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WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL.

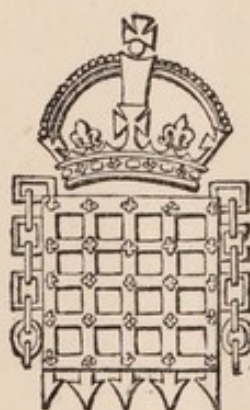
THE
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

(SESSION 1874-75).

BY

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OBSTETRIC PHYSICIAN TO THE HOSPITAL, AND LECTURER ON MIDWIFERY
IN THE MEDICAL SCHOOL.



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Sir Duncan G. B. Burt.

Portman St. -

W.



GENTLEMEN,—At the commencement of the Medical New Year, it is customary to offer a few words of greeting to those who come to us for the first time, and also to welcome back from their hard-earned holiday those who are already enrolled among us. The resumption of work after a long holiday is hardly a subject for congratulation; but in the present day, when the struggle for existence is a hard one, man must be considered, whether he will or not, in most cases a working animal.

But since last we met in this place, our bright anticipations have been sadly darkened, and looking around me to-day, in the circle of my colleagues, I miss some familiar faces,—one whose loss we are but now mourning, stricken down in early manhood, and who, we had hoped, would have been to us a tower of strength for the work of the session. I allude of course to the late Dr. Anstie; in addition to his high scientific talents as an accomplished physician, and one who reflected lustre on our school, he was endeared to us all by his hearty, honest bearing, his kindness to afflicted weakness, and his strong denunciation of all that was not straightforward and honourable. Of Dr. F. Bird, whose loss we had to deplore just before the commencement of the summer session, what shall I say? his rapid, almost intuitive diagnostic power, was familiar to you all, and the frequent illustration drawn from his large and varied experience made the remarks that

from time to time he gave you of the utmost value. Both these our colleagues have been taken in the midst of active work, and point with renewed force to the truth that the medical man, like the soldier, goes about his work, his life in his hand. It would ill become me in this place to more than just touch upon these melancholy points, but it would be improper if I did not on behalf of my colleagues and myself offer this slight tribute to their worth and the loss we endure.

And now, gentlemen, at the onset, let me congratulate you, and that most sincerely, on the choice you have made. The profession of medicine in its true nobility ranks second to none. Success ill rewarded and difficult of attainment is still in some respects a grander prize than in many other walks of life. And this too often ill-requital, perhaps, makes it the more sweet, and realises the truth of the saying, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' But here let me pause for a moment to say to such of you as I see before me for the first time, Are you sure of the truth of your choice? Are you sure that you are entering into our noble profession for its own sake, and not solely as a means of making money? If for this latter reason let me beg of you at once to change your mind and betake yourselves to the City or mart where you may devote your time and abilities successfully to the pursuit of this object, which you will never do in medicine. To the large majority of you we can promise, in a worldly sense, nothing greater than an honest competence, hardly earned; whereas in these other walks of life you may, if it be your bent, make large sums of money. The number of men in our profession who make large fortunes is infinitesimal, but with industry a moderate competence is open to you all, and the sweet satisfaction of having been of use to your fellow-creatures, and that you have spent a life fraught with good to others, if not to your own selfish advantage.

But supposing you to have fairly made up your mind to this sacrifice of self, and to have determined to apply yourselves to the study of medicine, you may know that in this country at least the highest social dignity you are liable to attain to is a baronetcy, or the empty dignity of a royal appointment; that the terror of having a statue raised to you,—a fear that is said to have haunted many men, and prevented them otherwise distinguishing themselves, need not distress you. Of the many great names of the past, but Harvey, Jenner, and Hunter, have been publicly distinguished in this way. The former in his native town, Folkestone, this year, by public subscription; the latter favoured, this year also, with a bust in Leicester Square. The statue of the immortal discoverer of vaccination still stands in Kensington Gardens, to the admiration and astonishment of the nursemaids of the neighbourhood. It is a source of satisfaction, however, to feel that, though neglected by the State, they and their work will live hundreds of years after those who are perhaps more highly honoured now shall have passed away and been forgotten. To be honoured professionally, however, is open to you all, and it is rare that honest work remains unrewarded in this way. It is a source of pride to us that of the four seats at the censors board of the College of Physicians, two are at present filled by the senior members of our staff, Dr. Basham and Dr. Fincham.

