the influence of private obligation and friendship, such is the opinion I hold of his learning, his talents, and his example, as an Investigator of Science and a Teacher, that I should be at a loss to name an individual whose appointment to the vacant Professorship would confer a greater benefit on the Class, or a greater honour on the University.

BENJAMIN TRAVERS.

*New Broad Street, London,*

*April 16, 1821.*

TESTIMONIAL by WILLIAM LAWRENCE, Esq. late Professor of Anatomy and Surgery to the Royal College of Surgeons in London, Assistant Surgeon to St Bartholomew's Hospital, Surgeon to Bethlem and Bridewell Hospitals, and to the London Infirmary for Diseases of the Eyes, &c. &c.

*College of Physicians, London, April 17, 1821.*

FROM personal acquaintance with Dr John Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, and from a knowledge of his writings on various parts of medical science, I have great pleasure in stating, that I consider him to possess very distinguished natural abilities, and the most extensive information on all branches of medicine, derived from long, patient observation of nature, and the most industrious study of medical writers in all languages. The published works of Dr Thomson, and more particularly his "Lectures on Inflammation," shew that he has directed his mind to the investigation of those scientific principles which form the basis of the healing art; and the



success with which he explains, enforces and illustrates them, as a practical teacher, as well as the clearness with which he arranges and lays before his audience his immense collections of information, has been most gratefully acknowledged to me by great numbers of his pupils, whom I have had the opportunity of conversing with in the schools of London. I therefore take the liberty of representing, respectfully, but forcibly, to the Lord Provost, the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh, my decided conviction, that Dr John Thomson possesses, in a very high degree, a combination of natural talent and acquired knowledge, which renders him particularly qualified for the situation of a public teacher; and that these endowments, as well as the direction which his practical researches and his studies have constantly taken, would enable him to fill the Chair of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, as a worthy successor of the late justly celebrated Professor.

WILLIAM LAWRENCE.

To the Lord Provost, the Magistrates and  
Town Council of Edinburgh.

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LETTER from J. R. FARRE, M.D. Consulting Physician to the London Infirmary for curing Diseases of the Eyes, Author of "Essays on the Morbid Anatomy of the Liver," &c. &c. &c. to the Right Honourable the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

*London, April 17, 1821.*

MY LORD,

IF the distinguished rank which the University of Edinburgh holds as a School of Medicine in the British Empire be considered, it will not surprise your Lordship, that any or every physician whose name is enrolled in any other University or College of that Empire, should feel the deepest inte-



rest in the issue of the present honourable contest for the Chair of the Practice of Physic, filled as it has been for so long a period by Professors of Medicine of such acknowledged eminence. Nay, my Lord, I presume to think that your Lordship will deem it a duty in British Physicians, without disparagement to the merits of the several distinguished candidates for the Chair, to bear testimony to the qualifications of that candidate of whom they may have a more particular as well as personal knowledge. Of Dr Thomson, one of the Candidates for the Chair of the Practice of Physic, I beg to offer, most respectfully, to your Lordship the following testimonial:—That having had the pleasure of his acquaintance, in the years 1802 and 1803, at Edinburgh, I marked at that period his uncommon zeal for the promotion of medical science, by his laborious researches, not only into the processes of nature, the original and most useful mode of investigation ; but also into the writings of physicians and surgeons of ancient and modern times, a labour for which, even at the time to which I refer, he stood most distinguished :—That the lapse of years since that period, whilst it has added to his honours, has not slackened that zeal, nor diminished that research, as his own works have proved :—And, that in addition to his having cultivated Pathology on the basis of Anatomy and Physiology, (although they constitute conjointly with the former the essential qualifications for Practical Medicine,) his extensive information in the other subsidiary sciences, qualify him, in a peculiar manner, to grace the chair, and to benefit the class devoted to the Practice of Physic. In whatever manner the wisdom of your Lordship, aided by the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh may decide, wishing that that Chair may ever be so filled, as to lose nothing of its pre-eminent usefulness, I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's faithful

And most obedient servant,

JOHN RICHARD FARRE.



Letter from HENRY HOLLAND, M.D.F.R.S. to DR THOMSON.

*Mount Street, London, April 18, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM anxious to admit no farther delay in replying to the letter in which you announce to me your being a candidate for the Chair of the Practice of Physic at Edinburgh. Before speaking more particularly on this subject, I think it right to explain to you, that in a letter which I wrote to Dr G. Gregory, on learning the event of his uncle's death, I stated to him my hope that our common friend Dr Alison would come forward as a candidate for the vacant chair, and added the opinion which I still entertain of Dr Alison's qualifications for this important situation.

While mentioning this circumstance, I do not consider that it precludes me from what I feel to be an equal act of duty, when knowing that you also are one of the candidates for this Chair, and in answering the letter, in which you intimate it to me, I am anxious to express, as far as I may do it without presumption, my sense of the eminent qualifications which so well fit you for the duties of this situation. I venture to speak with some confidence on this subject, both from my personal knowledge of your character as a public instructor in one important branch of the profession, and from my acquaintance with the various and extensive services which you have rendered to the Science of Medicine at large. I mean here to allude more particularly to your writings on professional subjects, the value of which is well known to me. The zeal and talent for accurate research and observation which these works display, is one of the highest testimonies to the merits, upon which may be founded your claims as a candidate for the vacant Chair.

I cannot add more, than the assurance of the great esteem with which I remain,

Dear Sir, your very faithful servant,

H. HOLLAND.



Letter from THOMAS STEWART TRAILL, M.D. Lecturer on Chemistry, Liverpool, &c. to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

MY LORD,

HAVING learnt that Dr John Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery in the respected University where I received my education, has offered himself as a candidate for the Chair, vacant by the lamented death of Dr Gregory, I have great pleasure in offering my humble testimony to the high character which Dr Thomson holds among his professional brethren.

As an author, he is very advantageously known by his valuable work on Inflammation, a subject of the highest practical importance, and of great difficulty in a theoretic point of view, which he has treated with much judgment and ability.

As an able and enthusiastic Teacher of Medicine, he has been long known in your city; and his pupils, widely scattered over the four quarters of the globe, retain a grateful sense of his merits as an instructor.

To these qualities, I can only add my personal esteem for him as a gentleman. I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

THOS. STEWART TRAILL, M.D.

*Liverpool, 21, St Anne-street,*

*April 9th, 1821.*

Letter from J. BOSTOCK, M.D. Author of an 'Essay on Respiration,' of 'The History and present state of Galvanism,' &c. &c. &c. to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

MY LORD,

AT the request of Dr Thomson, I take the liberty of submitting to you my testimony of his professional qualifications



for the Chair vacant by the death of Dr Gregory. During my residence in Edinburgh, I was in the habit of frequent intercourse with Dr Thomson, and have since that time had occasional correspondence with him, and have always considered him as an active and zealous cultivator of the different departments of knowledge connected with his profession. His character in this respect is, however, sufficiently established by a reference to his works, which are well known and justly estimated, and by his success as a Lecturer in the Chair which he now fills.—I am, my Lord,

With all respect, your Lordship's

Most obedient servant.

J. BOSTOCK, M. D.

*London,*  
*April 19th, 1821.* }

Letter from the MEDICAL OFFICERS of the New Town Dispensary, to Dr THOMSON.

*New Town Dispensary,*  
*Edinburgh, 14th April, 1821.*

DEAR SIR,

IT may appear presumptuous in us, so much your juniors, and most of us, formerly your pupils, to offer any testimonial with regard to your professional character. But we think it right, in the present circumstances, to express to you our feeling of the readiness with which you have at all times given us the benefit of your assistance and advice, in your capacity of Consulting Physician to the New Town Dispensary, and the value which we attach to your opinion on medical subjects; at the same time we beg to state our admiration of the zeal with which we have observed you always to be ani-



mated in the study and investigation of every thing which relates to the Science of Medicine.

We remain, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

W. P. ALISON, M.D. Physician.

JOHN W. TURNER, Surgeon.

J. MURDOCH, M.D. Physician Accoucheur.

DAVID MACLAGAN, M.D. Surgeon.

WILLIAM MONCRIEFF, M.D. Physician.

WILLIAM BROWN, Surgeon.

WILLIAM P. LAUDER, M.D. Physician Accoucheur.

ANDREW KENNEY, M.D. Physician.

ROBERT HAMILTON, Surgeon.

TESTIMONIAL by WILLIAM SOMERVILLE, M.D. late one of the Principal Inspectors of the Army Medical Department, Physician to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, &c. &c.

*London, 19th April, 1821.*

From the ample opportunities I have had of witnessing the unremitting zeal and assiduity with which Dr Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery, has applied to the study and practice of medicine, as well as from the sound judgment and accurate observation evinced in his various publications, especially his classical work on Inflammation, I conceive him to be eminently qualified to teach the Practice of Medicine.

W. SOMERVILLE, M.D.

TESTIMONIAL by Sir JAMES M'GRIGOR, Director-General Army Medical Department, &c. &c. &c.

This is to certify, that Dr John Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, and Sur-



geon to the Forces, has been employed in the public service under my own observation nearly six years; during which time, I have had reason to be most highly satisfied with his exertions, and fully persuaded of the benefit the public has derived from the exercise of the superior talents and great industry which distinguish Dr Thomson. As a public Teacher, he has been enabled for a long time to afford the Surgeons of the Army the most essential advantages from his Courses of Lectures on Military Surgery.

J. M'GRIGOR,  
Director-General,  
Army Medical Department.

*London, April 1821.*

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**TESTIMONIAL** by RICHARD FOWLER, M.D. Author of  
'Experiments on Animal Electricity,' &c. &c.

DURING three years that I passed in the University of Edinburgh as a student of medicine, I had the pleasure of a frequent intercourse with Dr Thomson, of the most intimate (and I may add, with respect to myself, of the most instructive) kind. A stronger, more active, or more informed mind than his, certainly was not to be found within the limits of my acquaintance. As his studies were directed ardently, and almost exclusively, to the profession, of which he has become so distinguished an ornament, his example had perhaps more influence than that of any other individual in exciting the emulation of others. To the personages to whom this testimonial is addressed, and in a University where the influence of opinion is perhaps the strongest power, by which the good it aims at can be effected, I need not even suggest the value of a mind capable of thus influencing the pursuits of others.

I can, therefore, most conscientiously declare, that I know



of no man, who, from the habits of his life, his large store of professional knowledge, and his discrimination in producing it, and rendering it useful to others, is so well qualified to fill the Chair of the Practice of Physic, left vacant by the lamented death of the late Dr Gregory, as Dr John Thomson.

RICHARD FOWLER, M.D.

*Sarum, 18th April, 1821.*

LETTER from JAMES WARDROP, Esq. F.R.S. Author of Essays on the Morbid Anatomy of the Eye, &c. &c. to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

MY LORD,

THOUGH a *junior* member of the Medical Profession to many of those who will upon this occasion give testimonials of Dr Thomson's *professional* acquirements, I consider it, however, as my duty to state to your Lordship, that in the course of twenty years acquaintance with Dr Thomson, I have had ample occasion of witnessing his great *practical* information;—that I consider him to be possessed of more erudition in the whole science of medicine than any person I am acquainted with;—and that his writings have raised him decidedly to the first rank of medical authors.

With these qualifications, along with his habits of indefatigable industry and great zeal, he appears to me to be eminently calculated to fill the Chair of the Practice of Physic in the Edinburgh University.

I have the honour to subscribe myself

Your Lordship's humble servant,

JAMES WARDROP.

*Charles Street, St James's Square, }  
London, April 18th, 1821. }*



**TESTIMONIAL** by **ASTLEY COOPER, Esq. F. R. S.** Surgeon to Guy's Hospital, Lecturer on Anatomy and Surgery, &c. &c.

NOTHING which it is in my power to state respecting Dr Thomson can be commensurate with his merits.

Zealous, ingenious, and scientific, he not only possesses the professional knowledge of the present times, but also all that of the times which are passed.

His character is most deservedly highly esteemed in the University of Edinburgh, in which he has long and ably taught; but his name and merits are not confined to his native country, but are generally known and highly appreciated through Europe.

