

## **On the foundation of scholarships in St. Bartholomew's Hospital.**

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SCHOLARSHIPS  
IN  
St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

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SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL, London,  
Medical College



ON THE  
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&c.

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It has long been customary to offer prizes of books, and other honorary distinctions for competition among medical students, as incentives to study and regularity of conduct; and the result has been such as proves that it is only necessary to increase the amount of substantial encouragement given to merit, in order to insure a far larger increase of the zeal with which eminence will be striven for. If students can be induced to apply themselves with extraordinary industry in the hope of acquiring temporary distinction, much more will they labour if there be held out a fair

prospect of considerable permanent advantage. It is in this view that the proposal to establish scholarships, to be conferred on those students of St. Bartholomew's Hospital who, in open examination, shall prove themselves most worthy of them, has originated.

All the arguments generally adduced for liberally rewarding meritorious students must have peculiar weight in favour of a proposal for establishing scholarships in medical schools; for, among all the young men who pursue their studies in the metropolis, the students of medicine are most tempted to idleness and laxity of moral conduct. Therefore, those of them who honourably distinguish themselves are doubly meritorious: they add to the merit of high attainments the virtue of resistance to peculiar temptation.

But, besides the general propriety of rewarding excellence, it may be especially urged in favour of the proposal to found these scholarships, that they will afford the means of



conferring advantages upon the public, as well as upon the meritorious students; and that they will assist to place the successful candidates in a higher rank in their profession, and may thus advantageously affect their course through life.

The foundation of scholarships for the best medical students will be advantageous to the public, by encouraging students to greater zeal in the acquirement of knowledge, and, consequently, by increasing the number of highly qualified and scientific practitioners of medicine and surgery.

If it be objected that it will not be possible to found scholarships enough to increase the number of excellent practitioners to an amount sufficient to be felt in public good,—it may be answered, that all the candidates for each scholarship, the unsuccessful as well as he who gains it, will be much better practitioners than they would have been had they not been thus incited to increased exertion in their



studies. Besides, experience shows that the knowledge and moral character of the best students in a school usually determine those of all the students below them ; so that, if the best be very good, the worst will not be so bad as they will be when the best are of only moderate merit. Though few students, perhaps, may strive to reach the highest standard of knowledge, yet the rest will not be content to be very far below these few ; for the more a few strive for eminence, the more must the rest strive to avoid the disgrace of disproportionate defects.

And thus it may be confidently hoped that the foundation of scholarships in medical schools would lead to a general and uniform increase of industry among the students, and a proportionate increase of knowledge among practitioners. The advantage of such a result to the public cannot be over-estimated.

But, it is also to be considered, that the benefits conferred upon the students elected to



the scholarships, though, at the first view, they may appear to be only temporary, terminating with the period during which each scholarship is held, may, really and in effect, be enjoyed for life.

To obtain the ordinary diplomas necessary for legitimate practice, it is required that students should follow the courses of lectures and attendance at an hospital for nearly three years. But none can deny that this period is insufficient for the attainment of that high amount of knowledge with which they should begin practice whose industry and mental power fit them to take the lead in their profession, and to be the advisers of their brethren. Accordingly, the highest diplomas granted by the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and by the University of London, can be obtained only on condition of the Hospital education having been prolonged to at least five years.

Now, among medical students, there are



few who are not compelled, by the necessity of maintaining themselves at an early age, to commence practice as soon as ever they can obtain those diplomas which enable them to do so legally. The expenses of their education, and of nearly three years' residence in London, commonly almost exhaust the means that can be granted them ; and, at the end of this period, it has been often and truly said, even by those students who have best employed their time, that they have only just learned how to study their profession, when they find themselves compelled by their necessities to begin to practise it.

It may be held for certain, that the best students in a medical school are often prevented, by want of means, from continuing their studies long enough to enable them to reach that high position in their profession for which their industry and talents peculiarly fit them. To all such as these, therefore, scholarships of a value sufficient to defray a good portion



of the expenses of prolonged study and residence in London would give great and permanent advantages.

