

[Printed letter of application for the Chair of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh] / John Struthers.

Contributors

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND HONOURABLE

THE

Curators of the University of Edinburgh.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN,

March 16, 1867.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg leave most respectfully to offer myself as a Candidate for the CHAIR OF ANATOMY in the UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, vacant by the death of Professor GOODSIR.

I have the honour to ask your consideration of a series of Testimonials which I submitted to the Crown when a Candidate for the Chair of Anatomy which I now occupy. They are arranged in Two Parts.

Part I. consists of Testimonials from Teachers of Anatomy and Physiology in the Universities and Medical Schools of Great Britain and on the Continent, whose opinions have special value in respect to an Anatomical appointment. To these, and to the accompanying List of my Published Works and other Contributions to the Science of Anatomy, I beg leave to refer, chiefly for evidence as to how far, although very busily engaged in teaching, my endeavours to contribute to the advancement of Anatomical Science have been successful.

Part II. consists of Testimonials from Professors and Lecturers in other branches of Medical Science, and from Physicians and Surgeons, to whom I was personally known as a Lecturer; and from Gentlemen who have attended my Anatomical Class. To these and to the accompanying List of the Courses of Lectures on Anatomy, Anatomical Demonstrations, and Practical Anatomy, which were delivered by me in Edinburgh, I refer chiefly for evidence of my experience and success as a Lecturer and Practical Teacher.

I have now taught Anatomy for twenty years. My work as a Student in the Edinburgh School is referred to in Testimonials II., IV., LXXXIV., LXXXIX., XCVII., and CXXIX. I resolved, when a Student, to become a Teacher of Anatomy. Immediately after taking my degree of M.D., at the Edinburgh University, I commenced, at the age of twenty-two, as Demonstrator.

Two years thereafter I commenced as Lecturer ; and for fifteen years conducted all the Anatomical Courses, doing the work of Demonstrator as well as that of Systematic Lecturer. During the whole of this time Professor Goodsir occupied the Anatomical Chair in the University, and only those acquainted with the circumstances know how difficult it had then become to gather together a good Class of Anatomy in the Extra-academical School. The proportion of my Class to the University Class was at first one to six, but grew to be one to two—my Class reaching 150, the University Class being then about 300. During this time, I desire to add that, though teaching in rival Schools, our rivalry was friendly, Professor Goodsir on one occasion, when absent for a year, from illness, intrusting his Class to me, and again, when I was unable to lecture for part of a Session, he taught my Pupils with his own until I was able to resume.

I beg leave particularly to refer to my having discharged the duties of the Chair now vacant, during the year 1853-4, although then, comparatively, an inexperienced Lecturer. On the recommendation of Professor Goodsir, and of the Senatus Academicus, I was appointed by the Town Council to fill the Chair. During this year my pupils, added to those of Professor Goodsir, formed a class of upwards of 400 (the precise number, I believe, was 447) students. To this class I delivered the courses of Systematic Lectures, Anatomical Demonstrations, and Practical Anatomy. It was the largest Anatomical Class ever taught in Edinburgh, or in any British School. Regarding the mode in which I discharged the duties of the Edinburgh Professorship, I refer to Testimonials, I., LXXX., LXXXIV., LXXXV., CXL., CXLIII., from Professor Goodsir and other Members of the Medical Faculty, and from distinguished pupils who attended the course, and to the subjoined letter from Professor Goodsir, on his resuming the duties of the Chair.* I may add that, at the end of the Session, I received a vote of thanks from the Medical Faculty, in the presence of the class, and I can never forget the enthusiasm displayed by the students on that occasion.

In Edinburgh I formed an extensive Museum of wet and dried specimens ; and a large collection of Anatomical Drawings, almost all of which were designed, or drawn from nature, by myself. These, together with the Museum which I purchased, (originally belonging to Dr. Knox), are still in my possession.

* 111, PRINCES STREET, August 29, 1854.

MY DEAR SIR,

When I proposed that you should occupy my place during my absence, I did so with full confidence that, if you assented, I would be relieved from all anxiety regarding my Class.

I, therefore, left all the arrangements in your hands, and have had every reason to be satisfied with your management, and gratified with the statements regarding it which have reached me from various quarters.

I cannot, however, resume my own official duties, without expressing how much I feel myself indebted to you for the able assistance you have afforded me during my retirement.

I remain, MY DEAR SIR,

Yours, very faithfully,

JOHN GOODSIR.

JOHN STRUTHERS, Esq.

In order to enable me to teach Anatomy thoroughly, I early made up my mind to forego private practice, and I resigned my appointment as one of the Surgeons to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, when I found that its increased duties required me to choose between taking this step, and giving less time to teaching in the dissecting room. But the experience I had acquired by my connection with the Royal Infirmary, I have found of great value, in enabling me to teach the application of Anatomy to Surgery and Medicine, on which so much of the value of the course of Anatomy, in a Medical School, depends.

Since my appointment to the Chair of Anatomy in this University, I have devoted myself to teaching Anatomy in all its departments, and to other work in the Anatomical School and Museum. I shall have the honour to lay before you Testimonials from Aberdeen as to my work in this University.

In the event of it being your choice to bring me back to the Edinburgh School, I shall look on it, not only as the reward of many laborious years given there to Anatomical Teaching, but as the highest encouragement to further exertion. It would be my endeavour, while I taught Anatomy as a Science, ever to bear in mind that the success of the Medical School depends largely on the mode in which Anatomy is taught in relation to Medicine and Surgery; I would be in a position where I would be more able to contribute to the advancement of Anatomical Science; and it would be my further endeavour to care for the welfare of the young men intrusted to my tuition, and otherwise to maintain, to the best of my ability, the efficiency and reputation of the University.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient Servant,

JOHN STRUTHERS.

In order to enable me to perform my duties as a Lecturer in the
 private practice, and I respectfully request your appointment as one of the
 Lecturers, which I have been informed is the highest honor conferred upon
 and giving the time for delivery of the lectures to be held in the
 connection with the Royal Laboratory, I have been of great value
 in order of Anatomy to surgery and medicine, on which so much
 Anatomy, in a Medical School, depends, and it is my duty to
 devote my attention to the Chair of Anatomy in this
 teaching Anatomy in all its departments, and to other work in the
 I shall have the honor to lay before you Testimonials from
 University.

In the event of being your choice, I shall be glad to bring the book to
 on it, not only in the reward of many labours bestowed upon them,
 the highest encouragement to further exertion, it would be my
 as a Science, ever to bear in mind that the success of the Medical
 made in which Anatomy is taught in relation to Medicine and Surgery,
 when I would be most able to contribute to the advancement of
 be my further endeavor to care for the welfare of the young
 otherwise to maintain to the best of my ability, the efficiency and
 to the end of that the year 1845, and in doing so, I
 I have the honor to be,
 My Yours and Obedient Servant,

Your most obedient
 and loyal Servant,
 J. J. [Name]