

An introductory address delivered at the Charing Cross Hospital Medical College, October 1, 1857 / by Edwin Canton.

Contributors

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4
D. Gibb
with Canton's best regards

AN

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

CHARING CROSS HOSPITAL

Medical College,


OCTOBER 1, 1857.

BY EDWIN CANTON, F.R.C.S.

Surgeon to the Hospital.

[PRINTED BY REQUEST.]

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INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,—Nearly twenty years have elapsed since it became my lot to listen in this Hospital to an Address introductory to the commencement of a first Medical Session, and I can well remember the anxiety with which I received the advice then offered, and which was to be my guiding star for future progress along a professional pathway. My memory is yet retentive of the fears I entertained; the resolutions I formed; the hopes I nourished, and the responsible duties I felt that I was about to undertake. Among my hearers are doubtless many who are equally novitiates in medicine:—whose hopes and fears are yet young; the strength of whose resolutions has yet to be tested, and who cannot but feel, withal, the lofty mission they are now called upon to fulfil in the endeavour to render themselves masters of that noble attribute—the healing art.

The career which you are on the eve of commencing may be looked upon as a new era in your existence; you are about to set aside pursuits which have characterized your boyhood, and to undertake the responsible duty of devoting three

years to the attentive study of subjects which will require, for their mastery, all the acumen you are possessed of,—all the diligence you can bestow on them. The choice of a profession has, doubtless, been a matter of grave and anxious deliberation with your friends, and they have selected one of which you will hereafter be justly proud—one, to which the longer you are spared, the more you will become attached,—a profession which, whilst it places you amongst the ranks of the learned, should bring into exercise the better feelings of your nature in kindly ministration to the sick, as your acquired skill seeks to relieve suffering, restore health, and sustain life.

I propose to place before you, in review, those various branches of knowledge with which you will have to become acquainted ere you will be justified in undertaking the responsible office of a medical practitioner, and at the onset of your studies I would remind you that you must become thoroughly acquainted with the human body in a state of health, before you can hope, adequately, to comprehend its condition in a state of disease or to readjust the balance which is disturbed. To the sciences of Anatomy and Physiology you will have to pay particular attention. The object of the former, in its most extended sense, is to ascertain and make known the structure of organized bodies. Physiology is the science which treats of the con-

ditions, phenomena, and laws of life. By the study of these subjects you are, as it were, arranging the foundation-work, whereon is to be reared the superstructure of the Art and Science of Medicine.

Too great stress cannot be laid upon the value of an acquaintance with Anatomy, both to the Physician and the Surgeon. It must be confessed, however, that from the latter is required a larger share of knowledge on this subject than from the former; inasmuch as the Surgeon has frequently to deal with disease by operation, in which minutiae are implicated and which the Physician is never called upon so to treat; nevertheless it is incumbent on the Physician to be acquainted with many details, that he may comprehend the relative position of contiguous parts and the intimate connexion existing between remote organs, in order to determine the particular seat of the affection he is required to attend to. The Surgeon may be suddenly called to tie a bleeding artery; set a fracture or reduce a dislocation, for all of which he is at once prepared, mainly, through his knowledge of Anatomy:—the Physician undertakes the treatment of a case of measles, rheumatism, or fever; and, though his acquaintance with anatomy may here seem to be of little value, we must remember that in the complications and sequelæ of these complaints, his anatomical requirements will be brought into requisition. Without multiplying illustrations, I

would say that whichever course of practice you may hereafter select, an acquaintance with the structure and arrangements of the human body is highly essential; and you must bear in mind that though I have adopted for a moment the conventional but arbitrary division, in speaking of the Surgeon and Physician as separate entities, you should leave the scene of your studies fully prepared to enter upon practice under either title, and especially make yourselves perfectly competent to combine the duties of both. Of the intimate connexion between the practice of Surgery and that of Medicine I shall have hereafter to speak.

