A speech delivered at a quarterly statutory meeting of the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh : on the 15th of January 1825, accusing James Hamilton of having published a false and calumnious libel against the Senatus Academicus as a corporate body; against the institutions of medicine, as a branch of education at Edinburgh; and against the present professo [sic] of institutions of medicine, as an individual / by Andrew Duncan, sen.

A

SPEECH

DELIVERED AT A QUARTERLY STATUTORY MEETING

OF THE

SENATUS ACADEMICUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

ON THE 15TH OF JANUARY 1825,

ACCUSING

DR JAMES HAMILTON,

PROFESSOR OF MIDWIFERY,

OF HAVING PUBLISHED A FALSE AND CALUMNIOUS LIBEL AGAINST THE SENATUS ACADEMICUS AS A CORPORATE BODY; AGAINST THE INSTITUTIONS OF MEDICINE, AS A BRANCH OF EDUCATION AT EDINBURGH; AND AGAINST THE PRESENT PROFESSO OF INSTITUTIONS OF MEDICINE, AS AN INDIVIDUAL.

BY

ANDREW DUNCAN SEN., M. D. & PROF.

FIRST PHYSICIAN TO THE KING FOR SCOTLAND,

AND PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF EDINBURGH.

Cuncta prius tentata sed immedicable vulnus,
Ense recidendum est. OVID.

EDINBURGH:

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1825.

To Dr James Hamilton.

Sir,

In sending this Speech to the press, I can, with confidence, affirm, that I am actuated by no sinister motive. I have no private enmity to gratify,—no successful rival to oppose,—no pecuniary interest to promote. But, in obedience to what I consider an indispensable duty, I take this method of severely reprimanding you before the tribunal of the University, and, as a necessary consequence, before the tribunals of the public, and of posterity, for what appears to me to be a flagrant and shameful breach of duty in a Professor.

In a Memorial which you have lately presented to the Patrons of the University of Edinburgh, you have spoken of several of your colleagues in very disrespectful, unjust, and injurious terms. Of me and my lectures you have asserted, "*that Students can derive from that individual Professor, no additional knowledge which can enable them to cure diseases.*" So far is this assertion from being true, that I am well convinced, even you who have lectured on the diseases of women, for more than twenty years, might derive additional knowledge from my lectures on some of the principal diseases of women, particularly on *amenorrhœa* and *menorrhagia*.

I sincerely hope, Sir, that, for your own credit, you will hereafter relinquish the arrogant vanity of insinuating that your lectures on these subjects are perfect productions, and that students can derive no additional knowledge from hearing other teachers. Your worthy Father, more than fifty years ago, mentioned, with great approbation, my Theory of Menstruation, which was very different from that then taught either by Dr CULLEN or Dr MONRO *secundus*; and he also expressed much satisfaction with the principles on which I recommended, that the cure of amenorrhœa and menorhagia should be conducted.

I firmly believe, Sir, that there is not one Professor in the University, from whose Lectures, as well as from mine, you might not derive additional knowledge.

From your consummate opinion of your own wisdom, you may view my conduct, in bringing this accusation against you, as highly culpable, yet I can with confidence venture to affirm, that I am perfectly innocent of any *animus injuriandi*, and that, as far as you are concerned, I am actuated only by an *animus reformandi*. I am satisfied, in my own mind, that, in me, it is much more meritorious to sacrifice private feelings than to desert what I consider as my indispensable duty to the University.

But, without mentioning other particulars, in which Students who have attended your lectures on Midwifery may obtain additional knowledge from my lectures, I shall conclude with telling you, that, afte the public

reprimand which I have given you in the following pages, although I may never be able to forget your transgressions, yet, from the bottom of my heart, I forgive them. And I would fain hope, that, while I continue to be your colleague in the University, which, in the course of nature, cannot be long, you will never again, in order to obtain a very unfair advantage over successful rivals, do an unprovoked injury to

Your old acquaintance,

ANDREW DUNCAN *sen.*
An. æt. 81.

SPEECH, &c.

MR PRINCIPAL,

IT is not without much mental distress that I now rise to address you and the Senatus Academicus, but I consider myself as imperiously called upon, by a sense of duty, to accuse one of our number of a transgression of a very serious nature. I rise to accuse a Professor, with whom I have long lived in terms of intimacy and friendship; but I am not unmindful of the old Roman maxim, *Fiat justitia ruat cœlum.* And, I have no doubt, that this principle will have due weight with the Judges, as well as with the accuser.

The right, Sir, of the Senatus Academicus, of punishing the delinquencies of its own members by admonition, by suspension, by censure, or by expulsion, is undeniable; and it is not without some uneasiness I call to my recollection, that, since I have had the honour of being a Professor in this University, even the most severe of these punishments, extrusion, has been inflicted, both upon a Student and upon a Professor. I have no doubt, that, on the present question, you will neither be swayed in your decision, by personal favour, nor by partial prejudice, but will found your sentence upon undeniable facts.