A good Anatomist and Physiologist, and an excellent theoretic Surgeon, who has long practised Medical Surgery, must be highly qualified to fill, with credit to himself and advantage to his pupils, the Chair of Professor of Medicine, as the same principles govern the two branches of the profession.

ASTLEY COOPER.

*London, April 18, 1821.*

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**LETTER** from **ROBERT RENTON, M.D.** to the Right Honourable the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

*Edinburgh, April 23, 1821.*

MY LORD,

UNDERSTANDING that Dr Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery in the University, is at present a Candidate for the vacant Chair of the Practice of Physic, I hope your Lordship will pardon the liberty which I now take in stating to you and to the Town Council, that I had the honour and



advantage, along with my friend Dr M'Kenzie of Windsor, to accompany the Professor, in the summer of 1814, in a journey which he made for the purpose of examining into the state of medicine in the different Schools of Europe.

In the course of this journey, we visited France, Italy, Austria, Saxony, Prussia, Hanover, and Holland, where he examined minutely into the modes of Medical and Surgical Practice followed in the public hospitals of those countries. His practical knowledge of diseases, and his extensive acquaintance with the works of the best medical writers of the different countries through which we passed, procured for him every where the respect and attentions of the Teachers and Practitioners of Medicine, and facilitated greatly the attainment of the objects which he had in view. The minute accuracy also with which he examined the Anatomical and Pathological collections at the Ecole de Medicine in Paris, at Pavia, Vienna, Berlin, Leipsic, Hallé, Gottingen, Amsterdam, and Leyden, evinced an ardour in his researches, which I and my fellow-traveller, well as we knew Dr Thomson's zeal in professional pursuits, could not observe but with feelings of surprise and admiration.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ROBERT RENTON, M.D.

LETTER from JOHN HOWSHIP, Esq. Surgeon, Author of "Practical Observations in Surgery and Morbid Anatomy," "on the Diseases of the Urinary Organs," "on the Diseases of the Lower Intestines," &c. &c. to DR THOMSON.

*George-street, Hanover Square,  
London, April 21, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I CAN have no hesitation in bearing testimony to the unwearied assiduity and peculiar diligence with which you applied yourself to the study of the various departments of Pa-



thology, as exemplified in the divisions of Mr Heaviside's Museum, at the period when I had first the pleasure of being introduced to you, in the year 1803, a period, the recollection of which has ever given me pleasure, though mingled with regret. I hope I have somewhat profited by the example you even then set before me, in the most unceasing application to the laborious task of possessing yourself, in the least possible time, of all the useful information that could be obtained by a visit to London.

The uniform report of those friends who have since visited Edinburgh, has enabled me to hear with pleasure, and believe with confidence, that Dr Thomson was becoming, and would become, highly eminent, and that deservedly, as one who applied himself with the most particular activity to the continual improvement of his profession; labouring for its advancement, both in usefulness and in honour.

How far you have continued to cultivate your more early habits of application, may be very satisfactorily seen by reference to the highly valuable work on Inflammation which you published some years since; and also by the manner in which you have fulfilled the arduous duties of Professor of Military Surgery in the University.

In conclusion, I can only regret, for the sake of Science alone, my not having it in my power more materially to forward your wishes, as regards the Professorship of Physic, your obtaining which would, (it appears to me,) be of no less high importance to the University than to yourself; because it would afford the only adequate facility for the more perfect developement of talents capable of proving essentially conducive to the support of that highly pre-eminent character which Physic has long held in Edinburgh, and which required the long continued efforts of very superior abilities in Drs Cullen, Monro, and others to establish.

If I can be of the least use, pray let me know;—and believe me,

Dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

J. HOWSHIP.



Letter from THOMAS BROWN, M. D. late Lecturer on Botany in the University of Glasgow, Surgeon to the Lock Hospital, &c. &c. &c.—to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

MY LORD,

As I am informed that Dr John Thomson means to offer himself as a candidate for the distinguished situation now vacant by the decease of Dr Gregory, I take the liberty of stating to your Lordship my entire conviction that he is eminently fitted for it.

I have been on habits of intimacy with Dr Thomson for twenty-five years; and I can safely declare, that I know of no person who has uniformly been more zealously attached to the improvement of his profession, in all its branches, than he has been. His powers of attention are unwearied, his memory most retentive, and his faculties of reasoning and of illustration excellent. I do consider him as admirably qualified for lecturing on the Practice of Medicine; and I say decidedly, that his having distinguished himself as a Lecturer on Surgery, gives him a marked advantage in conducting a course of lectures on the Practice of Physic; since the two departments are so intimately mixed, that it is difficult to draw the line of distinction between them. I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your obedient servant,

T. BROWN.

*Glasgow, April 21, 1821.*



LETTER from RICHARD MILLAR, M. D. Lecturer on Materia Medica in the University of Glasgow, Physician to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Consulting Physician to the Glasgow Lock Hospital, &c.—Author of “Disquisitions in the History of Medicine,”—to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

MY LORD,

HAVING been informed by Dr Thomson that he has offered himself as a candidate for the Chair of the Practice of Physic, at this time vacant in the University of Edinburgh, I have been induced, though personally unacquainted with your Lordship and the other Electors, to assume the liberty of addressing them on the present occasion.

The merits of Dr Thomson have been abundantly known to the medical world, as he has published various Treatises in different branches of Physic, all of them of wide circulation, and all of them evincing great discrimination and ability. His book on Inflammation, in particular, may be considered as a standard work. As a Teacher of Medicine, Dr Thomson is no less eminently distinguished—a fact equally attested by the experience of many years, and the attendance of numerous pupils. For my own part, I know no man who displays more enthusiasm in the pursuit of medical truth, or who shews more unceasing activity and industry in investigating and collecting whatever may be of use in the practical part of the profession ; and it is but justice to add, that combined with this, his knowledge in the history of our art, or his acquaintance with what has been effected towards its improvement by others, is at once extensive and minute. Besides, it ought not to be forgotten, that Dr Thomson has been long widely employed in actual attendance on the sick. On all which accounts, not a doubt, I think, can exist, that he is eminently qualified for filling the



Practical Chair in the University of Edinburgh. I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Most respectfully,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

RICHARD MILLAR, M. D.

*Glasgow, April 21, 1821.*

LETTER from SAMUEL COOPER, Esq. late Surgeon to the Forces,—Author of “The First Lines of the Practice of Surgery,”—“A Dictionary of Practical Surgery,”—&c. &c.—to Dr THOMSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING derived great and valuable instruction from your professional writings, and heard your Lectures always spoken of in terms of the highest praise, I feel particular pleasure in stating my belief, that your superior Medical and Surgical Knowledge,—your talents, industry, learning, and character,—eminently qualify you for the Chair of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh. Your inestimable work on Inflammation, in particular, furnishes abundant proof of the great extent of your information in Physic as well as Surgery, no publication, (in my humble opinion) containing a richer collection of facts, or a better history of the fundamental doctrines of Medical Science. In delivering these sentiments, I experience a kind of satisfaction which could not be felt were they in opposition to the dictates of my conscience; and as I think that physician must be the best in practice, who has made both Medicine and Surgery his careful study, so I am convinced, that the



soundest precepts are likely to issue from a Professor of the same meritorious description.—I remain,

My dear Sir,

With the greatest esteem and respect,

Your's ever faithfully,

SAMUEL COOPER.

*South Crescent, Bedford Square, }  
London, April 21, 1821. }*

**LETTER** from DANIEL ELLIS, Esq. Author of “Inquiries into the Changes induced on Atmospheric Air by the Germination of Seeds, the Vegetation of Plants, and the Respiration of Animals;” and of the article, “Vegetable Anatomy,” in the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, &c. &c. to Dr THOMSON.

DEAR SIR,

THE high reputation, as a professional man, which you already enjoy, and the testimonials of merit which, I doubt not, you will be able to produce from persons of the greatest weight and authority in medicine, may, perhaps, expose me to the charge of presumption in thus complying with your request to add to their number; but I willingly encounter that risk, since you are pleased to think, that, by so doing, I may render you some service.

My opinion of your qualifications to fill, with distinction, the Chair, lately rendered vacant by the death of Dr Gregory, is founded not less on a knowledge of the excellent works you have given to the world, than on an intimate acquaintance with the extent and accuracy of your information in every department of Physiology and Pathology. These have been subjects of frequent and confidential discussion betwixt us, while yet we possessed the talents, and were enlightened by the genius, of our late most excellent and va-



lued friend, Dr Gordon. Would to God he were still living, to add the weight of his respected name to this humble testimonial of your merits !

With regard to Pathology in particular, as illustrated by investigations of morbid structure, I know no one who has pursued it with equal zeal, or possessed equal opportunities with yourself. Not only have the morbid collections of our own country, but those also of the chief seats of Medical Science on the Continent, been carefully visited by you ; and from thence, you have derived views of the nature and consequences of diseased actions, which the simple observation of external symptoms is quite unable to supply.

Of your skill and ability in the practical exercise of your profession, it is quite unnecessary for me to speak. They are well known to the public in general ; and the increasing confidence reposed in them affords the best proof of the estimation in which they are held.

With every good wish, I am,

DEAR SIR,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

DANIEL ELLIS.

*Edinburgh, April 23, 1821.*

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LETTER from JOHN W. TURNER, Esq. Surgeon, to the  
Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

14, George Street, Edinburgh,

24th April, 1821.

MY LORD,

IN addressing your Lordship, on the occasion of the election of a Professor of the Practice of Physic, I do not presume to offer any opinion with regard to Dr Thomson's merits or qualifications ; because I am aware, that my place in



society, or in my profession, does not entitle it to any weight with the Patrons of the University, and it can be of no value to him, after the ample testimonials he has received of his talents, his zeal, and his reputation, from men of the highest eminence in science.

But having had the honour and pleasure of enjoying Dr Thomson's friendship, and of having been in habits of constant intercourse with him during the last seventeen years, I am enabled to state, from my personal knowledge, that, during this time, he has been engaged in the study of the different departments of Medical Science, with an ardour and constancy which can hardly be conceived, except by those who, like myself, have had particular opportunities of being acquainted with his pursuits.

His success in teaching one department of this Science, in Lectures remarkable for the information they contained, communicated in an agreeable and impressive manner, and for their effect in exciting and directing the studies of his Pupils, is well known, and has been acknowledged by his Students, and by his late patrons the Royal College of Surgeons. But, in addition to his labours in Teaching, I may refer, in confirmation of what I state, to the different works he has published on Medical and Surgical Subjects. I allude to his "Lectures on Inflammation;" to his "Account of the State of the Wounded in the Hospitals of Belgium, after the Battle of Waterloo;" his "Researches with regard to the Nature and Treatment of Syphilis;" and to his work on "Varioloid Diseases," containing the result of a laborious investigation into upwards of seven hundred cases of those diseases, which he undertook in Edinburgh, and in other parts of Scotland where the small-pox prevailed epidemically, with the view of ascertaining the value of the cow-pock inoculation.

I wish, however, chiefly to state to your Lordship my knowledge, that, during the last ten years, Dr Thomson has more particularly directed his attention to the study of Phy-



sic; to which he has been led, by his object of obtaining practice as a Physician, and by his having been engaged in writing the Life of the celebrated Professor and Physician the late Dr Cullen, as well as with the intention of qualifying himself to teach the Practice of Physic. In fact, it consists with my knowledge, that he has, for some time past, been preparing to deliver a Course of Lectures on this subject during the ensuing winter; though, for the purpose of avoiding any interference with the Course delivered in the University, of which he is a member, under a different name.

I trust your Lordship will excuse the liberty I have now taken; and I have the honour to be

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble Servant.

JOHN W. TURNER,

Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

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**LETTER** from ROBERT JAMESON, Esq. F.R.S.E., F.A.S. and F.L.S., &c. &c. and Regius Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh—to Dr THOMSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

To one so highly gifted and eminently distinguished in the scientific world as you are, any testimonial of mine can be of very little consequence; but as you express a wish for something of the kind, in a letter I have just received from you, I shall now state very shortly what occurs to me.