In the study of Anatomy you will be required to devote a large share of your time to the Dissecting-room; your labours here may be compared to that practical information which, in the study of Medicine, you obtain at the bedside of the patient; with both, books will teach you much, *vivâ voce* instruction will teach you more; but your own investigation will teach you most; and though from the practical study of Anatomy the mind may at first, instinctively, shrink with repugnance, it will be found, nevertheless, to be a pursuit fraught with high interest as it is also one of paramount importance, and you will speedily find yourselves busily and eagerly investigating a work replete with exquisite design, curious contrivance, mechanical arrangements, and marvellous adaptation of

means to end,—a masterpiece from that omnipotent source whence all that emanates is perfect. With what truthfulness may we exclaim :—

“How complicate—how wonderful is man !

How passing wonder he that made him such !”

In connexion with the study of Anatomy and Physiology you should make yourselves proficient in a knowledge of Chemistry, and through this source learn the composition of those textures you have been at so much pains to disclose. Your physiological inquiries call largely, also, upon the aid of this science, and an attempt to elucidate the functions of the various organs of the body were vain without it. In your investigation, also, of those substances with which disease is to be treated, you will find that an acquaintance with Chemistry is highly essential ; and, lastly, as well-educated practitioners, no small share of information on this science will, on all hands, be expected from you, and in relation to subjects wholly irrelevant to Medicine.

In rendering yourselves conversant with the structure and functions of the body in a state of health, you will have at the same time to study that deviation from it which is termed *disease*, and likewise those remedial agents which are employed for alleviation and cure. The Art and Science of Medicine are divisible into the knowledge and

treatment of disease as it affects either the interior or the exterior of the body, and a distinction is hence made between the practice of Medicine which applies to the former, and to that of Surgery which embraces the latter. These two subjects will have to be studied by attendance on Lectures, and by personal observation. Surgery presenting you with so much which is appreciable to the touch, so much which immediately meets the eye, so much that has a direct bearing upon Anatomy which you are at the same time studying, is that branch which is most frequently attended to by students, to the neglect, in a great measure often, of the due pursuit of a knowledge of Medicine. There exists, however, such a close relationship between the two that it is often impossible to say whether the case belongs to the Surgeon or the Physician,—the fact is, it may belong to both of them,—or, in other words, you should be equally prepared to treat it surgically and medically. For example, erysipelas may attack the head and face, and as an external affection require certain local applications; but, its cause may lie within the body, and internal remedies are necessary to aid in removing it. Again, a person in falling fractures his ribs, and is consigned to surgical care; but inflammation of the lung or its envelope supervening, the case, as far as the secondary affection is concerned, should fall under medical treatment, when the Surgeon,

through his knowledge of internal disease, directs the appropriate means of cure, and the complaint is subdued. In the first quoted instance, the cause is within—the effect without; in the second, the cause is external—the effect internal; in both, cause and effect are co-existent, and in the treatment of both, Medicine and Surgery must co-operate. It would seem, at a superficial glance, that the Surgeon had to practise his art, in many instances, without a knowledge of Medicine being called into requisition—for instance, in the removal of a limb, the reduction of a dislocation, or the adjustment of a fracture; nevertheless, in either case, irritative fever may supervene, constitutional remedies are required, the aid of medical assistance is imperatively called for. I would wish to impress on you the importance of devoting considerable attention to the study of the practice of medicine, however strong your predilection may be for the pursuit of that of Surgery. Remember always how intimately these sciences are blended, nor think, as Surgeons, you can operate successfully on the Gordian knot which connects them.

An acquaintance with the structure and functions of the body in health and a knowledge of the diseases to which that body is subject were comparatively useless, did we not make ourselves familiar with the substances to be employed as curative agents under the title of *Materia Medica*.

The various physical, chemical, and therapeutical qualities of these you will be taught in Lectures, and in the wards of the Hospital you will have the opportunity of judging of their stated efficacy. Your information on the subject should be perfect, so that you may be fully prepared to determine how far the praises bestowed on a remedy are justified by its effects—how far collateral circumstances may have influenced those effects—how far you should assign to Nature the part she has played in the cure. I would add, that though you shall have become perfectly conversant with the *Materia Medica*, remember that disease, however formidable, is frequently to be treated by most simple remedies; and an extensive and curious combination of drugs, involving the outlay of a lengthy and learned prescription, whilst it displays your intimate acquaintance with medicinal substances, may demonstrate, at the same time, your profound ignorance of the complaint for which they are intended. On the other hand, it must always be borne in mind, that the union of medicines is often highly advantageous, and, indeed, in many instances, absolutely necessary; nevertheless, the elaborate intermixture of drugs sometimes lays the prescriber open to the suspicion of aiming at a mark which he imperfectly describes, but which one or other of his many missiles, perchance, may reach.