I accuse Dr HAMILTON, Professor of Midwifery, of having presented to the Patrons of this University, false and calumnious libels against the Senatus Academicus, as a corporate body, and against me in particular, as an individual Professor. These libels, Sir, transmitted by the Town-Council to the Senatus Academicus, now lie upon your table; and, in my opinion, they will serve to establish, beyond the possibility of contradiction, in the mind of every candid Judge, the truths of those heavy charges which I have brought against him. But, before I point out the particular passages on which my accusation is founded, it will be necessary to state the origin and progress of this very disagreeable business.

The long period of twenty-five years has now elapsed, since Dr HAMILTON, on the 12th of April 1800, was admitted into the University of Edinburgh as Professor of Midwifery, that office having become vacant on the resignation of his own father. In consequence of his admission, he immediately entered into the full possession of all the rights and privileges which any of his predecessors had ever enjoyed. Like all his predecessors, he continued, for more than twelve years, to deliver three courses of lectures on Midwifery annually, two during every winter, and one during every summer session, enjoying in the College every privilege, and every advantage, which any

Professor of Midwifery had ever done. But, in the year 1815, he presented a petition to the Senatus Academicus, requesting that the *curriculum studiorum*, for obtaining the degree of Doctor of Medicine, which had long been observed in our University, should be altered; and that no Student should be permitted to be a candidate for that degree, who had not previously attended lectures on Midwifery in an University.

This petition the Senatus Academicus, before giving any decision, very properly referred to the Medical Faculty for their opinion. The Medical Faculty, after due consideration, were unanimous in thinking, that it should not be granted. To that unanimous judgment they were led, from the following considerations.

1*st*, Because it is by no means necessary that any Physician should be a practitioner in Midwifery. On the contrary, in many places, the practice of these two Professions is considered as incompatible. At this day, if any Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London shall practise Midwifery, he forfeits his Fellowship.

2*dly*, Because, although it should be granted that a knowledge of the practice of Midwifery is essentially necessary for every Physician, yet that art cannot be properly taught within the walls of a College. It can certainly be much better taught by private practitioners, affording opportunities to their students, of witnessing deliveries.

And, *3dly*, Because, according to the statutes of the University of Edinburgh, for granting the degree of Doctor of Medicine, which are at present in force, and which have been observed for near an hundred years past, it is impossible for any man, extensively engaged in the practice of Midwifery, to command that time which is required from every examinator, for the degree of Doctor of Medicine. For, at the *examen privatissimum*, as it has long been conducted, every examinator may be considered as a juryman.

In the year 1815 these particulars seemed to me, and to the other members of the Faculty of Medicine at that time, to afford insuperable objections to Dr HAMILTON'S request; and although a majority of the Senatus Academicus be now disposed to adopt an entirely new system of laws, for conferring the degree of Doctor of Medicine by the University of Edinburgh, and to receive the Professor of Midwifery as an examinator, yet I must say, that my opinion, as well as that of several other Professors, remains unchanged. We still think, that it would be both for the honour and interest of the University, that the original regulations, which have been observed with so much advantage, for near a century past, should be continued, without any considerable alteration. But what the Senatus Academicus may determine, in the year 1828, after the rights acquired by all the Students of Medicine, who have

already matriculated, shall have expired, it is, at present, impossible to foretell.

Whatever new system of regulations they may then adopt, it is sufficient to observe, that the unanimous opinion given by the Faculty of Medicine in 1815 was perfectly convincing to the Senatus Academicus at that time, and not one Professor then supported Dr HAMILTON's petition.

After his failure at that time, I must confess I vainly flattered myself with the hope that he would never again disturb the harmony of the University by a renewal of his request. But, by the late conduct of that Professor, these hopes have been miserably disappointed. For he has not only renewed that request, but has renewed it in a manner which, in my opinion, is highly culpable, and which I think ought not to pass unpunished by the Senatus Academicus. I now, therefore, call upon you to stigmatize his conduct as it deserves.

In place of again applying to the Senatus Academicus, as he might regularly and legally have done, he has appealed to what he pretends to consider as a superior court. He presented a Memorial on this subject to the Town-Council of the City of Edinburgh, who are unquestionably the principal Patrons of the University, but by no means possessed of the power either of conferring Degrees in Divinity, Law, or Physic, or of enacting the statutes by which they are to be conferred.