Ever since we became acquainted, I have known you as a man full of ardour in the pursuit of Science, and with a mind richly stored with all the treasures of modern science and literature. In Natural History, my favourite pursuit, your acquaintance with facts, systems and reasonings, is accurate and extensive; and formerly, when these were more objects of your attention than at present, I have often profited by your judicious advice and great knowledge. Your edition of



Fourcroy's Chemistry, as I well remember, was received in a distinguished manner by the illustrious author himself; and your illustrations were considered by your countrymen as a fine specimen of elegant taste and composition, combined with varied and profound philosophical views.

Although formerly a cultivator of Medical Science, I have, as you know, long since abandoned its particular study, and cannot therefore pretend to offer any opinion of my own as to the benefit you have conferred on Medicine; but if the general voice of the medical world is to be considered as speaking the truth, it would appear that your studies and views and practice have eminently contributed to the advancement of the Science of Medicine.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

ROBERT JAMESON.

45, George Square, }  
April 24th, 1821. }

LETTER from THOMAS THOMSON, Esq. F.R.S.E. Advocate, Deputy Clerk Register, &c. &c. to DR THOMSON.

*Charlotte Square, Edinburgh,  
April 19th, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

AFTER reading the printed Testimonials in your favour, which you lately left with me, I took the liberty of transmitting them to Mr Stewart, from whom I have had the pleasure of receiving a letter, which I cannot better dispose of than by sending it directly to yourself.

It is now, I think, more than thirty years since I first had the good fortune to make your acquaintance, when we were attending the chemical lectures in Glasgow College; and I can distinctly remember the high opinion we all then formed of your scientific talents, as well as of your zeal in the acqui-



sition of knowledge. That acquaintance laid the foundation of a friendship which has ever since subsisted between us ; and which, while it has certainly afforded me ample opportunity of estimating your character in riper years, may probably be thought to have disabled me for judging impartially in any thing where your interests or your fame are nearly concerned. At the same time, I am confident that I shall not offend against the conviction of any of those to whom you have been best known in stating, that from the period when you first entered on the career of science, down to the present day, throughout a life devoted to the laborious and anxious duties of your profession, your original ardour in the pursuit of knowledge has never suffered the slightest abatement, but has carried you onward in an uninterrupted progress of discipline and of acquirement, which constitute at once the highest title, and the best qualification, for the important and honourable office to which you are now aspiring.

Believe me to be, my dear Sir,

Your very faithful and obliged servant,

THOMAS THOMSON.

From DUGALD STEWART, Esq. late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, to THOMAS THOMSON, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,

I READ with the greatest pleasure the printed testimonials in favour of Dr John Thomson which you were so good as to send me. They are so ample and so strongly expressed, and are subscribed by names of so very high authority, that it would be presumption in me to add any thing with respect to his professional merits. But I may be permitted to say, that I have been intimately acquainted with Dr Thomson for more than twenty years, and have had the best opportunities of knowing his talents as a man of science, the extent and accuracy of his information in all those branches of phi-



losophy which have any connection with medical pursuits, and the unremitting ardour and perseverance with which he has prosecuted his studies in the midst of the avocations of a busy life. I can likewise, from personal knowledge, bear the strongest testimony to the exemplary worth of his private character; to his amiable manners; and to his disinterested and humane attentions to the poorer classes of the community.

With the most sincere regard, I ever am,

My dear Sir,

Your's most truly,

DUGALD STEWART.

*Kinneil House, 18th April, 1821.*



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LETTER to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST,  
the MAGISTRATES and TOWN-COUNCIL of EDINBURGH.

*5, George Street, Edinburgh, 15th May, 1821.*

MY LORD and GENTLEMEN,

I TAKE the liberty to transmit a few Testimonials, in addition to those which I have already had the honour to lay before you.

Wishing to rest my hopes of success in my application to you for the honour of being appointed to the Chair now vacant in the University, solely upon the judgment which you may be enabled to form of my qualifications to teach Medicine, by the testimony of those who have had opportunities of being acquainted with my general studies, professional pursuits, lectures, and writings, I have carefully refrained from all personal solicitation, which I should have deemed not less disrespectful to you, than unbecoming in one who is a candidate for so important a situation.

After having devoted thirty-six years of my life to the diligent study of my profession, and after having been employed for more than twenty of these years in teaching some of its branches, it is still not without feelings of diffidence, notwithstanding the warm and kind support with which I have been honoured by my medical friends, that I offer myself as a candidate for the Chair of the Practice of Physic, when I reflect upon the responsibility which must ever attach itself to the exercise of the duties which this situation imposes, and on the talents, learning, and industry, of those by whom it has been successively occupied.

But should the testimonials which I have submitted to your consideration, procure for me your favourable judg-



ment and patronage, I beg leave most respectfully to assure you, that no exertion shall ever be wanting on my part, to fulfil, to the utmost of my abilities, the duties which belong to the Professorship of the Practice of Physic; and that it shall be my unceasing endeavour to emulate the useful labours of those distinguished individuals, who, in holding this Chair, have brought such an accession of fame to the Medical School of Edinburgh.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN THOMSON, M.D.

## TESTIMONIALS.

### III.

LETTER from Sir JAMES M'GRIGOR, Director-General, Army Medical Department, to the Right Honourable WILLIAM DUNDAS, M.P. and transmitted by him to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

*London, 19th April, 1821.*

SIR,

I VENTURE to intrude upon you at this time, at the instance of Dr Thomson, Regius Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, who is a candidate for the Chair of the late Dr Gregory. Dr Thomson thinks it may be of some service that my opinion of him should be known to you; and I cannot hesitate to say, that from much official intercourse with him, during the last six years, as a medical officer in the army, I have formed the highest opinion



of his learning and professional talents, as well as of his excellence as a man.

If so humble an individual as I am, could be permitted to express an opinion, I would venture to say, that this country produces few men so equal to succeed the two last illustrious men who filled the Practical Chair, and to support the credit of the University of Edinburgh, as Professor Thomson.

I again entreat that you will kindly pardon this intrusion. I remain ever,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

faithful servant,

J. M'GRIGOR.

TESTIMONIAL by WILLIAM FRANKLIN, M.D. Principal Inspector, Army Medical Department.

THE talents and professional acquirements of Dr Thomson are so well known by his writings, and are so generally acknowledged by medical men of the highest authority, that any testimonial of mine on that head would be presumptuous; I therefore confine myself to his merits as a Medical Officer of the Army, in which situation, his talents and industry have been exerted much to the benefit of the service. I feel it right to add, that I believe many Medical Officers of the Army to have derived much information from his able instruction.

W. FRANKLIN.

*London, 1st May, 1821.*



LETTER from THEODORE GORDON, M. D. Deputy Inspector of Hospitals, and Professional Assistant, Army Medical Board, to DR THOMSON.

5, *Berkley-street*, April 23, 1821.

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM honoured by your letter of the 18th instant. Although I cannot flatter myself that the testimonial of so humble an individual as myself, can in any way contribute to the success of the object you have in view, I can assure you it is with feelings of the greatest satisfaction that I seize the occasion of expressing to you how warmly I am interested in your success, and how happy I shall feel if you obtain the honourable station, for which, by your attainments and labours in Medical Science, you are in my opinion so eminently qualified.

I have had the comfort and gratification of experiencing the benefit of your able counsel and advice at the bed-side, on many important and trying occasions in the hospitals of the wounded at Brussels. On this subject I need only say, that as I appreciated them highly at the time, so do I still feel gratitude and complacency at the recollection of the advantages derived from your assistance and co-operation.

Known to the medical world by your publications, but more eminently perhaps distinguished by your work on Inflammation, it scarcely can be necessary to state my opinion thereon: it bears the seal of reputation stamped upon it, I believe, by the unanimous approbation of the profession.

Numerous other works on Medical Subjects by you, evince an equal ardour in pursuit of, and in the diffusion of medical science.

As a pupil, I should be most ungrateful did I not most fully and freely acknowledge the benefit I have derived, as well from your Lectures as from your Clinical Observations.

The value of your professional Reports to this department, you have the satisfaction of knowing, have been duly esti-



mated by the Director General, Sir James M'Grigor, whose approbation and high commendation they have at all times elicited.

With every wish for your success, believe me to be, my dear Sir,

Your's with the greatest esteem,

THEODORE GORDON.

LETTER from Lieutenant General SIR JOHN HOPE, late commanding the Forces in North Britain, to DR THOMSON.

116, *George-street, Edinburgh, April 30, 1821.*

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of Saturday, sending me all the Testimonials from your different friends—principal medical practitioners—respecting your qualifications to fill the vacant Chair in the University. It would be high presumption in me to add any thing to these numerous and highly gratifying proofs of your merits as a Medical Officer ; but yet in justice to what has come under my immediate observation, while I held the command of the troops in North Britain, I have no hesitation in saying, that your zeal and attention to the Hospitals under your charge, called forth my most decided approbation ; and that I firmly believe, to your unremitting perseverance we at that time owed the continued healthiness of the garrison, when a very malignant fever was spreading in the town of Edinburgh. I can only conclude, by offering my wishes for your success, in obtaining the appointment you now have in view, and that you may enjoy it with every satisfaction to yourself, and benefit to the University and Public.

I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN HOPE,

Lieutenant General.



LETTER from Major-General SIR THOMAS BRADFORD,  
commanding the Forces in North Britain, to DR THOM-  
SON.

*Edinburgh, May 2, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

ALTHOUGH it might be presumption in me to give an opinion of your medical abilities, I may venture to say that I have the most perfect confidence in them myself; and I am convinced the service has derived the greatest advantage from the assiduity and diligence with which you have performed the duties of Staff Surgeon to the Forces, since my appointment has afforded me the opportunity of judging.

Wishing you every success in the object you have in view, believe me,

Your's faithfully,

T. BRADFORD.

LETTER from J. HENNEN, M.D.F.R.S.E. Deputy Inspector of Hospitals; late Principal Medical Officer in North Britain, and Author of "Principles of Military Surgery," &c. &c.—to DR THOMSON.

*London, May 2, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I THIS morning received your letter of Saturday, and last night I for the first time saw your printed Testimonials. I have not the presumption to suppose that any addition to these honourable documents, in my power to offer, could add to a professional character so well known as yours is, or could influence in any degree the event of the pending election; but it is impossible for me to refuse you the certificate you request, especially as the substance of it has been repeatedly given in my official reports to the Director-General of the Army Medical Department, and that it is founded on a professional intercourse which, from our relative situations, has been frequent and intimate.



When I first had the pleasure of your acquaintance, at Brussels, in 1815, I was struck, in common with every officer of the staff, with the enthusiastic zeal and indefatigable attention with which you investigated the wounds, and the endemic and other diseases which at that time abounded in the Military Hospitals; and I can never forget the professional emulation which you excited among the junior officers,—the friendly and unpretending style in which you communicated information,—and the ready and available assistance which you offered to us all. After I was placed at the head of the Medical Staff in Scotland, I had daily occasion, for three years and a half, of witnessing the same ardour and persevering industry in your practice; and your clinical reports in the military hospitals of Edinburgh, where a great variety of interesting diseases occurred, the investigations of which—especially small-pox and syphilis—was of the highest importance to the profession, and to mankind at large. The results of your observations on these, and many other scientific subjects, are before the public; and, however individuals may differ with you in some speculative points, there can only be one opinion as to the perseverance, talents, and learning which you have exhibited in all your works.

Believe me,

Ever faithfully your's,

J. HENNEN.

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TESTIMONIAL by JAMES MOORE, Esq. Director of the National Vaccine Institution, Author of the Histories of Small Pox and Vaccination, &c. &c. &c.

*Conduit Street, London, April 24, 1821.*

THIS is to certify, that the writings of Dr Thomson, Professor in the University of Edinburgh, have impressed me with a conviction that the learned author is profoundly skilled in the Science of Medicine.

JAMES MOORE.