Closely allied to the subject of which I have

just spoken is the study of Botany—a branch of medical knowledge too generally neglected by students. In speaking of your chemical pursuits, I have said you will learn more than is actually required of you as medical men; but not more than is expected from you as well informed practitioners. With respect to your acquirements in Botany, the same observation will apply; and let me remind you, in addition, that should you practise your profession in the country, you will sometimes be expected to display a knowledge of botany, lacking which you may be considered, even though unjustly, ignorant of still more important and strictly professional matters.

Having mastered the subject, as it bears upon Medicine, you should pursue it as an instructive, an elegant, and pleasing recreation, for

Not a tree,

A leaf, a flower but contains

A folio volume. We may read and read

And read again, and still find something new,

Something to please and something to instruct—

Even in the humble weed!

In after years some of our most pleasurable recollections we find associated with that period of life when youth is merging into manhood, and the care-worn practitioner of medicine still looks fondly back to those days when arduous studies occupied his thoughts, and time was counted only by the

knowledge gained. With these will memory recall his teachers of the past,—the words of experience sound once again in his ears, and in mental vision, he once more sees his kind instructors. In realizing this sketch hereafter, you will recognise one who, in bygone days, I have here listened to,—a teacher to whom you also will find yourselves indebted for much of that information which will be required of you in the lying-in chamber. Here a weighty charge is undertaken by the medical man—a double responsibility is incurred in the committal of two lives to his skill; and often does it happen not only that his knowledge must be sound, but his tact, fortitude, humanity, and forbearance should be unimpeachable. The delay of a few minutes only may be the harbinger of death, whilst promptitude and prescience might recall a fleeting life. Consider then for a moment how large should be the share of attention devoted to the subject of Obstetrics, and how complete should be your acquaintance with its details, that you may honestly enter upon the fulfilment of the important trust confided to you.

There is yet one other study to allude to in which you will have to engage—one embracing all those I have previously spoken of—and is a study of the greatest importance. I refer to Forensic medicine. Unhappily, the last few years have furnished us with striking instances wherein medical evidence

has been called for at judicial inquiries, and you must all have observed with what inquisitive acumen the knowledge of the medical witness is searched into by those empowered to scrutinize; and when it is remembered that on your dictum may often depend the life of your fellow-man, I feel confident that I need not say more in recommending the subject of medical jurisprudence to your serious consideration, and would assure you that in proportion to the attention you have paid to your other studies, so will be the success attending your pursuit of this particular one.

I have thus passed in review all those branches of information with which you have to become acquainted, and would now wish to impress you with the inestimable value of that knowledge which is to be obtained at the bedside of sickness. It is here you will be called upon to watch the progress of disease; to study, from the life, those symptoms which accompany the malady; to note those especial features which constitute the 'essentials' for diagnosis, and with scrupulous care to consider the action of remedies. The information to be here obtained will prove invaluable: no book-knowledge can compete with,—no hypothesis stand in place of,—no reasoning supersede it.

I have yet to speak of the value of notes taken at lecture—let me here offer a few remarks in reference to clinical notes. Many are proud, and

justly so, of their memoranda collected from a description of disease in the class-room : how few can boast of their notes taken from the inspection of disease itself in the sick-ward ! the former are as imperfect sketches made from a good copy,—the latter a portrait completed from the original itself. I would strongly advise you then to adopt, as a habit, the plan of making written observations of disease, and let your notes be at first brief but explicit : increase of experience will confer facility of expression, which time and observation will enable you to correct and amplify, whilst a steady perseverance in this system will, ultimately, find you in possession of a large body of well-recorded facts and cases, which have, as it were, been insensibly transferred to mental tablets, and a store of practical information thus been amassed which will bring with it, hereafter, a just claim to the proud distinction of a skilful practitioner.