In the family circle, though, it is that the doctor is always welcome, and in this country at least he is looked upon as an intimate friend as well as adviser. A charming American writer, himself a doctor, says of the three great professions, law, physic, and divinity, 'The lawyers are the cleverest men, the ministers most learned, and the doctors the most sensible. . . . I rather think, though, that they are more agreeable to the common run of people than the men with black coats or the men with green bags. The minister

has a little smack of the sexton about him; he comes when people are *in extremis*, but they don't send for him every time they make a slight moral slip, tell a lie, for instance, or smuggle a silk dress through the Custom House; but they call in a doctor when a child is cutting a tooth, or gets a splinter in its finger. So it doesn't mean much to send for him, only a pleasant chat about the news of the day; for putting the baby to rights doesn't take long. Besides, everybody doesn't like to talk about the next world; people are modest in their desires, and find this world as good as they deserve; but everybody loves to talk physic,—everybody loves to hear of strange cases,—people are eager to tell the doctor of the wonderful cures they have heard of,—they want to know what is the matter with somebody or other who is said to be suffering from a complication of diseases, and, above all, to get a hard name, Greek or Latin, for some complaint which sounds altogether too commonplace in plain English. If you will only call a headache, a *Cephalalgia*, it acquires a dignity at once, and a patient becomes rather proud of it. So I think doctors are generally welcome in most companies.' Hear Dr. John Brown's definition of a doctor: as hearty and racy as might be expected from that manly, genial author. 'Everybody knows the doctor, a very important person he is to us all. What could we do without him? He brings us into the world, and tries to keep us in it as long as he can, and as long as our bodies can hold together; and he is with us at that strange and last hour which will come to us all, when we must leave this world and go into the next. When we are well, we perhaps think little about the doctor, or we have our small joke at him and his drugs; but let anything go wrong with our body, that wonderful tabernacle, in which our soul dwells, let any of its wheels go wrong, then off we fly to him. If the mother thinks her husband or her child dying, how she runs to him and urges him with her tears; how

she watches his face and follows his searching eye, as he examines the dear sufferer ; how she wonders what he thinks, —what would she give to know what he knows ! how she wearies for his visit ! how a cheerful word from him makes her heart leap with joy and gives her spirit and strength to watch over the bed of distress ! Her whole soul goes out to him in unspeakable gratitude when he brings back to her from the power of the grave her husband or darling child. The doctor knows many of our secrets, of our sorrows, which no one else knows ; some of our sins, perhaps, which the great God alone else knows ; how many cares and secrets, how many lives, he carries in his heart and in his hands. So you see he is a very important person, our doctor, and we should do our best to make the most of him, and to do our duty to him and to ourselves.'

I give these definitions of the doctor to you in preference to others, as you will probably for the most part occupy the honourable position of general practitioners —but few of you will have the opportunity, if you have the inclination, of following the more laborious and up-hill career of consultants and specialists. You will have to combat with energy the various ills that flesh is heir to, and will have to stock your minds, with all the knowledge you can obtain in every department, for this purpose. Remember, also, that some of the best and most important work has been, and is being done, by general practitioners,—that Jenner was a general practitioner, to give one instance only,—that in the present day a strong feeling is being manifested in many quarters against the hard and fast line drawn between the different departments of practice ; and that even if in the future you should wish to become specialists, you cannot successfully practise as such without being good general practitioners first. Let me then impress upon you that you are medical students, intending to acquire an art enabling you to minister

to the prolonging of life, and the cure or alleviation of disease; not to become philosophers, chemists, botanists, or zoologists; not to attempt to become professors, but, in the first instance at least, to gain such an amount of knowledge from all these subjects, that you may be able to undertake the duties of a medical man with credit to yourselves and benefit to the public. It has often followed that medical men have taken up these subjects and frequently become highly distinguished in them, but your main business is to become qualified medical practitioners.