TESTIMONIAL by PETER M. ROGET, M.D. and F.R.S.L.  
 Secretary to the Medico Chirurgical Society, Physician  
 to the Northern Dispensary, and Consulting Physician to  
 the Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital.

My personal knowledge of Dr John Thomson, and of his  
 merits as a Lecturer, and my acquaintance with his valuable  
 Medical Writings, are such as fully to convince me, that he  
 is perfectly qualified for the important office of Professor of  
 the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh.

P. M. ROGET, M.D.

*Bernard Street, London,  
 April 25, 1881.*

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LETTER from CHARLES HATCHETT, Esq. F.R.S.L. & E.,  
 F.L.S. Honorary Member of the Medico Chirurgical So-  
 ciety, Author of numerous Chemical Essays in the Philo-  
 sophical Transactions, to Dr THOMSON.

*Bellevue-House, Chelsea, April 24, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I VERY sincerely wish you success, and should be happy  
 to promote it by every exertion in my power, but I fear that  
 in this case you must take the will for the deed.

It is totally out of the question for me to give any opinion  
 on your Medical qualifications ; but I cannot have any he-  
 sitation in stating my high estimation of those attainments in  
 the Science of Chemistry, which I have long known you to  
 possess.

Believe me,

My dear Sir,

Most truly and faithfully yours,

CHARLES HATCHETT.



LETTER from WILLIAM CLIFT, Esq. Keeper of the  
Hunterian Museum, to Dr THOMSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

IT will give me great pleasure if you succeed in obtaining the honourable situation which I hear you are soliciting in Edinburgh. From my early recollection of the diligence with which you pursued your studies at the time you were in Mr Hunter's dissecting rooms, in the year 1792, and the close examination of Mr Hunter's collection, particularly the pathological part of it, in company with our worthy friend, the late Dr F. Jones, of Barbadoes, in the year 1803, in a manner so particular as had never till that time been done by any visitor, and indeed not frequently since, except by our Professors, it appeared to me, that you were pursuing your professional inquiries in the right way, by careful examination and observation, as Mr Hunter had done before, and by which he obtained that acknowledged superiority which now sustains his name, I may say with universal consent, and as the true path to that knowledge which will bear the test of time, and remain permanently useful; for whoever pursues his steps, and endeavours to make as careful deductions, must, in my humble opinion, be the most likely to attain the same beneficial result.

With best wishes for your health, and wishing you success,

I remain, dear Sir,

Your's truly,

WM. CLIFT.

*College of Surgeons, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields,  
London, April 24, 1821.*



LETTER from JOSHUA BROOKES, Esq. Lecturer on Anatomy and Physiology, &c. &c. &c. London, to Dr THOMSON.

*Theatre of Anatomy, Blenheim Street,  
1st May, 1821.*

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

I FELT great pleasure in hearing that you are a candidate for the Professorial Chair at Edinburgh, vacant by the demise of that illustrious man Dr Gregory, in whose company I had the honour of dining about this time last year.

The loss to Science, however, allow me to say, cannot be in any way felt, should the Members of the University shew their acumen by electing a successor, of whose universal Pathological knowledge, the several times you have honoured me with a visit, when in London, afforded me ample proof, as well as great information.

Nor, indeed, was I so fully aware of the rarity of some Morbid Preparations in my Museum, until your scientific eye displayed their peculiarities.

I could, and certainly should, say on this occasion much more, were it not likely to be fulsome to your feelings, although simply uttering the truth.

But permit me farther to observe, that if genuine merit and cultivated science rest on their own basis, the vacant Professorial Chair seems destined for you.

With every hope of success, I remain,

My dear Doctor,

Yours very faithfully,

JOSHUA BROOKES.



LETTER from DAVID MACLAGAN, M.D. Physician to the Forces, Surgeon to the New Town Dispensary, &c. &c. to Dr THOMSON.

22, George Street, Edinburgh,  
1st May, 1821.

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM desired by those Pupils and Friends, at whose desire your portrait was painted and engraved, to present the original picture to you and your family, in testimony of their respect for your talents and usefulness as a public Teacher, and of their esteem and regard for your private character.

Having been one of your earliest Pupils, and so long acquainted with your habits and pursuits, I fulfil this duty with greater pleasure than I can well express.

Your unremitting and successful cultivation of all the Sciences connected with Medicine,—the ability and candour with which you communicate the knowledge you have acquired,—and the skill and humanity with which you apply it to the practice of our profession,—have long been objects of my admiration and respect, as they must ever be of those who enjoy the benefit of your public instructions, are familiar with your writings, or have the pleasure and advantage of your private society and advice. It is, indeed, most gratifying to all your friends, that your name and works are so well known, and so justly valued in England and on the Continent, as well as in this country, and by individuals, whose character and attainments in Science and Literature render their approbation and praise truly valuable.

With earnest wishes for the health and happiness of yourself, and of your family,

I am, with respect and esteem,

Yours very sincerely,

DAVID MACLAGAN.



LETTER from J. HENRY DAVIDSON, M.D. F.R.S.E.  
Physician to the Royal Public Dispensary, to the Right  
Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

*Edinburgh, May 1, 1821.*

MY LORD,

I SHOULD not have presumed to have addressed your Lordship at present, if Dr Thomson had not done me the honour of requesting, that I should state to your Lordship what I know as to his claims for being appointed to the Medical Chair, vacated by the death of Dr Gregory. Whilst I, with pleasure, yield to Dr Thomson's desire, I hope your Lordship will not think I have the vanity to express any opinion concerning his merits, or that this letter contains any thing but a plain unvarnished account of what has come within my own knowledge.

It is now fifteen years since I first became acquainted with Dr Thomson, as one of his Pupils; and if, at this time, I know any thing of Medical Surgery, I should be ungrateful if I did not acknowledge, that I am indebted for my acquaintance with that most extensive and most important department of medicine, to the instructions I received when attending his Lectures. As these Lectures have been my guide in prosecuting the study of the multifarious subjects contained in them, and as I cannot accuse myself of indolence in pursuing the plan which they pointed out, I feel myself justified in saying, that they contained a vast variety of useful information, and a most luminous detail of ancient and modern experience; whilst I recollect, that the enthusiasm which Dr Thomson instilled into his Pupils by his mode of teaching, made them not only attentive listeners, but stimulated them to the ardent study of the Science, into the principles of which they were initiated.

When I say, that Dr Thomson is the most learned Physician I ever met with, I know that I am quite safe from any



appearance of exaggeration ; because I have heard the same language employed by many Medical Men in England, and by all those Foreigners with whom he became acquainted during his Professional Tour on the Continent. It is not only in Medicine, and its immediate branches, that Dr Thomson has a most remarkable degree of knowledge. No one, I am certain, can have conversed with, or consulted him, upon the actual state, or previous history, of Chemistry, Botany, Mathematics, or General Philosophy, without being surprised at the extent and accuracy of his information ; which can have been acquired only by a devotion of time and attention to laborious study, seldom found, and but little expected, in an individual engaged, as Dr Thomson has been, in an anxious and fatiguing profession.

When I was on the Continent, I found that Dr Thomson's celebrated work on Inflammation had rendered his name familiar in Paris and Geneva ; and the favourable mention which has since been made of it, in the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Medicales*, and other publications, proves the estimation in which these Lectures are held by French practitioners.—In Germany, these Lectures have been translated, and have been justly styled, in the preface, the most valuable contribution lately made to the Medical World :—and in Italy, where English medicine and surgery are not so generally known as in Germany, or even in France, a translation was commenced when I was in that country two years ago.—I have thus, my Lord, done what I conceived to be my duty towards Dr Thomson ; and, whilst I request pardon for the liberty I have taken in addressing your Lordship, I should also apologize for the prevalent egotism, if the nature of the communication had not rendered this inevitable.

I remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

J. HENRY DAVIDSON.



EXTRACT from the Preface to the German translation of  
Dr THOMSON's Lectures on Inflammation, by Dr KRU-  
KENBERG, Professor of Medicine at the united University  
of Halle and Wittemberg.—*Halle*, 1820.

(*Translation.*)

THE Lectures on Inflammation, exhibiting a view of the general doctrines, pathological and practical, of Medical Surgery, by John Thomson, Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, 1813, form one of the most valuable contributions which have been made in modern times to medical literature. The doctrine of Inflammation, a subject as important as it is difficult, is here treated with great solidity, knowledge of the subject, acuteness, and truth; numerous important remarks upon scrophula, hæmorrhage, the ligature of arteries, healing of wounds, &c. are interspersed in the investigation; so that no reflecting physician can study this work without deriving from it great instruction, and without great esteem for its celebrated author. Works like this are rare, where it becomes a question, whether to admire more the extent of the learning and the acuteness of the author, or the candour and love of truth with which he has pointed out so many subjects, still doubtful and obscure, and which therefore require further accurate investigation.

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LETTER from Dr BENEDETTO BAROZZI, of Pavia, to  
Dr THOMSON.

(*Translation.*)

MOST EXCELLENT PROFESSOR,

YOUR important doctrines, known and followed by the learned Italians, are yet known by report chiefly to the



greater number of us, for want, I believe, of a translation, which might render them completely familiar even to the least informed. On this account, desirous to procure for my country such an advantage, I have begun to translate your excellent Lectures on Inflammation. Not wishing to fail in the respect due to you, and anxious that the translation may come before the public in the manner most conducive to your fame, and to the benefit of society, I entreat that you will be pleased to furnish, or to point out to me, any information that might enlarge or correct it. In the expectation of which, I remain

Your admirer,

Dr BENEDETTO BAROZZI.

*Pavia, 15th April, 1819.*

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EXTRACT from a Review of Dr THOMSON'S Work on Varioloid Diseases, in the London Medical Repository, No. LXXIV, for February 1820.

THE profession at large are certainly much indebted to Dr Thomson for the pains he has bestowed in investigating the subject, and for the immense mass of facts he has accumulated. We lay aside for the present all consideration of the merits and demerits of the particular hypothesis which he espouses, and must frankly confess, that the author has shewn himself to be an indefatigable observer, and a candid reasoner. He publishes his cases in detail, and enables the reader to judge for himself. He throws no veil over the statements of those who differ from him in opinion, but places their arguments and objections in a prominent part of his volume, and either allows them their full weight, or urges his reasons in reply.



EXTRACT from the Review of Dr THOMSON's Work on Varioloid Diseases, in the Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal, No. LXIII, for April 1820.

THIS work has many claims on our attention, not merely on account of the distinguished character of its author, and the novelty and ingenuity of the views it contains, but also, because it is the most comprehensive and authentic record of the observations that have been made on the late epidemic small-pox in this country. The zeal and industry with which these observations have been prosecuted, and the candour with which several of the conclusions resulting from them have been admitted, even when at variance with preconceived opinions, have been highly creditable to the practitioners in this part of the country; and, if they have not disclosed facts hitherto unknown, they have at least illustrated so fully the frequency of occurrences, hitherto considered as anomalous, that they may fairly be said to have added considerably to our knowledge of the disease.

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Extracts from a Review of Dr THOMSON's Work on Varioloid Diseases in the Medicinisch-chirurgische Zeitung, for September 1820, by the late Dr ALBERS of Bremen.

(*Translation.*)

THE medical public of Germany have lately been in no small degree alarmed by reports from England, which have brought into doubt the protecting power of cow-pock against small-pox. It must therefore be highly important for those who have at heart the advancement of the art, to be informed whether these reports are true, or are to be regarded as the delusions of unskilful physicians and surgeons. Those writings which the best English physicians publish upon the small-pox epidemic that is prevailing there, must therefore



be important to the readers of our journal ; and they may feel obliged to us for making them acquainted with the work of a man, certain very honourably known as a physician of knowledge and experience, who treats of this subject.

\* \* \* \* \*

Before concluding, the reviewer may remark, that he has not lately read any work with so much interest as that of the author. The idea of the identity of the small-pox virus with that of chicken-pox, is original, but still requires, in his opinion, mature observations before it can be received as a truth : Much may be said for it, but there is much also which openly opposes it ; and it is only with great labour, assisted by favourable opportunities, that the point can be properly determined. With regard to vaccination, which has lately been so severely attacked, the value of this practice suffers no injury from the work of the author ; on the contrary, its cause is powerfully supported by him. Even should the hypothesis of the author prove incorrect, vaccination will still maintain its almost universally acknowledged value.