It is at the bedside of sickness you will have anxiously to mark the ravages of disease, the torments of pain and their quiet subsidence into the calm slumber of death ; and it must sometimes be your lot to witness the heart-rending grief of bereaved relatives, to see an only parent snatched from her tender offspring, or, to watch the deep distress of devoted friendship. These are amongst the painful duties you will be called upon to perform—these the gloomy scenes you must

sometimes encounter. But let me now reverse the picture, and paint with brighter tints a happier sketch. By your knowledge may be averted the threatenings of disease, by your judgment may be controlled the raging malady, and by your skill may life be preserved. Then is it you will participate in the joy which you have been the means—though but the humble instrument only—of diffusing; then is it that you will congratulate yourselves on having so profitably employed the time allotted you whilst fulfilling the probationary duties of students of medicine; and he who hereafter, on sufficient evidence, is convinced that he has been the instrument of rescuing from death and restoring to health a human being, cannot but feel that he has performed a service beyond all recompence. On the contrary, although it be a painful duty to watch over incurable disease, yet is that a most consolatory and acceptable service to the patient which is employed in diminishing his sufferings. Even on this almost hopeless subject, it is enough to say, in the words of the justly celebrated Dr. Hunter:—‘Though the cure of disease be the first object of your profession, the knowledge of incurable complaints is of much importance to humanity, particularly in restraining us from bleeding, blistering, purging, vomiting, cutting issues, applying caustics, &c., in a word, torturing a miserable human creature.’ But, it is

to be remarked besides, that it is not enough to refrain from inflicting pain where there can be no compensation for it, for we must soothe and mitigate the evil which *Nature* does not, and *Art* cannot cure.

Before quitting the subject of clinical observation, I would yet make a few remarks on the investigation of disease, and, in the first place, remind you that on your mode of making inquiries much will depend, for the amount of information elicited may often be measured by the manner in which it is sought; and bear in remembrance that from the uninterrupted prattle of childhood, or the tedious loquacity of age, you may frequently glean facts as important to be known for the welfare of your patient, as may with greater readiness be gathered from more thoughtful years. By kindly consideration, too, much may be accomplished; and we should never forget that in the treatment of the sick in hospital, we have not only to combat with illness, but attack it in the formidable garb of associated poverty. Disease and want are in league to destroy—skill and kindness should combine to preserve.

Furthermore, let me advise you in respect of your deportment during the investigation of disease: for some patients you will have to attend are sanguine with hope when their complaint is lingering and hopeless; others are gloomy with despair when

their malady is slight and curable; some are fanciful and deceptive, others self-willed and intractable; some do all things to favour their recovery, others everything to retard it; and it should hence be the province of the medical man, not only to study disease in its various forms, but to mark with them the mind's operation in its different phases; for there is often to be detected an intimate relationship existing between the two, and he who ministers to the condition of the one whilst attending to the state of the other, will frequently do more for the relief of his patient than the practitioner who loses sight of, or is regardless of, this important connexion. In your attendance upon the sick you should be cheerful, though not frivolous; attentive, though not obtrusive, and determined, but not ungentle; and you may oftentimes do as much by thus instilling a confident reliance, as by directing an appropriate medicine.

From lectures you will learn much, but verbal instruction can never supersede personal investigation. Facts like those I have just alluded to may make but a transient impression when merely told to you, and it is only your own observation that will fix them indelibly in your minds, and there stamp them with a value which in after life will be fully appreciated when called to the bedside of your patient to test it.

Contrast for a moment the medical neophyte, whose knowledge of disease has been gleaned chiefly from books, with him who has carefully studied it from life: watch them over the sick-couch—the one as anxious as the other to relieve the sufferer, but the former is talkative, theoretical, and comparatively ignorant, whilst the latter is observant, reflective, and eminently practical. With one a life may be sacrificed to book-learning, with the other preserved through clinical knowledge. It is not, however, solely from study at the bedside of the patient you are to anticipate that rich harvest of success which I hope all will reap. Remember, the soil must be prepared, the seed must be sown, and it is by diligent attendance only on lectures, previously, that these ends will be accomplished, and with the further care I have advised you, the crop will be plentiful.