That Memorial, Sir, I have read over with great attention; and, after serious and repeated consideration, I will confidently venture to pronounce it one of the most singular productions that I have ever known to come from the pen of any Professor. It is indeed artfully written, and may readily tend to mislead those who have had no opportunity of being acquainted with undeniable facts. But after removing, as far as I am able, every bias from my mind, I am led to the lamentable conclusion, that I have seldom read any production which demonstrates, on the part of the author, a greater degree of arrogant self-conceit, or of wilful ignorance of the most important facts respecting the power of the Patrons, and of the University. Perhaps I ought rather to have said, willful suppression of truth; for I can hardly allow myself to believe, that Dr HAMILTON was ignorant of several undeniable facts, which he was in duty bound to have stated, but which are totally suppressed in his Memorial to the Patrons. After repeatedly reading Dr HAMILTON'S Memorial, my opinion is, that it may be viewed as a most artful and infamous quack-bill. And in this sentiment I am by no means singular; for I know it is also the opinion of some of the most eminent medical philosophers of the city of Edinburgh.

The great object at which Dr HAMILTON aimed in his Memorial, was to persuade the

Town-Council and Magistrates, as Patrons of the University, to assume a power to which they have no right whatever,—the power of controlling the University in granting the degree of Doctor of Medicine. The power, Sir, of conferring literary honours in Divinity, Law, Physic, and Arts, the University of Edinburgh, as well as every other University in Scotland, derives immediately from the legitimate fountain of all honour, the King; and that privilege, when conferred by him on the University of Edinburgh, was solemnly ratified by an act of the Legislature of the kingdom.

I need not tell you, Sir, that, from a charter granted by King James the Sixth, and ratified by an act of the Parliament of Scotland, dated the 4th of August 1621, the University of Edinburgh is invested with all the liberties, freedoms, immunities, and privileges belonging to an free College, and that in as ample form, and large manner, as any College has, or bruiks, in his Majesty's realm. These, Sir, are the words of the act of Parliament creating the University of Edinburgh, and granting for its support liberal funds, intrusted to the care of the Town-Council, who were empowered to appoint such Professors as they might think proper.

Since the University of Edinburgh was, in consequence of a Royal Charter, first established, that University has uninterruptedly enjoyed the power

of conferring literary honours like every other University in Scotland, and, like every other Scottish University, they have uninterruptedly enacted those regulations by which such literary honours could alone be obtained from them. This has been demonstrated in many instances, with regard to the degree of Doctor of Medicine in particular. Prior to the year 1726, that degree was conferred at Edinburgh, as well as it then was, and still is, both at St Andrew's and Aberdeen, without any examination whatever, but upon a certificate alone. Nay, at the time of conferring it, the candidate might be a thousand miles distant from the University. Nothing more was required but a proper certificate, and the payment of certain fees.

After, however, the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh, in the year 1726, appointed a Faculty of Medicine, a very different system of regulations was adopted by them. By their Statuta Solennia de Gradu Doctorali in Medicina capessendo, it was then enacted, that no one should obtain the degree of Doctor of Medicine at Edinburgh, unless he appeared personally to undergo different trials before examinators appointed by the Senatus Academicus, and unless he publicly submitted, not merely to the Professors of the University, but to the learned in general, *examini eruditorum*, an Inaugural Dissertation, which had previously obtained the imprimatur of some one Professor, as

containing nothing which would be discreditable to the University. This dissertation the candidate was required publicly to defend before the Senatus Academicus on a day and hour published on the title-page of his dissertation. It was only after giving satisfaction at this public trial, that the degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred in due form by the Magister Principalis, in presence of the Senate.

These excellent fundamental laws have now been uniformly observed for near a century past. Some important changes have, indeed, during that period, been made by our Senatus Academicus on the original statutes. These changes have particularly been with regard to the curriculum of medical study required of every candidate before he can be received upon trial, and with regard to the length of time for which these academical studies must be continued prior to any examination. The Statuta Solennia at Edinburgh have increased the term of study at Universities, first from one to two, and afterwards from two to three winter-sessions. But all these alterations, Sir, they have made, like every other University, entirely by their own authority, and without the slightest challenge from any quarter whatever. No candid man, therefore, of common understanding, acquainted with undeniable facts respecting medical graduation at Edinburgh, can possibly entertain any doubt, either of the power of

the University for conferring literary honours, or for enacting the statutes by which these honours can alone be obtained.

The power of creating Doctors of Medicine, granted by Royal Charter to the University of Edinburgh, has been, every year, for near a century past, promulgated in the most public manner. The title page of every Inaugural Dissertation expressly bears, that the degree is conferred, "Amplissimi Senatus Academicæ consensu et nobilissimæ Facultatis Medicæ decreto." Of these Dissertations, with this title, more than 2000 have appeared since the Laws of our University required their publication. Of these Dissertations, for several years past, more than 100 annually have been delivered by the porter of the University to Dr Hamilton, as well as to every other Professor. How, then, is it possible, Sir, that he could be ignorant of those ties by which he is bound to support the rights of the University?