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LETTER from ASTLEY COOPER, Esq. Surgeon to Guy's  
Hospital, to Dr THOMSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

I THANK you for your kind present (work on Varioloid Diseases) which I have read with great pleasure. It is ably written, and the style is at once nervous, clear, and easy.

I have only one fault to find with you. Your opinion ought not to have been called an *hypothesis*, because it is really a well founded and legitimate *theory*, deduced from patient observation, and proved, as far as time and history permit, by concurrent testimony. Hypothesis, from you, would give dignity to a term which ought to be exploded from all



medical reasoning, as nothing but induction of principles from facts ought for an instant to be admitted as science in our profession. If yours be not a theory, and a good theory, I know not what it is.

Your work also contains a great deal of original matter, as well as new ideas, and must add great respectability to a character already deservedly ranking so high in the medical world. I am

Your very truly obliged

ASTLEY COOPER.

*London, 19th February, 1821.*

LETTER from C. YELLOLY, M.D. F.R.S. late Secretary to the Medico-Chirurgical Society, Physician to the Duke of Gloucester, &c. &c. &c.—to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

*Carrow Abbey, Norwich,  
April 25th, 1821.*

MY LORD,

HAVING been requested by my friend, Dr Thomson of Edinburgh, to state to you my sentiments as to his qualifications for the Chair of the Practice of Physic, vacant in the University of Edinburgh, I beg leave to inform you, that I have had the pleasure of Dr Thomson's acquaintance for more than 25 years, and that I have always considered him as very eminently distinguished for his comprehensive and accurate knowledge of all the branches of Medical Science.

Dr Thomson has carried with him into practice all the ardour of the student; and, in his mature age, continues to prosecute the studies and pursuits of his profession with a zeal and energy of which there are very few examples. He has a genuine attachment to his profession; and, should he be elected to the high and honourable situation of successor to the late Dr Gregory, he will, I am sure, do every thing



for the credit of the University, which talents, learning, extensive acquaintance with his subject, and unwearied assiduity, can effect.

I have the honour to be, with much respect,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,

C. YELLOLY, M.D.

LETTER from HENRY IRWIN, M. D., Deputy Inspector  
of Hospitals, to Dr THOMSON.

*Sligo, 1st May, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

ALTHOUGH long and intimate knowledge of your merits have impressed me with the highest respect for them, yet I would be very unwilling to offer any testimonial of mine, when your professional abilities are so generally acknowledged, lest it should be considered as presumption, were it not, that I had two opportunities of peculiarly estimating your professional talents; the first, after the battle of Waterloo, at Brussels, where I knew you to be consulted on every case of moment, and where you never failed to convey the most satisfactory information and useful advice, both as Physician and Surgeon, which your judgment and research so qualified you to communicate. The second was, when I served as Principal Medical Officer in North Britain, at which time I experienced, on all occasions, the most valuable professional assistance from you, but especially as regarded the Hospital Establishment, under your immediate charge, where I was in the habit of sending the worst cases of disease from the other Military Hospitals in Scotland. On these occasions, I constantly observed, and I trust with advantage to myself, the powerful resources of your mind in directing medical expedients for the alleviation of disorders,



that in many instances might be considered beyond the reach of art.

I have only to add, that, aware of your qualifications for the situation you look to, and of the advantage that the public would derive from your appointment to the Chair of Professor of Medicine, I most sincerely wish you success, as I consider it would be a public as well as private advantage.

Believe me, dear Sir,

With the highest respect and esteem,

Yours very truly,

HENRY IRWIN, M.D.

LETTER from J. E. HEADLAM, M.D. Senior Physician to the Newcastle Infirmary, to the Right Honourable JOHN MANDERSTON, Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

*Newcastle, 10th May, 1821.*

MY LORD,

I BEG leave to offer to your Lordship my testimonial of Dr Thomson's great qualifications for the Chair of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh, now vacant by the death of the late eminent Professor, Dr Gregory.

During an intimate acquaintance with Dr Thomson for twenty-four years, I have had very frequent opportunities of witnessing the industry, the zeal, and the success, with which he has devoted himself to the study of every subject connected with the practice of Medicine and Surgery. I have also had frequent occasions, in the course of my private practice, to refer cases of great importance or obscurity to Dr Thomson's consideration, in which I have had the most decisive proofs of his profound knowledge and accurate discrimination of diseases, which led to very successful treatment. It is important, moreover, to add, that his reputation through the Empire has been raised to great eminence, by a work



which he published upon Inflammation, and by other valuable Essays, and also by his public Lectures on Surgery.

For these reasons I humbly submit to your Lordship, that the appointment of Dr Thomson to the Professorship of the Practice of Physic, would be calculated to advance the interest of Science, to uphold the honour, and to support the high character of the University of Edinburgh.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

J. E. HEADLAM, M.D.

LETTER from Sir MATTHEW J. TIERNEY, Bart. Physician in Ordinary to the KING, &c. &c. &c. to Dr THOMSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

ALTHOUGH many years have elapsed since I had the pleasure of your acquaintance in Edinburgh, I have not forgotten the zeal, industry, and ability, with which you have so successfully cultivated the various branches of your profession. Your career since, has not passed unnoticed by me; and I may with perfect confidence add, that, in my opinion, your lectures, writings, and practical experience, have essentially advanced the improvements in our art.

My personal acquaintance with the late lamented Dr Gregory, as well as my knowledge of his transcendent talents, and peculiar qualifications as a teacher, make me aware it is no easy matter to replace him in your University. Should my humble testimony, however, contribute in the smallest degree to the success of your views, believe me I offer it solely on the principle that I consider your practical, as well as general information, qualified you most fully to uphold the high character of your University.

With sincere esteem, I am,

My dear Sir,

Your very faithful

M. J. TIERNEY.

46, Dover Street, 9th May, 1821.



LETTER from CHARLES SKENE, M. D. Lecturer on Anatomy, Marischal College, Aberdeen, to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

*Aberdeen, May 8, 1821.*

MY LORD,

UNDERSTANDING that Dr John Thomson is a candidate for the Chair of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh, vacant by the death of the late Dr Gregory, I take the liberty of mentioning, in the most unqualified terms, my opinion of his fitness to discharge the duties of that important situation. I consider his professional acquirements, the result of much study and long practice, as of the highest order ; and believe, that from the extent of his medical knowledge, and habits of communicating instruction, he would, as Professor of the Practice of Physic, essentially promote the improvement of his pupils, and powerfully assist in maintaining the well earned reputation of the University as a Medical School.

It may not be superfluous to add, that my opinion of Dr Thomson's qualifications is founded on an intimate acquaintance of many years standing.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your very obedient servant,

CHARLES SKENE, M. D.



LETTER from G. J. GUTHRIE, Esq. Deputy Inspector of Military Hospitals, and Surgeon to the Royal Westminster Infirmary for Diseases of the Eye, Author of a Treatise on Gunshot Wounds, Lecturer on Surgery, &c. &c.—to Dr THOMSON.

2, Berkley Street, May 10, 1821.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE delayed answering your letter requesting a testimonial from me on the subject of your qualifications for the Chair of Physic in the University, because I knew not how to answer it in a manner that would do you justice, and not impugn the judgment of the gentlemen to whom it is to be shewn, and who cannot consider such additions to your high and well earned reputation as at all necessary.

I am not acquainted with the other candidates, and shall not therefore make any comparisons ; but if the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Edinburgh, wish to have a Professor of the Practice of Physic of indefatigable industry, of extensive knowledge in the literature of his profession,—old enough to have read much and practised largely,—and yet young enough to attend to, and make improvements in a science that is daily enriched by something new and interesting—and above all, of sound judgment and great discrimination,—they cannot find a better one than Dr John Thomson.

That the Electors may, my dear Sir, appoint you, and keep the interests of Science and the University apart from every other consideration, is the earnest wish of your sincere friend,

G. J. GUTHRIE.



LETTER from SUMMERS HIGGINS, Esq. Deputy Inspector of Hospitals, &c. &c.—to Dr THOMSON.

*Mt. Mellick, 13th May, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING seen your address to the Lord Provost, the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh, offering yourself as a candidate to succeed the late truly lamented Dr Gregory as Professor of the Practice of Physic, I lose no time in giving you an assurance of my hearty good wishes for your success. In doing so, I am actuated by two motives; first, an anxious desire for your welfare and happiness; and next, that each Chair in the University should be filled by men of talents and acquirements, who shall be found equal to support that high character for which it is so justly renowned.

You may probably bear in mind the situation of difficulty and embarrassment in which you found me, (in my official capacity as Deputy Inspector of Hospitals,) and the medical gentlemen placed under my superintendance, at Antwerp, after the memorable battle of Waterloo. Our hospitals were unavoidably crowded to excess for many days; the weather was exceedingly hot, and the low situation of that city very unfavourable to the recovery of our wounded. These causes conspired to produce disease in an aggravated form; fever of each type, dysentery, and hospital gangrene, all appeared; and however highly those eminent Staff Surgeons, Cole, Blicke, Bruce and Ryan, as well as many of the junior class, who were all very well informed young gentlemen, benefited by your assistance in surgical cases, yet we all conceived ourselves still more indebted to you for your able advice when the diseases which I have enumerated occurred. For very many years I spared no pains to obtain a just knowledge of my profession, and I am vain enough to think, that the rank which I have had the good fortune to attain in the



medical department of the army, might fairly lead me to the conclusion that I had been sufficiently successful, to authorize me at least to express my admiration of the superior talents of others.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully and sincerely yours,

SUMMERS HIGGINS.

**LETTER** from **GEORGE BIRKBECK**, M. D. Physician to the General Dispensary, London, to the Right Honourable **JOHN MANDERSTON**, Lord Provost, the **MAGISTRATES**, and **TOWN COUNCIL** of Edinburgh.

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

As a grateful pupil of the University of Edinburgh, I feel deeply interested in its proceedings; and, as an ardent cultivator of the Science of Medicine, I am especially solicitous that its Medical School, to which I am so much indebted, should be preserved in the highest state of reputation and utility. I cannot therefore be indifferent to the election of a Professor, who must succeed one justly distinguished for his scientific and literary attainments, and who must likewise occupy a Chair, without exception, the most important to the Science of Medicine.

I am happy to find that my friend, Dr Thomson, has offered himself to your notice as a candidate, having for some time been well acquainted with his very extraordinary acquirements in Medicine, Medical Surgery, and the collateral sciences; and having, whilst a student, often remarked the singular clearness and eloquence with which he was accustomed to convey information to the uninitiated. Subsequently, I have, with considerable attention, marked his progress; and, without insisting upon many other proofs of his fitness for the Practical Chair, which have appeared, I would venture to allege, that his Lectures on Inflammation (confessedly



the best work on the subject, and involving the discussion of the most important topic in the practice of Medicine,) place him beyond the reach of every competitor. Should you be disposed to confer upon Dr Thomson this appointment, I am persuaded that you will, in the most effectual manner, repair the loss sustained by Medical Science and the public by the death of Dr Gregory.

I have the honour to remain,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

GEORGE BIRKBECK.

*London, 15th May, 1821.*

LETTER from GEORGE BELL, Esq. F.R.S.E. Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, &c. &c. to Dr THOMSON.

*32, St Andrew's Square, 16th May, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

THIS morning I was favoured with your Testimonials, respecting your qualifications to fill the Chair of the Practice of Medicine in this University. Some of these I had seen accidentally before; but the greater part of them I have now read for the first time. I have not the vanity to suppose that any thing I can say or do on this occasion, can, in any way, influence the result of the pending election. For this reason I was unwilling from the first to take any share in the present canvass, the more especially as by doing so, I might be accused of presumption on the one part, and, on the other, might run the risk of injuring those whom I wished most to see placed in the situation they ought to occupy, and whom I deemed best qualified to fill the Chair of my late revered friend, Dr Gregory.