You are about to enter upon your various studies at what may be termed a small hospital—let me speak of it, also, as I have known it from my days of pupilage till now, a *multum in parvo*. In outward capaciousness it may diminish before the extent of similar institutions; but, from the observation of years, I will confidently say that in internal capacity for instruction it yields to none. You will find that you can never profit, at one time,

by more than a small proportion of that information which is here laid open to you ; but you may notice elsewhere that when still more is proffered, still less will not unfrequently be attended to. Better is it always to endeavour to obtain a competent knowledge of a few diseases at a time, than to possess a superficial and fleeting insight into many ; you will find that the subjects which demand your investigation, though somewhat numerous, may be mastered by deliberation and care, and the information thus acquired, though of slow growth, will be deeply-rooted. No sudden resolves or quick actions, as a general rule, are commendable ; safer is it to travel along the equable path of learning with measured pace and becoming confidence, than to rush headlong to the goal with hasty step and overweening reliance ; remember the fable of the tortoise and the hare—adopt the motto ‘*Festina lente.*’ I would advise you to enter upon your studies with a determined resolution to pursue them in the manner they have been commenced—a manner to be characterized by patience and perseverance, but lacking that injudicious ardour which would o’erleap difficulties at a bound, and seize upon knowledge at a grasp ; such undue efforts are profitless and enervating, the mind’s power fails under the exertion, and apathy, usurping the place of anxiety, becomes mated with ignorance.

With the talented author of *Proverbial Philosophy*,
I would say :—

Let the cool streams of prudence temper the hot-springs
of zeal,
So shalt thou gain the honourable end, nor lose the
midway prize,
So shall thy life be useful and thy young hearts happy.

I may yet devote a few words only to remind you of the necessity of not losing sight of that classical knowledge which you have acquired before entering into your medical studies, and which will be found indispensable to the perfection of the education of the professional man, qualifying him to mix with advantage with the members of the sister professions. His patients are men of every rank and phase of human life—both rich and poor, learned and unlearned, noble and ignoble, look up to him, not only as an adviser when suffering under the inroads of disease, but as a friend whom they may consult in every emergency, unconnected with professional attendance, which may arise. How important a point is it, then, to make a favourable impression on the patient, to gain his good-will and thus to accelerate his cure. With the scholar, for instance, what so likely to interest him when bodily affliction weighs down his spirit as the consciousness that he is attended by one who is capable of appreciating the works of those whose labours have formed his consolation by day, and have exercised their influence over his

waking dreams by night? Probably the very intensity of his application may have given rise to the symptoms, the removal of which calls for the aid of the medical attendant; his spirit, as is often the case with men of genius and superior attainments, may be too powerful for his bodily frame, the casket too frail for the precious gem within: and who so capable of ministering to the *mind diseased* as he who has slaked his thirst at the same classic fount, and thus rendered himself keenly alive to the more hidden points of diagnosis than one who has never felt the burning zeal which kindles in the breast of the student whose researches after knowledge are but too likely to render him indifferent to the preservation of his bodily health? Nor is this a visionary idea; it is formed upon a knowledge of the sympathies of human nature which always yearn towards men of kindred pursuits; and it is a principle of action which will often effect more to render medical treatment successful, by operating on the mind, than will the skilful exhibition of drugs by one who is not possessed of this master-key to the hidden springs of the human heart.

It must not be imagined that I am unadvisedly advocating the necessity for indulgence in these collateral pursuits, when the medical studies which are more especially to occupy your attention might be considered, in themselves, sufficient to engross

the whole term of your pupilage. Be sure there is still a surplus of time which may be thus advantageously disposed of. With the learned and indefatigable Dr. Adam Clarke I may say, 'Never suffer your energies to stagnate. The old adage of too many irons in the fire conveys an abominable error. You cannot have too many—poker, tongs, and all: keep them all a-going.'