These rights, Sir, it is the duty of every honest Professor faithfully to protect. No Patron whatever,—neither the King, the principal Patron of the University of Edinburgh, as well as of every other University in Scotland,—the Town Council, the Patrons of many Professorships,—the Faculty of Advocates, or the Writers to the Signet, the Patrons of a few,—nor any other Patrons whatever, have, before the present occasion, attempted to invade the rights of the Senatus Academicus.

The Patrons of Universities have no more right to controul the power of the Senatus Academicus in conferring literary honours, than the Patrons of Churches have to controul the power of Presbyteries in licensing Preachers of the Gospel. Universities grant to their Doctors of Medicine, "Liberam plenamque potestatem Artem Medicam exercendi, docendi et quovis modo profitendi." Presbyteries grant to their Licentiates the right of preaching the Gospel, and of holding Benefices in the established Church. And the power, neither of the one nor of the other can be removed or controlled, unless by a solemn act of the Legislature.

Dr Hamilton, however, by means of the Memorial on your table, has had art enough to persuade the Town-Council to grant him a new commission, appointing him, not only Professor of Midwifery, but also of Medicine, and of the Diseases of Women and Children. Into this new Commission there can certainly be no objection to the introduction of the Diseases of Women and Children, although it be well known to every Professor, and must, I should think, be also well known to the Patrons, he has uniformly lectured on these diseases for more than twenty years past. This new Commission, with the apparent additional privilege, the Town-Council had an undoubted right to grant: but Dr Hamilton has been able to mislead the Patrons, so far as to get them to in-

troduce into his new Commission a privilege which they had no right whatever to grant. They have introduced a clause, giving him a power to examine Candidates for Degrees in Medicine. The examinations for Medical Degrees are fixed by our Statutes, which have been uniformly observed for near an hundred years past. By this clause, the Town-Council have manifestly usurped a power of altering our Statutes for graduation. This they have no right whatever to do. And, accordingly, by a late unanimous decision, respecting the Medical Graduations which are to take place in the years 1825, 1826, and 1827, you have resolved to consider this assumed power in the Town-Council as a mere dead letter. And when they have sent you a mandate, requiring you to rescind that resolution, you have unanimously resolved that it shall not be rescinded. Indeed, without a flagrant breach on your part, both of justice and of honour, you must continue your present Statuta, till every Student of Medicine, who has already matriculated by the insertion of his name in your Album, has had an opportunity of obtaining the degree of Doctor of Medicine on the same footing with the Graduates of former years.

Dr Hamilton, in his Memorial, remarkable for the suppression of truth, taking no notice whatever, either of your Royal Charter, of your Act of Parliament, or of your Inaugural Disser-

tations submitted every year to public examination, *eruditorum examini*, has artfully endeavoured to mislead the Town-Council by a partial representation of the opinion of a very able and upright Lawyer, Mr Baron HUME. When Baron HUME was one of our number, as Professor of Scots Law, anxious to avoid a disagreeable controversy between the Town-Council and the Senatus Academicus, he gave us a very cautious, and, in my opinion, a very timid advice. In that advice, Sir, he represented the power of the Town-Council, which, in the University of Edinburgh, is certainly very great, particularly in the administration of the College Funds, as being still greater than several of us imagined. And by means of his cautious advice, a disagreeable difference with our Patrons was at that time avoided.

But whether Baron HUME's opinion, as a lawyer, was right or wrong, it is in no degree applicable to the present occasion. Can Dr HAMILTON pretend to say, that Baron HUME has ever asserted, or even insinuated, that the Patrons either of this or of any other University, have the power either of creating Doctors of Medicine, or of enacting those laws by which they are to be created? Can Dr HAMILTON, artful as he has proved himself to be, dare to assert that Baron HUME has ever denied the power of the University of Edinburgh to confer the degree of Doctor

of Medicine, or to regulate those statutes by which it is to be obtained. That right, Sir, is as clearly established as it is possible for any chartered right to be; and Dr HAMILTON's Memorial, by which he has been able to persuade the Town-Council to attempt to usurp our chartered rights, is a flagrant breach both of his duty and his honour as a Professor: After what I have now stated, I have no hesitation in telling the Senatus Academicus, that I shall consider them also as having neglected their duty to the University, if they do not stigmatize this transgression as it justly deserves.

But, in this highly culpable Memorial, Dr HAMILTON, while attacking the chartered rights of the University, has, at the same time, presented to the Town-Council a false and calumnious attack against several of his brother Professors. To establish the great importance of Midwifery, as a branch of medicine, he has thought proper to depreciate almost every other branch of medical education. No man who, even in the slightest degree, possesses the love of science, can read what he has said either with respect to Botany or Chemistry, without astonishment. That such assertions could come from any Professor is truly wonderful. It is true, indeed, that those eminent Professors whose branches of science he has attacked, have repeatedly told you, in this room, that they hold all his calumnies in the highest

contempt; that they consider them as unworthy of contradiction; that they regard them as below notice or correction.