With these feelings I would not thus unsolicited have obtruded myself upon you on the present occasion, had I not observed, on perusing your Testimonials in reference to the Chair of Military Surgery, in 1806, that one is wanting which might have carried with it some weight with the Public, as well as with some of the present Honourable Patrons of the University, who were personally acquainted with my father the late Mr Benjamin Bell, who, had his health permitted, was at the time most anxious to lend his aid in bringing into the University a person who he believed would add greatly to the celebrity of the School of Medicine. My father's ardent desire to promote the advancement of every branch of the profession, was well known to all his brethren who were acquainted with him, of which he has left behind him many proofs, and not the least of them that of having, with the assistance of the late Mr Andrew Wood, and with the concurrence of their fellow members, laid the foundation of the Professorship of Surgery established by the Royal College of Surgeons, for which Professorship you were designated, not only by him, but by the almost universal consent of the College and the Public.

When the creation of a Professorship of Military Surgery in this University by his late Majesty was in contemplation, in 1806, my father, although on his death-bed, was most anxious to add his testimonial of the zeal, and energy, and splendid talent, which you had exhibited, not only in teaching the class established by the Royal College of Surgeons, but in following out various other branches of medicine, and, above all, in exciting the enthusiasm and directing the exertions of all the young professional men who came in contact with you. He was then so weak, however, that he was unable to effect his wishes and intentions, although he often expressed to me his anxiety for your success, and his conviction that your talents and exertions would add celebrity to the University, if your patent were not cramped by the interference of the patents of other Professors. How far he



had accurately estimated your character and attainments, may be judged of by the increased and increasing improvement in the qualifications of candidates for surgical diplomas since the establishment of the Professorship of Surgery by the Royal College of Surgeons in 1804. The beneficial effects of this Professorship have been made manifest over a large portion of this country, and have been very generally acknowledged, not only by practitioners in civil life, but also by the Medical Officers both in the Army and Navy. No one acquainted with these facts can hesitate to attribute a great part of this visible and important alteration to your exertions.

However unwilling, therefore, I may be to interfere in the present canvass, I cannot think of allowing you to lose the benefit of such a testimonial as I know my father would have given you, had he been able, in 1806. Indeed I believe his opinion with regard to you, as a Teacher of Medicine and Surgery, is recorded in a letter addressed by him to Sir William Fettes, when Lord Provost, on the occasion of the opposition that was made by some members of the University to the institution of a Professorship of Surgery by the Royal College of Surgeons.

For myself, I will only add, that an intimate knowledge, for thirty years, of your habits of industry, indefatigable and incessant zeal in prosecuting every branch of professional inquiry both in health and in sickness, of your readiness of access to all who are desirous to obtain information, of your talent for communicating it, of the support and encouragement you never fail to afford to those young professional men who apply to you, added to those powers of mind which enable you to take so accurate and comprehensive views of any subject to which you turn your attention, convinces me that these must eminently qualify you to add to the celebrity of any School of Medicine in which you may be placed.

Believe me,

My dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully.

GEORGE BELL.



LETTER from G. SANDIFORT, M.D. Professor of Anatomy in the University of Leyden, to Dr THOMSON.

*Leyden, 18th May, 1821.*

SIR,

IT has been a great pleasure to me to have been acquainted with you in the year 1814, when you were visiting our University, chiefly to see my own collection of Anatomical and Physiological preparations, as well as those of Pathological Anatomy. Whilst I was shewing to you the beautiful collections of the celebrated Albinus, Van Dœveren, and Brugmans, I was amazingly pleased with your reflections on different subjects on which our conversation turned, and obliged to admire your profound knowledge of every part of Medical Science.

I am informed, that among the candidates, one of whom will become Professor of the Practice of Physic at Edinburgh, in the place of the late Dr Gregory, your name is rightly known. I hope those to whom this election belongs, will do honour to your most eminent abilities, and, in the meantime, a great service to the University itself, which, I dare say it, would be happy to be in possession of a man highly recommendable to such a situation by his most eminent qualities.

I will be very glad to be informed about it, and it will be very agreeable to me to hear of your election.

I am, with the utmost respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

G. SANDIFORT.



LETTER from G. VROLIK, M.D. Professor in the Athenæum of Amsterdam, Secretary to the first Class of the Royal Institute of Sciences in the Netherlands, &c. &c. to Dr THOMSON.

*Amsterdam, 15th May, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECOLLECT with great pleasure the very interesting conversations I had with you during your stay at Amsterdam, which I wished could have been longer. If my acknowledging your particular abilities for a Chair of Medicine, will in any way be useful to attach you to the University of Edinburgh, I should find myself very happy to render such a service to that establishment.

I did not receive your publication on Varioloid Epidemic. I am very anxious to have it, as I do not expect less information from it than I received from your former work on Inflammation.

As all my subsequent writings are in Dutch, I regret very much it would be useless to present you with them.

Accept the assurance of the high esteem of,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

G. VROLIK.

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#### TESTIMONIAL by Dr VROLIK.

I, the undersigned M.D. and Professor in Athenæo Illustri Amstelædamensi, Secretary to the first Class of the Royal Institute of Sciences in the Netherlands, do hereby declare, that in the year 1814, I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr John Thomson, who then made a short stay at Amsterdam ; and that, in my opinion, the profound



learning and distinguished abilities of that gentleman in Medicine and Surgery, fully qualify him to fill a Chair in these branches of knowledge, with high credit to himself, and great utility to the students. The undersigned would indeed congratulate the University, in which Dr Thomson might be called to a Medical Professorship.

G. VROLIK.

*Written in Amsterdam, }  
the 15th May, 1821. }*

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LETTER from J. P. MARTIN, M.D. Assistant Anatomist at the Garden of the King, and the Royal College of France, to Dr THOMSON.

(Translation.)

*Administration of the Museum of Natural History, at the Garden of the King.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received, through Mr B., the letter which you have written to me, and which recalls to me the agreeable acquaintance I made with you during your stay in Paris, in 1814.

I will never forget the friendly and scientific conversations which we had with Dr Portal, my uncle and instructor in Medicine, who knew how to appreciate your talents, and extensive knowledge in the healing art, and who often mentions to me the pleasure that you gave him when he had the happiness to see you. We all regretted that your stay could not be prolonged.

I often read over, with much interest, the work on Inflammation, of which you made me a present. Besides the clear manner in which you arrange the different subjects, I have found in it many new facts, the result of your observations



and experiments, which are well calculated to throw light upon what your illustrious countryman, Hunter, had advanced.

Dr Portal has heard, with much regret, of the death of his very old and very good friend, Dr Gregory. There is thus a Chair vacant in your celebrated University. If talents, and the experience which you possess, are to be regarded, I cannot doubt but that you will be chosen to fill it with distinction.

Receive, Sir, the assurance of my great respect, and of my friendship.

Your very humble,

And very obedient servant,

J. P. MARTIN, M.D.

*Paris, 12th May, 1821.*

LETTER from Baron ANTHONY PORTAL, M.D. Physician to the King of France,—Professor of Medicine in the College of France, and of Anatomy in the Museum of Natural History,—Foreign Honorary Member of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of London, &c. &c.—to Dr THOMSON.

(*Translation.*)

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

I HAVE heard, with great sorrow, of the death of my friend and old pupil, Dr Gregory. His death is a great loss to Science in general, which he had cultivated so well; and to the University of Edinburgh, in which he has taught Medicine with so much success, at the same time that he practised it with a celebrity that may be termed hereditary. His father was a distinguished Medical Practitioner, who was pleased to entertain a favourable opinion of me from my first outset in medicine. His son, the late Dr Gregory, came to



Paris, with a recommendation to me from your illustrious countryman, Sir John Pringle.

Knowing your zeal for the progress of Medicine, and your profound knowledge of Anatomy and Surgery, I am of opinion, that you will continue the career which Dr Gregory followed; and thus compensate, as far as can be done, for the loss which the Students of Medicine have sustained. It is of great importance, that the Surgical and Anatomical Departments should continue to be well taught, in a Faculty which can boast of so many men distinguished in Medicine.

I beg you will have the goodness to offer my kind remembrance to Dr Hamilton, sen. and to Dr Hay.

I remain

Your affectionate friend,

PORTAL.

12th May, 1821.

**LETTER** from Dr BECLARD, Professor of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris,—Secretary to the Royal Academy of Medicine,—President of the Juries of Medicine of the Departments, &c.—to Dr THOMSON.

(*Translation.*)

*Paris, 10th May, 1821.*

SIR,

I HAVE been informed of the loss which the University of Edinburgh has sustained, by the death of the respected Dr Gregory; I wish, and hope, that you may be chosen to succeed him in the Chair of Practical Medicine.

Your labours in Pathological Anatomy and Experimental Physiology, particularly the experiments on the Wounds of Arteries, and of the Intestines,—the first ideas of which Dr



Jones and Mr Travers owe to you,—and the observations on Tumours which you have collected, and which, it is to be wished, you would give to the Public,—the zeal and the success with which you have devoted yourself to teaching,—as well as the Works which you have published,—give you the best-founded claims to that Chair.

Your work on Inflammation, contains all that is known at present in this important part of Medicine. The opinions of John Hunter could not have had a more able commentator. Your own observations, joined to those of your illustrious countryman, have filled up the chasms, and elucidated the obscurities, which his doctrines presented. It is to you that we are indebted for these doctrines being so well understood, and so generally known and adopted.

Your work on Varioloid Diseases, throws much light on that part of Pathology, and of Practical Medicine; it will probably fix the opinions of medical men, and put an end to the discussions which have lasted so long, with regard to the preservative powers of vaccine inoculation. With regard to your method of treating syphilitic diseases without mercury, I have employed it in several cases with the most complete success.

I am persuaded, that a man who has given so many proofs of talent and of zeal for the progress of Medicine, who has cultivated with success its most important branches, such as Anatomy, Physiology, Pathological Anatomy, and Pathology, and who devotes himself to the practice of Medicine, will be chosen to fill a Chair of such importance, and one which requires the fullest combination of the different branches of medical knowledge.

I sincerely hope that you may obtain the Chair of Practical Medicine, which you so well deserve,—and am,

Sir,

Your devoted servant, colleague, and friend,

BECLARD.



LETTER from AUGUSTUS POCKELS, Dr Med. et Chir.,  
Physician-General to the Brunswick Troops, and Direc-  
tor of the Military Hospital, to Dr THOMSON.

*Brunswick, May 10, 1821.*

SIR,

HAVING heard that the Chair of the Practice of Physic is vacant by the death of the learned Dr Gregory, and that you are a candidate for it, I most sincerely wish, for the sake of the University, that you may succeed ; feeling confident, that a man who stands so high in the esteem of the first professional men in Britain, as well as over the whole Continent, for his successful endeavours to advance the state of Medical Sciences and of the Practice of Physic, will fill this Chair, to the glory of that learned Corporation, and contribute to sustain to the northern University the name of “*Mater Medicinæ*.”

The most favourable reception of your valuable works is universally known by the analyses of French, German, and Italian journals ; and by the necessity, particularly felt by the more industrious Germans, to study them in their own language. In the latter years only, we received the long-wished-for translation of your excellent work on Inflammation, which gives not only very fruitful results of ingenious physiological experiments, elucidating many dark points in the theory on this subject, but is also a treasure of experience seldom met with in medical works.

Since the year 1814, I had the pleasure of your personal acquaintance ; and, with the greatest joy, I heard everywhere during my travels through Germany, France, and Italy, the favourable mention which was made of you by the most eminent men of our profession, Dupuytren, Scarpa, Walther, and many others, in their Lectures, as well as private conversations, considering you as one of the leading characters of Medical Science in Britain.



Lastly, I must confess without flattery, that your instructive conversations induced me to prolong my stay in Edinburgh for several months; and I shall ever gratefully remember the learned communications you gave with distinguished eloquence, and the benefit I derived from your experience.—I am, Sir, with respect for your high talents, and wishing you every success,

Your most obedient servant,  
**AUGUSTUS POCKELS, Dr Med. et Chir.**



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LETTER to the Right Honourable JOHN MANDERSTON,  
Lord Provost of Edinburgh, from Dr THOMSON.