Now, gentlemen, when I entered the profession, and as I speak to you it seems but the other day that I was sitting on the student-benches myself—not that in our profession one ever ceases to be a student, the study of medicine being a life-long study, of which you will learn but the elements here,—now, at this time barely twenty years ago, it was the custom, although just on the point of decaying,—it was the custom, and a good old custom too, that the young man who aspired to enter the portals of the medical profession, did so through an apprenticeship to a qualified practitioner. Already the five years had dwindled down to three, and in many cases even less; but it still existed, and would that it did now. In a year or so spent in this way the advantages were very numerous—the seeing a great deal of practice, and especially the minor and petty cases that make up to a large extent the sum of every-day practice, and especially the minor diseases of children, scarcely ever seen in a general hospital—the methods of interrogating and examining the patients—the handling of drugs and the art of prescribing, never successfully learnt in any other way—the traditions and etiquette of the profession—the mistakes committed in a large and varied practice, and the comparison between actual practice and hospital practice—all these things are among the most useful points of knowledge in after-life. I can only say that I am deeply grateful for the benefits I

received in this preliminary groundwork, and that, although in my student-life I had the advantage of attending the lectures of Christison and Garrod, yet the knowledge of drugs and the art of prescribing I obtained in my apprenticeship were of infinitely more use to me than the admirable teaching I had from those eminent professors. One other no small advantage of the apprenticeship system, it affords a young man the opportunity of judging whether he really likes or dislikes the profession of his choice—as he sees, in addition to the purely medical point of view, the kind of daily life that he must expect if he goes on with it.

The years of apprenticeship need not be altogether wasted as regards some future studies, as, in addition to a knowledge of the bones, he may also obtain some elementary knowledge of Botany and Chemistry. Be this as it may, times are now altered, and after the passing of a preliminary examination in Arts, the student comes to us often fresh from school to the hospital. But not, nowadays, to what was known formerly as ‘walking the hospitals,’ I hope, and which too often really consisted in walking so many times through the wards, and gaining nothing save the waste of shoe-leather in so doing. For in those days clinical and practical instruction were but in their infancy, and in a large school many a student saw little but the backs of his fellows unless he were of unusual hardihood, both in perseverance and muscular power.

Let me now for a short time address myself especially to those among you who are making your first appearance in this theatre, and who, having passed the preliminary examination, intend at once to commence their studies within these walls. What should be the order of these studies?—for without order you will work to very little advantage. An eminent clinical teacher has said that the order of medical studies should be compared to a series of steps, to be gone through

with regularity, not skipping or jumping over any one of them. Otherwise you will be in the painful position of one who having advanced so far up the ladder has again to descend, to walk on some step that he has omitted on his way up. The first winter, then, the attention should be mainly directed to Anatomy, Physiology, and Chemistry; and especially the former, for Anatomy has been aptly described as the Alphabet of Medical Studies, and hence to be thoroughly mastered first. Therefore especially attend with diligence the class of Anatomy and the dissecting-room. Attend the lectures on Physiology, but defer more careful work at this for the present. Attend also the lectures on Chemistry, as a pleasant relief to the more distasteful, though necessary, work of Anatomy. But for the first winter Anatomy should reign supreme, and I would advise you all to compete most closely for the very useful prize given by Mr. Davy for regularity and diligence in the dissecting-room. Let good dissection be your aim, the best dissector is generally found to be the best anatomist. Above all, do not neglect the class examinations given from time to time to test your progress. These class examinations are invaluable as an introduction to the after important ones at the College of Surgeons. Of Chemistry, let me advise you to master all the facts placed before you. It is not necessary that you should dive so deeply into this most interesting subject as if you were to become professors of it; but a sound elementary knowledge, and especially of organic chemistry, will be most useful to you hereafter. Your first summer session gives you the subjects of Botany, Materia Medica, and Practical Chemistry. These, after your arduous labours in the winter, may be considered light subjects. Of the advantage of Botany you may be convinced with difficulty in the present day, and for my own part I think it would be well if this were referred to the preliminary exa-

mination. Still it is a most interesting study, well suited in its practical nature to the summer session, and is undoubtedly of use as a training of the mind to observation.