Perhaps I would have acted more prudently, and would have more consulted my own personal ease, by following their example, than by becoming a public accuser: For now, past the 80th year of my age, my labours must, in the course of nature, be soon terminated. But, as the oldest Professor in our University, I consider it as imperiously my duty to accuse Dr HAMILTON of having presented to the Patrons of our University a false and calumnious libel against the Institutions of Medicine, as a branch of medical education, and against me as the individual Professor by whom that branch is at present taught.

I do not think it necessary to enter into a detail of what he has said respecting the Institutions of Medicine, in a general way. It is sufficient to observe, that even the most ignorant or impudent empyric never treated the Theory or Philosophy of Medicine with greater contempt than he has done in this Memorial. Empyrics, indeed, have often asserted, that all theory in medicine is not only absurd, but pernicious. They contend that, by their infallible nostrums, their balm of Gilead, their essence of water-dock, or their elixir of life, they can cure every disease of every organ of the human body. They contend that, for a physician, anatomy is totally useless; that they can re-

move all diseases of the stomach, for example, without any knowledge of the function of digestion; nay, without knowing whether a man has as many stomachs as a horse. In Dr HAMILTON'S Memorial, which now lies upon your table, he has undeniably supported the same doctrine. He has represented the Institutions of Medicine, in the most explicit terms, as conveying no knowledge useful in the cure of diseases.

That an artful empyric, to promote his own pecuniary emolument, might hold this doctrine, is not wonderful. But that such a sentiment should ever have been put in print by Dr HAMILTON is truly astonishing. He cannot be ignorant that a knowledge of the anatomy and philosophy of the human frame is essentially necessary for the successful and safe removal of the diseases to which mankind are subjected. He cannot be ignorant, that, in the University of Edinburgh for many years past, the Professors of the Institutions of Medicine have taught three very important branches of medical science, Physiology, Pathology, and Therapeutics. Although he may despise the two first, as merely explaining the philosophy of the human body, and the nature of its diseases, yet he must allow that the third branch, the *Therapeia generalis*, is as intimately connected with the cure of every disease, as the *Therapeia specialis*, or Practice of Medicine, strictly so called.

In teaching the Practice of Medicine, the lecturer proceeds from descriptions of diseases to indications of cure; from indications to remedies. In the Therapeutics, the order is reversed. He proceeds from remedies to indications; from indications to diseases. Of this important branch of the Institutions of Medicine, I hold so high an opinion, that, at a very early period of my life, I made Therapeutics the subject of a particular course of Lectures at Edinburgh. The heads of these Lectures, Sir, were published in the year 1770, under the title of *Elements of Therapeutics*. And, although much has since been written on the *Methodus medendi generalis*, both at home and abroad, yet these Elements are still frequently quoted, with approbation, by zealous cultivators of medical science, anxious for the improvement of the healing art.

In the Lectures on the Institutions of Medicine, at present delivered in the University of Edinburgh, even Dr Hamilton will not dare to assert that this important branch of medical science is neglected. Since arriving, indeed, at a very advanced age, I have entirely relinquished it to my coadjutor Dr Alison. Confining my own lectures to what may strictly be called the Philosophy of Medicine, I have relinquished the *Therapeia generalis* entirely to him. Dr Alison has extended the therapeutics to a much greater length than was ever done before in the Univer-

sity of Edinburgh. Prior to his appointment, the therapeutical branch had necessarily less time allotted to it than its importance required. When introduced only, at the end of a long course of the philosophy of medicine, the Professor of Theory was unable to bestow upon it many lectures. But in the hands of Dr Alison it has been much more extensively considered than it was either by me or by any of my predecessors. In place of a few lectures at the end of the course, which were all that could formerly be allotted to it, he has, for two years past, bestowed on this important practical subject two lectures every week during the whole winter-session. And, when Dr Hamilton has asserted, that, from the present course of lectures on the Institutions of Medicine, a student can derive no knowledge which will aid him in the cure of diseases, it is impossible even for himself to deny, that the assertion is false and calumnious.

After having thus established Dr Hamilton's transgression, by his attack upon the undoubted rights of the University, and on the Institutions of Medicine, as a branch of the regular medical course of study at Edinburgh, it is perhaps unnecessary for me to go farther. But it is a duty which I owe to my own character, to accuse him also of a most unwarrantable attack upon me as an individual Professor. Not contented with representing the philosophy of medicine as a branch

much inferior in importance to the practice of midwifery, he has represented my assiduous labours in the University of Edinburgh, for more than thirty years, as altogether useless. This, in the Memorial now upon the table, he has asserted to the Town-Council, in the most explicit terms. The words are, " but he ventures to allege that students can derive from that individual Professor (Dr DUNCAN *senior*) no additional knowledge which can enable them to cure disease."