*5, George-Street, Edinburgh, 5th June, 1821.*

MY LORD,

THE inclosed Letters are the last with which I shall trouble your Lordship upon the present occasion. What effect the Testimonials I have laid before you may produce upon your mind, or upon the minds of the other Patrons of the University, it is not for me to conjecture; but it must ever be most gratifying to my feelings to have had my claims to the Professorship of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh so warmly supported as they have been, not only by those who have been my teachers in medicine, my fellow-students, my medical friends, and my pupils, but also by the Medical Department of the Army, the Military Commanders under whom I have had the honour to serve, and so graciously confirmed by his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JOHN THOMSON, M.D.

Professor of Military Surgery.



## TESTIMONIALS.

## IV.

LETTER from JOHN HUME, M.D. Honorary Member of the Cambridge Philosophical Society, &c. &c.—to Dr THOMSON.

*Almada Hill, Hamilton, May 26, 1821.*

DEAR SIR,

IN thanking you for the papers you were so obliging as to send to me, I cannot help expressing the pleasure I feel at your having become a candidate for the vacant Professorship. If my feeble testimony could add any thing to the splendid testimonials you have already obtained, I would be proud to say, that, in my opinion, you are the man in Europe most worthy of being successor to the late lamented Dr Gregory ; for, if patient research, if vast erudition, sagacity, general science, and a most intimate acquaintance with every part of our profession, can entitle any man to that station, you are the person in whom is a rare assemblage of such talents as have rendered the names of Boerhaave, Sauvages, Haller, Cullen, and Pringle, immortal. I hope you will excuse me for speaking thus warmly, as I fear that my anxiety to do you justice has led me to say more than your own unassuming merit will perhaps pardon.

Wishing you every success, and hoping that the claim of merit may be listened to, in preference to that of mere partiality or favour, I am,

Dear Sir,

With much respect and esteem,

Your most obedient and very

Humble servant,

JOHN HUME, M.D.



LETTER from DAVID HAY, M.D. Surgeon to the Royal Public Dispensary, &c. &c. to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST, the MAGISTRATES, and TOWN COUNCIL of Edinburgh.

*67, George Street, June 1, 1821.*

PERMIT me, my Lord and Gentlemen, to address you on the subject of the election of a Professor, to succeed my late most excellent teacher Dr Gregory.

I am not vain enough to suppose that my opinion of the merits of the candidate who appears to me the best qualified, will add much to the force of testimony already adduced in his favour, proceeding as it does from almost every man who has of late distinguished himself in Medical Science; but I should consider myself devoid of gratitude to an instructor, from whose excellent Lectures and extensive information I have derived the most essential benefits, were I not to state explicitly those qualifications, which seem to me particularly to fit Dr Thomson for the Chair of the Practice of Medicine. He is, my Lord, profoundly skilled in the knowledge and practice of his profession, active and zealous in procuring additional information to that which he already possesses, discriminating what rests on a solid basis from what is hypothetical, and anxious to communicate his knowledge to his pupils, and to inspire them with habits of industry and application similar to his own.

As a pupil of Dr Thomson, I have to acknowledge my obligation to him for his highly useful Lectures on many parts of the Practice of Medicine, untaught, or slightly glanced at, in the Lectures delivered in the University. I allude more particularly to those on cutaneous diseases, which his intimate acquaintance and correspondence with the late much to be lamented Drs Willan and Bateman enabled him to



give more fully than any other teacher in the Edinburgh School of Medicine.

In pursuing the subject of Medical Pathology, few of the Profession have surpassed or equalled him in industry or accurate discrimination, and many important facts have been established by him. His treatise on Inflammation, already so often taken notice of, must remain a standard work with the Profession. Two of the best and most original theses ever produced by the graduates of this University, those of Dr Macdonald on Necrosis and the Reproduction of Bone, and of Dr Jones on the Suppression of Hæmorrhage and Ligature of Arteries, owed many of their most important and valuable experiments and observations to his suggestion.

I might, my Lord, continue to detail other important labours in which Dr Thomson has been engaged, but these are noticed in the testimonials in your hands. It has been said that testimonials do not afford proper grounds on which, as electors, you and the other Patrons of the University may decide, and that friends solicited to grant them will naturally make them as strong as possible. This, however plausible, is by no means a just remark; for you may be assured, that men of high professional character will not stain their reputation by giving their opinions in favour of an unworthy object; and, when you regard the names of Baillie, Astley Cooper, Pearson, Sir Everard Home, Brodie, Lawrence, Travers, Hennen, Portal, Beclard, Sir Matthew Tierney, Sir James M'Grigor, and many others, it is quite impossible to conceive that they, without absolute conviction, could separately and so strongly have expressed corresponding opinions that Dr Thomson is so well qualified to fill the vacant chair. On this point, I cannot forbear to quote one passage from the letter addressed to your Lordship by Dr J. H. Davidson, a gentleman whose learning and talents entitle him to give an opinion of the qualifications of others. "When I say that Dr Thomson is the most learned physician I ever



met with, I know that I am quite safe from any appearance of exaggeration, because I have heard the same language employed by many medical men in England, and by all those foreigners with whom he became acquainted during his professional tour on the Continent."

My late father, Dr Thomas Hay, personally known to you, my Lord, and to many of the Council, entertained the highest opinion of Dr Thomson, which I often heard him express. It was my own good fortune to pass a considerable time with him in Paris, during the year 1814, when I was a daily witness of his eagerness to add to his store of professional knowledge, and had many opportunities of observing the respect paid to him, by some of the highest rank in the French School of Medicine; and I may mention the names of Portal, Pinel, Esquirol, Alibert, and Swediaur, as men who duly estimated his acquirements.

To conclude, I may with truth aver, that it is the opinion of many of my professional brethren, as well as my own, that the Professor of the Practice of Physic, like his predecessors, Cullen and Gregory, ought to be a man who has devoted himself to the study and practice of Medicine, to whom other practitioners may apply in cases of difficulty, and whom the public may regard with confidence, as possessing extensive practical experience.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

DAVID HAY.

LETTER from GEORGE KELLIE, M.D. to DR THOMSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR printed Testimonials, which you have done me the honour to send me, are indeed most ample and respectable;



but you have lived so long amongst us, and have been so long and so eminently distinguished for all those accomplishments which the vacant Chair of our Medical School demands, that I should have thought such a mass of Testimonials little wanted to substantiate your claims. I will give you my opinion : A physician of mere *practical experience*, and one of mere *science* and *research*, would be equally unfit to discharge the important duties of Professor of Medicine in our *alma mater*. You, in an eminent degree, unite the qualifications of *both*. With great talents, joined to unrivalled industry, you have established for yourself abroad, as well as at home, a distinguished reputation as a man of literature and of science ; and have become equally eminent as a Writer, a Teacher, and a Practitioner of Medicine. As I know few men who have better deserved this high fame, so surely I know no one who has made greater sacrifices to merit and obtain it. If the Patrons of the University—if the Electors could be transported from the Town Council to Paris, or to Vienna, I am persuaded they would soon discover that, on the Continent of Europe, you have long been considered as one of the greatest supporters of the renown of the Edinburgh School of Medicine ; and I think if you could yet send them there, it would do you some good. I know not on whom of the many candidates their choice may fall. I hear various opinions. There is one or two whose talents and acquirements I think competent to the high office, but I know no one better qualified to sustain the honour of the Chair of Cullen and of Gregory than yourself.

I am,

My dear Sir,

With best wishes, yours always,

GEORGE KELLIE, M.D.

Leith, 31st May, 1821.



LETTER from JOHN GAIRDNER, M. D. Surgeon to the Royal Public Dispensary, to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST, MAGISTRATES, and TOWN COUNCIL of the City of Edinburgh.

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

THOUGH it never entered into my mind, that it was in the power of one of my rank and standing in my profession to add to the reputation of any *worthy* aspirant to the Chair of Dr Gregory ; and though I have therefore never presumed to volunteer my opinion of any of the candidates, with many of whom I am on terms of intimacy and friendship, yet I cannot refuse compliance with the request of a friend of Dr Thomson's and of mine, who has just suggested to me that the opinion entertained of him by medical practitioners here, who have consulted with him, and are intimately acquainted both with the *man*, and with his talents and acquirements, is likely to appear of some importance in the eyes of the Patrons.

I am not acquainted with any man whatever, to whom the character of a scientific physician can with more justice be assigned, than to Dr Thomson. His acquaintance with medical literature, and with every branch of science, which is either immediately or remotely connected with his profession, is unusually extensive and minute. He possesses a powerful understanding, and a mind ardent and indefatigable in the pursuit of knowledge. He has not regarded medicine merely as a practical art, but as a department of human science, eminently susceptible of improvement ; and has given several recent proofs of his aptitude for its successful cultivation, which will transmit his name to future ages, as a distinguished medical philosopher, whose history is interwoven with that of the science which he professes.

His writings on Varioloid and Syphilitic Affections, have introduced simplicity and perspicuity into the theory of these diseases, which was previously involved in much diffi-



culty and perplexity; and, in regard to the latter, have had the more important effect of introducing a milder, more simple, and more efficacious practice.

Having been a hearer of Dr Thomson about eleven or twelve years ago, and having had many pupils since, who have attended his Lectures, I beg leave to add my testimony to those which your Lordship and Council have already received, as to his abilities as a Teacher.—I am,

My Lord Provost and Gentlemen,

Your very obedient humble servant,

JOHN GAIRDNER.

50, Hanover-street,  
Friday, 1st June, 1821.

#### TESTIMONIAL, &c.

WE hereby certify, that Dr John Thomson, personally well known to us, is in our opinion eminently qualified to fill the Chair of the Practice of Physic now vacant in the University of Edinburgh, by his attainments, as manifested in his valuable writings, by his abilities, which in our estimation are of the highest order, and by his tried capability of teaching, as well as by that singular ardour with which he cannot fail to inspire the minds of his pupils.

We farther testify, that we know none in whose practical skill we repose more unlimited confidence, or from which we have derived more benefit, than from that of Dr Thomson, in cases of doubt, difficulty, and danger.

ALEXANDER RAMSAY, M.D.

ALEXANDER BELL, M.R.C. Surgeons  
of London.

JOHN CRICHTON, Surgeon.

PATRICK NIMMO, M.D.

ALEXANDER STORMONTH, M.D.

Physicians and Surgeons to the  
Dundee Royal Infirmary.

Dundee, }  
2d June, 1821. }



## LETTER from JAMES STENHOUSE, M.D. to Dr THOMSON.

*Dunfermline, 2d June, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I LOOK forward with no small degree of interest to the approaching election of a successor to the late Dr Gregory ; an interest arising from an ardent wish that the high reputation of the Edinburgh School of Medicine may be supported and still farther advanced.

I have long contemplated the probability of your promotion to the Chair of Physic ; and I am firmly convinced, that throughout Europe, there is not one better, and few indeed so well qualified, to discharge the duties of that important situation.

As your pupil, I can never cease to remember, with admiration and gratitude, the profound and comprehensive views of the Science, the minuteness and accuracy of the details, which in your Lectures on the Principles and Practice of Surgery, you exhibited with clearness and perspicuity to a crowded and attentive audience.

As House Surgeon to the Royal Infirmary, while you had the superintendence of the surgical wards, I had ample opportunity of seeing your rules applied with the happiest effects to practice ; and, during a period of ten years that I have been settled here, I have been in the frequent habit of applying to you for advice in cases of doubt or difficulty ; and every time had more reason to admire the acuteness and precision with which you brought to light the obscure causes of diseases.

That the electors may duly appreciate your merits, and, in comparing them with those of the different candidates, consult alone the welfare of the University, is the earnest wish of

Your sincere friend,

JAMES STENHOUSE, M.D.