It has occurred to me, frequently, to notice that many are prone to pay particular attention to certain studies to the comparative neglect of others, and also to lay too great stress on minute details in the features of disease, to the exclusion of those broad characteristics which often more especially mark the malady; and, whilst we should never neglect a single sign that may be corroborative, we may, withal, indulge in minutiae to such an extent that we at last form a diagnosis from almost a single symptom. He who has more especially devoted himself to chemistry will analyse the sputum, test the urine, and look with the curious eye of a Liebig into the dejections, and believe, mainly from the results, that he has obtained a competent knowledge of a disease which the hard working student in *Materia Medica* and Pharmacy thinks can be only treated by a curious combination of drugs, oft-changed medicines, or heroic remedies. He who has applied himself more particularly to the study of Anatomy and Physiology

will fancy that he can point out the seat and actually localize the extent of mischief, and in reasoning upon normal function may forget the peculiarities of diseased action; but he must seek the aid of the pathologist and morbid anatomist before he can hope, successfully, to comprehend the complaint, whilst those who principally study diseased structure and semeiology will find themselves as much in fault at the bedside as either of their *confrères*. 'In such an extensive science as Medicine, so multifarious in its objects, much care is requisite that no undue preponderance be permitted to any one of its numerous branches to the neglect or exclusion of the rest. But it is a matter of notoriety that there exists in the minds of most men a bias to the pursuits of some of its component parts in preference to others. This disposition, especially in prosecuting our early studies, requires to be carefully watched and cautiously regulated, lest the views of the science, as a whole, and the relative value of its auxiliary branches, should be partial and limited, and not sufficiently extensive or comprehensive to qualify the students for successful practitioners.' These latter remarks were amongst the earliest I myself had the gratification of hearing in this theatre, and after the lapse of years I feel them to be the impressive words of extended experience, an emanation from one who had seen and observed

much, read and thought more, spoke always with caution, acted invariably with kindness, and knowing well, instructed wisely. I allude to my esteemed teacher, Dr. Shearman.

It is only by a combined acquaintance with the varied branches of knowledge which I have spoken of, that you may hope to succeed in unravelling the intricate nature of disease, and determining its most judicious mode of treatment; but bear in recollection, that though your hands may have become well-tutored to act, and your minds well-trained to direct, you may in many cases do most good by doing comparatively nothing. This seemingly homœopathic advice calls for an explanation. Nature, uninterfered with in her operations, works in her own inscrutable manner to restore the lost adjustment in the balance of health, whether of the body generally, or a portion of it only, and we must often be careful how we interfere and trench upon her ways. I would thus illustrate my meaning. Whilst a large portion of bone is separating after an injury, to be cast off as a dead and useless mass, we find the processes for its detachment are in gradual and sure progress. We watch these efforts with interest, and with the case constantly before us and doing the best for it, we do—comparatively nothing. But, on the other hand, should the surgeon endeavour to expedite the work by meddlesome manipulation whilst all is pro-

ceeding favourably,—these processes, in place of being accelerated, are arrested; irritative fever is set up, and the life even of the patient may be in danger, and we are now called upon to quench the fire we have kindled, in order to allow Nature once again to pursue her steady course, and accomplish her own ends by her own means.

After a time, however, it may happen, from the long continuance of the complaint, that the health of the patient has become undermined, when, judging from the fast-failing strength that Nature is unequal to the work before her, the surgeon becomes as active as he had been previously observant only, and by his now judicious interference, the source of mischief is removed, and the limb and life of the patient are preserved. This is a fair example, amongst many which might be adduced, of the advantage of doing for a disease at one time but comparatively nothing, and at another period of its progress effecting all that your knowledge of the art and science of Medicine can accomplish.

It is imperatively necessary, then, that you should have diligently studied your profession to be enabled to determine, in the *first place*, the exact nature of the malady; *secondly*, when assistance is ill-timed, and when it is required; and *thirdly*, the best manner in which that assistance can be afforded. You have, Gentlemen, nearly three years allotted you to solve these problems in, and

it is he only who masters their difficulty, that will become the truly qualified practitioner.