Than this, Sir, it is impossible for me to conceive a more unwarrantable, or a more calumnious attack. He asserts, in plain language, that all my labours in the University of Edinburgh, for more than thirty years, have been of no real use; and it follows, as an unavoidable conclusion, that I have been merely picking the pockets of the students, and consuming their time, with useless, nay, with pernicious theory.

That this assertion is false, I could prove by the testimony of many of the most respectable practitioners in Edinburgh. For I have now been so long a teacher of medicine, that most of them have attended my lectures; and I have received from many of them testimonies, both of a public and private nature, declaring the useful information which they obtained from hearing me.

But, without occupying the time of the Senatus Academicus with oral testimony, as a complete refutation of this highly injurious calumny,

I need only appeal to my printed Heads of Lectures, which I follow every session as a text book. These Heads of Lectures are now before the public, in a seventh edition. Every one of these editions will demonstrate, that I have uniformly connected the Physiology, or Philosophy of the human body, with the Pathology, or an account of the nature and cure of the diseases to which each part or function is subjected.

In every successive edition of my Heads of Lectures, I have endeavoured to improve the practical remarks in my Lectures, from extending the illustrations of the pathology, by additional observations on the cure of particular diseases; and I shall, I trust, be excused, though I take the liberty of mentioning an occurrence, flattering to myself, which has taken place this winter session. In illustrating the pathology of the blood, I lectured as usual on the prevention and cure of Sea-scurvy. A gentleman who has practised as a surgeon in the British Navy near twenty years, came to me after the lecture, and expressed great satisfaction with what he had heard; and he even expressed his regret, that he had not before been acquainted with some means of prevention which I had mentioned. He had not before heard of the successful employment of the *Cactus Tuna* or Kew Nopal, in the prevention of scorbutus among the Lascars in the East Indies. He, at the same time, informed me, of some means of preserving

the health of seamen, with which I was before unacquainted. He particularly told me of the advantages which he had derived from rubbing the decks in the most confined births, where the men have their hammocks, with hot sand. He has been so obliging as to promise, that he will send me his observations in writing on that subject. And if I shall deliver lectures on the Institutions of Medicine another winter-session, I trust I shall yet be able to communicate some additional knowledge in the cure of diseases, by his observations.

But it is altogether unnecessary to multiply instances, in which I give remarks on the prevention and cure of particular diseases. As I have already said, it is impossible for any candid or intelligent man to read my Heads of Lectures, without being satisfied that Dr HAMILTON'S assertion is both false and calumnious, and I trust the Senatus Academicus will consider it as their duty not to allow it to pass unpunished.

I cannot indeed say that I have sustained from this groundless calumny, any pecuniary injury. In the language of the Scots law, I *can qualify no damages*, for Dr Hamilton's calumnious assertions, although well known among our Medical Students, have had no influence in diminishing the number of my Pupils. About thirty years ago, when I began to Lecture on the Institutions of Medicine, the number of Students

matriculated for that branch of education, was, in general, between fifty and sixty, and that number was as great as had attended either of my eminent predecessors, Dr CULLEN, or Dr JAMES GREGORY. During this Winter Session, notwithstanding Dr HAMILTON's positive assertion, that, from me, no Student can derive any additional knowledge which may enable him to cure disease,—Two hundred and twenty-four Pupils have entered their names in their own handwriting, in my list.

Although, however, I have sustained no pecuniary loss from Dr HAMILTON's defamation of me and my Lectures, yet I have suffered an injury which has given me no inconsiderable distress. In the words of a celebrated poet, I may say, " He who steals my purse steals trash. But he who robs me of my good name, takes from me that which not enriches him, but makes me poor indeed." I have now, Sir, lived so long as a public character in Edinburgh, that I have met with much fulsome applause, and much groundless abuse. And from both, my feelings have, at different times, been much hurt. But I have never met with any applause or any abuse which has given me so much distress, as this single sentence from the pen of Dr HAMILTON. And at that distress you will not be surprised, when I mention to you three different circumstances immediately connected with it. In the *first* place, it is not only totally groundless, but is in direct opposition

to truth, as my Heads of Lectures must clearly demonstrate to every intelligent reader. In the *second* place, it came from a man, who had ample opportunities of being acquainted with the truth; and, *last* of all, this false calumny is asserted by a man, with whom I have lived on terms of intimacy and friendship, from the earliest period of his life, till he presented to our Patrons his singular Memorial. I had been not only his own friend, but his Father's friend, for more than thirty years, and that too in many trying situations. With his Father, from the time of our first acquaintance in early life, till the day of his death, I had lived on terms of cordial friendship. Is it, then, wonderful, Sir, that I felt much from the wound inflicted upon my character, by the Son of my intimate friend. That wound, Sir, has been inflicted by Dr HAMILTON without any provocation whatever on my part. What motives may have led him to this unjust attack upon me, I cannot pretend to guess. But, in the words of a celebrated poet, I may say, "Auri sacra fames quo non mortalia cogis pectora."