## LETTER from P. MUDIE, M.D. to DR THOMSON.

*St Andrews, June 2d, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE this moment received your letter of yesterday, and hasten to answer it by this evening's post. I sincerely wish you success in your competition for the Chair of the Practice of Physic in your University, convinced that, in the circle of my medical acquaintance, there is no one so well qualified as yourself to be the successor of the late Dr Gregory.

It would appear presumption in me to offer my testimonial of your abilities, and medical acquirements; but if this letter can be of any use in forwarding your views, it is at your service.

I shall be anxious to learn the result of Wednesday, and hope the Edinburgh School of Medicine will have the benefit of your instructions.—And I remain,

In haste,

Your's very faithfully,

P. MUDIE.

## LETTER from ANDREW DEWAR, M.D. to DR THOMSON.

*Dunfermline, June 2d, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

IT is most assuredly presumptuous in me to attempt to estimate aright the extent of that merit, which has justly entitled you to the distinguished place which you hold in the opinion of your professional brethren. Yet, I cannot refrain from acknowledging the important advantages which I have derived from my attendance on your most interesting Surgical Lectures, and the pleasure I have often felt in witnessing the ardour which you have displayed in stimulating the zeal of your pupils to the prosecution of their professional pursuits. In some very difficult cases, in which I have had occa-



sion to consult you in my private practice, I cannot sufficiently express the admiration I have felt, at the almost intuitive perception with which you unravelled the intricacies of the most difficult cases, at the extent, and, at the same time, the minuteness, of your knowledge on every subject connected with your profession, and at your simple and efficient mode of treating disease. Your high attainments in philosophy and the sciences, as well as your very extensive and intimate acquaintance with the history of your profession, both in ancient and modern times, eminently qualify you to fill, with honour to yourself, advantage to your pupils, and credit to the University, the Chair for which you are at present a candidate. That you may long live to cultivate those sciences which you love, and to dignify and improve that profession which has been already much benefitted by your labours, is the earnest wish of,

My dear Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

ANDREW DEWAR.

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LETTER from WILLIAM HENDERSON, M.D. to  
DR THOMSON.

*Perth, 4th June, 1821.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I BEG you will accept of my best thanks for the copy of your Testimonials which I received the other day. It gives me the sincerest pleasure, to see that the Medical Profession, both in Britain and on the Continent, value your eminent literary talents and high professional acquirements as they deserve; and, were the opinion of so humble an individual as I am of any consequence to you, or of any weight with the Town Council of Edinburgh, which I have not the presumption to suppose would be the case, I could testify with regard to the thirteen years that have elapsed since I attended your Lectures on Surgery, at which period you first ho-



noured me with your friendship, and which it is the proudest boast of my life to say remains undiminished.

When I attended your Lectures, I was particularly struck with the energy and assiduity with which you discharged the duties of a Public Teacher, with the extent, and, in many instances, the originality of your views of Medical Science; with your gentle and endearing manners, by which you first gained the hearts, and then the close attention of your pupils; with the facilities which you afforded them in the acquisition of professional knowledge, by your examinations of them at extra hours, specially appointed for that purpose,—a mode of communicating knowledge admirably calculated for improving students in any branch of science; and with the readiness with which you lent an ear to all the difficulties of your pupils in private, and the diligence with which you obviated them.

I have since observed, with delight, the ardour with which you have cultivated Medical Science, sparing neither body nor mind, as the late Varioloid Epidemic in Perth, and other parts of Scotland, can fully testify, where you satisfied yourself of the identity of the disease at patients' bedsides, both here and elsewhere, wherever it occurred. I need say nothing of your published works on Inflammation, Varioloid Diseases, &c. &c. The medical world value them as they deserve.

In short, if high literary and scientific acquirements, extensive opportunities of medical practice, a ready discrimination of disease, a powerful retentive memory, a manner admirably calculated to gain the attention, and a mind amply stored to convey practical instruction; and if the maintenance of the respectability and high character of the Edinburgh School of Medicine have any weight with the Electors, you cannot fail to be the successful candidate.

With best wishes for your success,

I am, my dear Sir,

Your's sincerely,

WM. HENDERSON, M.D.



## TESTIMONIAL by J. MACFARLANE, M.D.

HAVING this day been applied to by a friend of Dr John Thomson, the present Professor of Military Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, for the expression of my sentiments as to his fitness for the Chair of the Practice of Physic in that University, (my *alma mater*) vacant by the deeply to be lamented death of my valued friend Dr Gregory ; with becoming diffidence, I hereby beg leave to render to the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Edinburgh, my humble opinion, that the said Dr John Thomson is *eminently* qualified to fill that most important situation.

J. MACFARLANE, M.D.

Perth, 4th June, 1821.

## TESTIMONIAL, &amp;c.

WE, the undersigned Medical Practitioners in Perth, understanding that Dr John Thomson is a Candidate for the Chair so ably filled by the late Dr Gregory, certify, That we have severally attended Dr Thomson's Lectures on Surgery ; that, during our attendance thereon, we were much edified by his ample and profound knowledge of the first principles and practice of medical art ; by his unwearied exertions in communicating the ample stores of information which he possesses, and by his eloquent and impressive manner as a Public Lecturer ; and that he is, in our opinion, eminently qualified to teach Medicine.

JOHN STEWART, M.D. H.P.  
42d Regiment.

WM. HENDERSON, M.D.

DAVID SCOTT, Surgeon.

JOHN BARLAS, Surgeon.

Perth, 4th June, 1821.



LETTER from DR PHILIP WHITESIDE, Physician to the Ayr, Newton, and Wallace Town Dispensary, to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST of Edinburgh.

MY LORD,

THOUGH conscious how little effect any thing I have to say in favour of Dr John Thomson (who is, I understand, a candidate for the Chair lately held by the illustrious Gregory) can have with the Electors, I cannot withhold my testimony of the high estimation in which he is held by those who best know him as a public Teacher, Writer, and Practitioner. Should he be successful, I am satisfied the Chair cannot be filled by a person better qualified for the situation, or more devoted to the Profession. I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient

And most faithful servant,

PHILIP WHITESIDE, M.D.

*Ayr, 4th June, 1821.*

LETTER from Dr W. DONALDSON, Physician to the Ayr, Newton, and Wallace Town Dispensary, to Dr THOMSON.

*Ayr, 4th June, 1821.*

SIR,

I HAVE read the Testimonials you were so kind as to send me, with great satisfaction, as they confirm the opinion I had formed of your Professional Character, after an acquaintance of nearly twenty years.

Feeling, as I do deeply, the vast importance to the University of Edinburgh, to Scotland, and to Science, of filling the Chair, vacant by the death of Dr Gregory, with a per-



son qualified to support the high rank it attained from a Cullen and a Gregory, I rejoice that the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh, for this purpose, have it in their power to avail themselves of your distinguished abilities, and great zeal.

I remain, with every wish for your success,

Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

W. DONALDSON.

LETTER from WILLIAM NEWBIGGING, Esq. Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, &c. &c. to THOMAS BLACKWOOD, Esq.

18, *St Andrew's Square, Edinburgh,*  
4th June, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received your letter, requesting, as a Member of Council, my opinion of the talents and qualifications of Professor Thomson for the vacant chair of the Practice of Physic.

I have hitherto declined giving Testimonials to any of the Candidates, conceiving that, if my opinion could be of any use to the Patrons of the University, it might be obtained upon their application. In compliance, therefore, with your request, as one of the Patrons, I beg leave to state, that, from my long and intimate acquaintance with Professor Thomson, I have had the opportunity of observing his eminent talents, indefatigable zeal, and persevering industry, in the cultivation of the Sciences of Medicine and Surgery, by which he has conferred the greatest benefit upon the Profession, and contributed largely to the reputation of the Medical School of Edinburgh.



I am of opinion, that Professor Thomson is well fitted to discharge the duties of Professor of the Practice of Physic in the University; not only from the qualifications which I have already stated, but also from the happy talent he possesses, of infusing zeal and enthusiasm into the minds of the Pupils who are under his care.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

WILL. NEWBIGGING.

LETTER from WILLIAM WOOD, Esq. Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, &c. &c., to THOMAS BLACKWOOD, Esq.

87, George Street, June 5, 1821.

SIR,

I HAVE this moment received your note, requesting that I would state to you my opinion regarding the qualifications of Dr Thomson for filling the vacant Chair of the Practice of Medicine. Although most anxiously interested in the result of the election, as every one must be who has been educated in our University, which has been so long and so justly the admiration of the world, I have hitherto refrained from offering testimonials to any of the candidates, from an anxious wish not to intrude myself on the notice of the public. But applied to, as I have been by you, as one of the Patrons of the University, I do not think myself entitled to withhold my opinion, of however little value that may be. From a very long and intimate acquaintance with Dr Thomson as a pupil, as a friend, and as a professional brother, I have had constant opportunities of witnessing his brilliant talents, his profound erudition, and the



happy power he possesses, not only of communicating useful knowledge to his students, but also of exciting in them great zeal in the prosecution of their medical studies—of all which excellent qualifications for teaching, we have had abundant proof in the discharge of his duties as Professor of Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons,—a situation which he has filled for a long series of years, with the greatest advantage to the Medical School of Edinburgh, and with the greatest credit to himself. I have no hesitation, therefore, in stating it to be my opinion, that Dr Thomson is, in every respect, eminently qualified to fill the vacant Chair; and, if placed in it by the suffrages of the Patrons, I feel confident that he will do honour to their appointment.

I may add, that I have stated my opinion on this subject with the greater confidence, from knowing that it was in consequence of his very high opinion of Dr Thomson's talents, that my late father was induced to give him his warmest support at the time he was appointed Professor of Surgery to the Royal College of Surgeons, and afterwards Professor of Military Surgery in the University.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant.

WILLIAM WOOD.

P. S.—You are at liberty to make what use you please of this communication, as the sentiments it contains I have never hesitated to declare to those with whom I have happened to speak on the subject.



LETTER to the Right Honourable the LORD PROVOST,  
the MAGISTRATES and TOWN-COUNCIL of EDINBURGH,  
from Dr THOMSON.

*5, George Street, Edinburgh, 6th June, 1821.*

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

HAVING been this morning informed that a majority of the Electors have declared in favour of another candidate, I beg leave respectfully to withdraw the application which I had made to you for the honour of being appointed to the Chair now vacant in the University. It was indeed not without reluctance I was induced to offer myself as a candidate for this Chair, knowing as I did that it had been confidently reported, by persons who exercise much influence over the deliberations of the different Public Bodies in Edinburgh, that an *arrangement* had been formed with respect to it, and some other Chairs in the University, which would necessarily preclude all competition.

With my heart full of gratitude to those who have honoured me with their support upon the present occasion, permit me to avail myself of this opportunity to assure them and the Patrons of the University, that no exertion of mine shall ever be wanting to promote to the utmost of my abilities the best interests of the Medical School of Edinburgh, and of the University, of which I have the honour to be a Member. I have the honour to be,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN THOMSON, M.D.

Professor of Military Surgery.

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EDINBURGH:

Printed by James Ballantyne & Co.





LETTER to the Right Honorable the Lord Provost,  
the Magistrates and Town-Council of Edinburgh,  
from the Town.

Edinburgh, 17th June, 1791.

My Lord and Gentlemen,  
It was on this morning informed that a majority of the  
Electors have declared in favor of another candidate, I beg  
leave respectfully to withdraw the application which I had  
made to you for the degree of being appointed to the Chair  
now vacant in the University. It was indeed not without  
reluctance I was induced to offer myself as a candidate for  
the Chair, knowing as I did that it had been confidently re-  
commended by persons who exercise much influence over the de-  
liberations of the Electors, I shall be obliged to you, should  
an arrangement had been formed with respect to it, and some  
other Chairs in the University, which would necessarily pre-  
clude all competition. I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
With my heart full of gratitude to those who have ho-  
noured me with their support, and the prospect of being  
permitted me to avail myself of this opportunity to assure them  
and the Town of the University, that no exertion of mine  
shall ever be wanting to promote to the utmost of my ability  
the best interests of the beloved School of Edinburgh,  
and of the University, of which I have the honor to be a  
Member. I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

John Thomson, M.D.

Professor of Natural History.