There is also a class of students—not a large one, yet they are more numerous than those who can afford the cost of prolonged study—who might be even more benefitted by the foundation of scholarships. These are such as cannot afford the ordinary expenses of education and of the shortest necessary residence in London ; whose deeper necessities compel them to work as dispensing assistants to medical practitioners or druggists even while they are endeavouring to pursue their studies in the Hospital.

It is difficult to imagine circumstances more disadvantageous to the study of medicine than those under which students thus situated labour ; certainly, pecuniary assistance could hardly any where be better bestowed than in rewarding one who, in spite of these difficulties, could attain such knowledge as to merit a



scholarship. If, while obliged to devote many hours a day to the earning a part of his subsistence, he could rise to eminence, what might not be expected of such a student if, by the aid of a scholarship, his whole time could be devoted to the pursuit of knowledge!

And here it may be added, that while the scholars themselves receive these advantages, they will also be diffusing benefit among all around them. The good order of a school depends scarcely more upon the character of the teachers than upon that of the senior and most instructed students; for the junior students regard the attainments of their seniors as the standard to which they must rise; and in moral conduct and general behaviour it is the example of seniors which is most readily imitated. Now, it may be reasonably anticipated, that scholars elected according to well-ordered rules, and required to continue studying in the Hospital, will always be



such as, by their examples, will exercise a good influence upon the other students, and be, in this regard, important assistants to the teachers.

The considerations hitherto offered are such as may recommend, it is hoped, the foundation of scholarships in all large medical schools.

To these, others may be added, to show the peculiar advantages that may be looked for if some be founded in the school of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

The position which this institution holds is such, that whatever good systems are adopted in it are, as far as possible, imitated in other schools. The good, therefore, which is done here multiplies itself rapidly, by affording an example which is at once copied by others.

Again, the foundation of scholarships in this institution is a step of progress in the Collegiate system of education. The advantages of the application of this system in medical education may now, happily, be said to be proved



by experience. The same experience makes it probable that the more the system is carried out, the greater (and the greater in an increasing ratio) will be its advantages. Maintaining, therefore, the principle of imitating, however humbly in these respects, the old Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, it will well become the School of St. Bartholomew's to copy them in a system of rewarding merit, for which they are not more richly endowed than widely celebrated, and by which they work so great an amount of good.

Moreover, the value of good examples set by seniors is peculiarly great when students live together in colleges. Perhaps, among all the arrangements of the old universities, none has conduced more to their constant eminence as schools of moral discipline as well as of learning, than that by their wealth they are enabled every year, not merely to reward, but also to retain in residence, a certain number of the best graduates. Thus, while at



the usual period of graduation, all the idle students leave the university, and their evil example ceases, many of the good ones remain, and their good influence is secured for some years more. Hence (to state the general result) the bad are always the weaker party,—if not in numbers, yet in influence; for they are the younger party, and there are always a number of good senior men opposed to them, some of whom are retained in the service of each college by their fellowships or other college offices.

Something of this kind is almost essential to the well-being of a college, not only that there may be good examples for imitation, but that improvements in discipline and system may be adopted. Masters and tutors cannot guide junior students so well as they who have just or hardly left the student's rank. The surest means by which those who hold authority in colleges can give a good tone to the whole society is, by influencing those who stand next




to themselves, and who, in their turn, may influence others in the next following station, till, in succession, all are subjected to the same transmitted influence.

On these grounds, the Treasurer of the Hospital, James Bentley, Esq. has established a scholarship of fifty pounds a year for three years. The Medical Officers and Lecturers have also resolved to found three Scholarships, each of the annual value of forty-five pounds, and tenable for three years, and of which one will be offered for competition in each year. Towards the support of these three scholarships they have agreed together to subscribe ninety guineas annually, till, by public donations, a fund is accumulated sufficient for the permanent maintenance and increase of the scholarships.

It is confidently hoped that the plain statement just made of the advantages which the public, as well as a large class of students, will derive from such a fund, will have its due influence on all who are zealous for the

improvement of medical education and the medical profession ; and more particularly on those who, whether by their authority in its government, or by their former connection with it as pupils, are interested in maintaining the eminence of St. Bartholomew's Hospital as a school of medicine.

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 Subscriptions will be received by the Treasurer, James Bentley, Esq., or by any of the Medical Officers or Lecturers.



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