But the wound which Dr HAMILTON has given to my feelings, it is impossible for the Senatus Academicus to heal, by any punishment that they can inflict. And although I may forgive, yet while I retain any power of memory, it will be impossible for me to forget, the injury he has attempted to do to my character. Your sentence,

however, may perhaps be such as to afford me some solatium. In another court of long standing in this country, the Commissary Court, it is no uncommon sentence to direct the defamer to unsay his slander, and to compel him to acknowledge, " False Tongue, you have lied."

The Senatus Academicus may order something similar in the case of Dr HAMILTON, they may order him to sign a palinode, in the following, or somewhat similar terms.

" I hereby acknowledge, that I was guilty of a flagrant breach of duty to the University, when I applied to the Patrons to assume a power of interfering with the Laws of the University respecting Graduations. I also acknowledge, that my assertion in my Memorial, ' That the Students can derive from that individual Professor (meaning Dr DUNCAN *senior*), no additional knowledge which can enable them to cure disease,' is false and calumnious. I am sincerely sorry for these transgressions, and I humbly entreat forgiveness from the Senatus Academicus."

If Dr HAMILTON shall refuse this solatium, or any other which the Senatus Academicus may direct, his contumacy may be severely punished. For it is impossible for any Professor, acquainted with the rights of Scottish Universities, to deny that they have the undoubted power, not only of reprimanding delinquents, but of suspending and extruding from their Senate.

I shall not, however, presume farther to suggest what punishment our Senatus Academicus may inflict upon Dr HAMILTON, for the transgressions with which I have now charged him. I shall only conclude with observing, that I have demonstrated beyond the possibility of doubt, that different assertions contained in Dr HAMILTON's Memorial to the Town-Council are false and calumnious libels, not only upon me, as an individual Professor, and upon the class of the Institutions of Medicine, as a branch of medical education, long taught at our University, but upon the rights and privileges which the University of Edinburgh has uninterruptedly enjoyed, ever since they were established by Royal Charter, and which every other University in Scotland does enjoy. I leave it therefore to the wisdom and justice of the Senatus Academicus, after due consideration of what I have now stated, and after hearing what Dr HAMILTON may offer in his own defence, to inflict such punishment as they think right.

APPENDIX.

Soon after Dr Duncan sen. *received from Dr Hamilton, a printed copy of his Memorial to the Town-Council, the undisputed Patrons of the University, he wrote to Dr Hamilton a friendly letter, earnestly recommending it to him to withdraw that highly reprehensible Memorial. To that letter he received the following answer.*

Edinburgh, 23. *St Andrew's Square,*
January 19. 1824.

My Dear Doctor,

I have had many proofs of your kind and friendly wishes towards me, and I take the earliest opportunity of thanking you for your obliging hint, received by this night's post.

The reasonableness of my claim rests on public opinion, and as to the legality of the interference of the Patrons of the College, that must be settled between them and the Senatus Academicus. It will require some ingenuity, on the part of the Medical Faculty, to

shew good cause against what common sense dictates, and I am quite ready to meet the Faculty on that point.

At any rate, you may be well assured that I cannot take amiss any difference of opinion which I am sorry to find exists between us, on this subject.

And believe me to be ever,

With true cordiality,

Your obliged friend,

(Signed) JAMES HAMILTON *jun.*

P. S.—I send you a copy of the Memorial, which is to be most extensively circulated.

From this letter it will appear, that no regard whatever was paid to Dr DUNCAN'S advice. And, after this honest endeavour had failed, in order to prevent Students from being misled, with regard to the Institutions of Medicine, he has, on different occasions, when illustrating the Pathology of particular diseases, by practical remarks, alluded in his Lectures to Dr HAMILTON'S calumnious assertions. With the view of preventing inaccurate reports, he has put into the hands of his Pupils in print what he has said on some diseases, as will appear from the following documents.

I.

As Dr DUNCAN sen. *has been informed that some observations which he made in his Lecture on the Pathology of Respiration, on the* 31*st of March* 1824, *have been incorrectly reported by some of his hearers, he has judged it advisable to put them in print, in the words in which they were actually delivered.*

Beginning of the Lecture.

" GENTLEMEN,

" In treating of the Pathology of Respiration, I have already given some view of the morbid conditions to which that function is subjected. I come next to speak of the causes by which these morbid states are produced, and of the remedies by which they are to be combated.