I have already remarked that much of your time will have to be consumed in attendance upon lectures, which may be regarded as the steps by which you ascend to the sick chamber. I would here enjoin you to observe punctuality and regularity. The hours bring with them appointments which, duly keeping, you will, on the one hand, be acquiring a habit which in after-life will prove a high recommendation, and, on the other, be amassing that large amount of knowledge which it should be your pride and pleasure to possess. Your entrance at a lecture commenced is an annoyance to the teacher, an interruption to the studious, and an act of injustice to yourselves. The time allotted you for these studies is all too short for an extravagant waste of it. During lecture-hour, let attention, observation, and reflection be your constant guides, and whilst profitably employing the fleeting time, be sure that this dawning assiduity is the fair herald of a meridian sunshine of success. Levity of manner and habitual frivolity bespeak instability of purpose and littleness of mind:—they are the ignoble parents of a *triplet* offspring—negligence, ignorance, and want.

In each class examinations are not unfrequently held; these I would particularly recommend you not only to be present at, but to join in. It is

here that you will have the opportunity of judging of the knowledge you have already acquired, or of estimating the deficiency you have still to supply. It is at an examination that the industrious are brought to light, whilst the idle remain in self-creating obscurity. At these ordeals the intelligent reply, whilst the boastful are dumb, and little are to be envied the feelings of that student who can quit the scene of his silence with a pleasantry on his tongue—without annoyance at his heart.

It is often a question with you how far the plan of taking notes at a lecture is an advisable one; each of your teachers may entertain peculiar views on this point, and they will be explained to you in due course; but, in speaking generally, I would say that there are some subjects of which copious notes may advantageously be taken, and others where you will do well to avoid the practice altogether. For example, in some lectures particular cases which have fallen under the care of your teachers are adduced as apt illustrations; facts brought forward are treated of in an original and simplified manner, and observations will often be made as the result of personal experience,—of any such I would say, with a well-known authority, ‘when found, make a note of it.’ But there are other lectures whereat you can dispense with this plan altogether, and in listening only, observe well the experiment, the diagram, or the dissection.

Part of your evening employment should be invariably to re-write your notes, and, memory permitting, to amplify them; they will then serve your present purpose, and be valuable hereafter;—neglecting this advice, they will be evidence merely of your attendance on lectures, but no proof of the extent to which you have profited by them. In pursuing your studies, then, let earnestness of purpose be the main characteristic, for, as Sydney Smith has truly observed, ‘There is nothing so horrible as languid study, when you sit looking at the clock, wishing the time was over, or, that somebody would call on you and put you out of your misery. The only way to read is to read so heartily that dinner-time comes two hours before you expected it. This is the only kind of study which is not tiresome, and almost the only kind which is not useless; this is the knowledge which gets into the system, and which a man carries about and uses like his limbs, without perceiving that it is extraneous, weighty, or inconvenient.’

In conclusion, I would remark that there are two objects which, during your career as students of medicine, should form your mainspring of action,—anxiety for the present and solicitude for the future: a steady perseverance in the one, will secure to you ultimate success in the other. A resolution bent on overcoming obstacles argues a mind steeled

against difficulty, encased in the armour of reliance, and calmly confident in its shield of security. Strength of mind, however, it must be borne in remembrance, constitutes, as it were, the ammunition for the resistance of attack from without, and you must be ever on the alert to recruit a failing stock, so as successfully to countervail outward opposition, direct decision against difficulty, and meet resistance with resolution. At the onset of your medical career, Timidity—the feeble offspring of Anxiety—may oppose a barrier to your progress, and impede that journey you have to undertake along the pathway of knowledge, which should be at once trodden with firm footstep and hopeful heart—for the difficulties that scare you are but shadows,—the further you proceed, the less rugged the track—the nearer the goal, the more glittering the prize. The journey-end of your pupilage will be rewarded with that becoming satisfaction which engenders reliance on self, has sprung from merit, and been fostered to maturity by perseverance.

You may then look back upon the past with pleasure, towards the future with hope. Bear also in mind that it is not you alone who will feel the pleasure of this well-merited success; from many a tongue will flow the words of gratulation and approval; many a heart will bound with pride at the joyous tidings, and, above all, your return to home

will be greeted with the glowing reward of increased affection, when, with honest satisfaction, you resign the trust so confidently reposed in you,—proudly feeling that you have neither squandered prodigally your time, nor lavished unprofitably—it may be—the hard-earned means of an anxious parent.

THE END.

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