" In the *Institutiones Pathologiæ* of Dr GAUBIUS, a work I have often recommended to your attention, you will find a very full enumeration of the causes of difficult Respiration; but they are not arranged in an order which serves to point out the general principles upon which they operate. These causes, however, have been judiciously arranged by my eminent predecessor in this Chair Dr CULLEN, who has thrown them into the form of a table. From this table, the view which I now propose to give, is almost entirely taken.

" In the arrangement, which you will find printed in my Heads of Lectures, I have, indeed, made some few inconsiderable alterations from Dr CULLEN'S plan. In these, my sole object has been to render that view somewhat more simple; perhaps, however, at the expence of rendering it less complete. To compensate this, I

have also reprinted, in my Heads of Lectures, at full length, the tabular view of the causes of difficult Respiration, given by Dr CULLEN to his Students in 1768; and I hope you will bestow upon it an attentive consideration in private. But in the remarks now to be offered, I shall follow the arrangement which, in these Heads of Lectures, I have subjoined to that of Dr CULLEN."

Conclusion of the Lecture.

" I have thus endeavoured, Gentlemen, to give a general view of the principal diseased states which occur in the vital function of Respiration, to enumerate the causes chiefly affecting a function so essential to life, and to point out the general principles upon which these affections may be most successfully combated. I would fain hope, that the view I have given may serve to communicate to you some knowledge of the pathology of this function, a proper acquaintance with which is unquestionably of great importance in the practice of medicine. For, in determining the proper remedies to be employed in combating some of the most dangerous diseases to which the human species are subjected, every rational Physician must be much directed by the Respiration as well as the Circulation,—by the breathing as well as by the pulse. And he who has ventured to assert in print, that, from the Lectures on the Institutions of Medicine, given at the University of Edinburgh, *a Student can derive no knowledge which may enable him to cure diseases*, has proclaimed himself to be, either an ignorant empiric, or an arrogant impostor."

II.

As the Observations with which Dr DUNCAN sen. *concluded his Lectures on the subject of the Human Blood, delivered during his Winter Course on the Institutions of Medicine, at Edinburgh, on the* 15*th December* 1824, *may perhaps be incorrectly reported by some of his hearers, he has thought it right to put them in print, in the words in which they were delivered by him, that each of his Students may be enabled to give a fair report of them.*

" WITH these interesting facts, Gentlemen, respecting the treatment of Fevers, I conclude my Observations on the Blood, and some of you may perhaps imagine, that I have extended them to too great a length. But, for my own part, I am convinced that the remarks I have offered on the chief fluid of the body, have not occupied more time than the importance of the subject well deserves; for no portion of the Human System demands more minute consideration. I would not, indeed, go so far as the illustrious Dr HARVEY has done. For he has said, " *Sanguinem esse partem genitalem, fontem vitæ, primum vivens, ultimum moriens.*" But no one can doubt that the blood, circulating through every organ of the body, gives support and vitality to every part. And, with regard to the Pathology of the Blood, it is not more certain that it exists in the body, than that different morbid states, to which it is subjected, are intimately connected with many of the most dangerous diseases to which the human race are subjected.

" From this unquestionable truth I have been led to illustrate the Pathology of the Blood by practical re-

marks on three very dangerous diseases, Scorbutus, Hæmorrhœa, and Febris. When treating of the cure of these diseases, I have presented you with the fruits of my own observations in an extensive practice of Medicine, for more than fifty years; and, during that long period, I have had an opportunity of conducting the cure of diseases in different situations and in different climates. For although, during the greater part of my active life, I have been a medical practitioner in Edinburgh, yet I have had an opportunity of practising the healing art in three different quarters of the world, not only in Europe, but also both in Asia and in Africa.

" In communicating, however, to my hearers in this room, knowledge which may aid them in the cure of diseases, I have, in another way, done more than any Professor can be supposed to do from his own experience, however extensive, however judicious, however attentive. I have given you, although a concise, yet, I trust, a faithful account of all the most important practical discoveries which have lately been published respecting the three diseases I have mentioned, particularly Scorbutus; with regard to which, such interesting improvements, in the way of prevention, have lately been made, that Sea-scurvy is now almost banished from the British Navy, even during the longest voyages.

" From extensive reading, and deliberate study, I have been enabled to communicate to my students much useful practical knowledge, which, without very ready access to books, and without much time and serious reflection, they could not have obtained from the original authors by whom it has been published.

" I leave you, therefore, to judge, with what regard to truth it has lately been asserted, by one of my colleagues in this University, and even in print, that, from me *as an individual Professor, students can derive no*

additional knowledge which may enable them to cure Disease. I confidently trust, Gentlemen, that your report to your Fellow-Students, founded on what you have heard in this room, will afford ample evidence that this assertion, with regard to my Lectures, is as false as it is calumnious. And I flatter myself you will be able to tell, that, though now an Octogenarian, I can still communicate to my hearers much knowledge which may be useful in the cure of diseases."