The study of *Materia Medica*, on the other hand, might be referred with advantage to a later period of your studies; but a portion of this course, especially since apprenticeship is not now necessary, is very important, and without careful attendance the student would never have the advantage of even seeing the drugs that he is to be daily prescribing, and would know nothing whatever of the art of compounding drugs or writing prescriptions: the latter in the present day showing, I am sorry to say, often miserably to the disadvantage of the non-apprenticed men. Therapeutics, in the widest sense, has in the present day made great strides, and should be paid great attention to, but the student would derive more advantage from learning this when he has some knowledge of medicine. The Practical Chemistry course is a very important one, as it enables you yourselves to carry out many of the processes that have been described to you in the winter course—many of the reactions necessary to test the presence of poisons, and many other analyses most useful to you in the present day, when the department of public health has been so much extended to the advantage of the public, and indirectly to the medical profession.

In your second winter you come again refreshed to your Anatomy and dissecting, and hard work here must again be recommended, as your examination in this subject will come at the close of this second winter. You now attend a second course of Physiology, and this time probably the course of Practical Physiology and Histology. And now, having more time, and more groundwork from your previous anatomical studies, take up this fascinating subject; for you must remember that a mere knowledge of anatomy, however accurate

and minute, does not imply a knowledge of disease any more than a knowledge of the alphabet and the ability to read implies a literary character. Méry was accustomed to say, 'We anatomists are like the porters of Paris: who are well acquainted with all its streets, as well as all its lanes and alleys, but who know nothing of what passes within the houses.' The most assiduous examination of the dead body can disclose but little of the functions and properties of the living one. Physiology, as the key to medicine, is one of the most important of all the branches of medical study, and, taught as it now is to a large extent by actual experiment, you have greater advantages than students of a former day. Diligent attendance at Dr. Allchin's class, in the new laboratory, will impress, and render even more interesting than before, this most inviting branch of medical knowledge.

Also, during this winter session you will attend your first courses of systematic Medicine and Surgery; and here I must say, I think in the present day these classes are badly placed. In the olden time, when within the short space of three years the ordinary student was expected to equip himself with all his medical knowledge, this was a necessary evil; but at the present time, when he is compelled to extend his course of study to four years, I consider this early attendance on lectures of Medicine and Surgery very unsatisfactory. It would be well if the student's time up to the close of the second winter session should be devoted exclusively to the subjects I have enumerated—leaving the latter two years clear for the principles of medicine to be deduced from a careful study of the elementary subjects. However, as these courses must be attended, I can only advise you to attend them, and to give as much attention as you can spare to them.

Supposing now that having been diligent in your studies

you have met your reward in passing your first examination,—this now sets the mind free for the more practical work that follows.

Your second summer is devoted to Forensic Medicine, and Hygiene, and to Midwifery, and Diseases of Women and Children. The former a very important course as implying your relation as medical men with the legal tribunals of your country, the detection and discovery of crime, and the furthering the ends of justice. Here, while speaking of courts of justice, I cannot refrain from giving you the good advice offered many years ago by a former president of the College of Surgeons, Mr. Quain, ‘Go into the witness-box as seldom as possible;’ referring to the often discreditable conflict of medical evidence and the use made of it by counsel,—so that the medical witness frequently suffers great discomfort to his own peace of mind, and not seldom loss of credit to his reputation.

Of Midwifery I can only say, as is customary, that this is in many respects the most important of your studies—to you, most of whom will be engaged in general practice either in town or country, you will find this the keystone to success. A good accoucheur generally means a good practice, and *vice versâ*. But, above all things, perfect yourselves by actual attendance on cases of labour. Often have elderly men told me, with sorrowful accents, the misery and discomfort that they felt on first entering into practice from the want of this facility and practical knowledge; and how frequently they have been outdone by other men perhaps less highly qualified in other branches than themselves. Get a good theoretical knowledge, then, of this subject, and attend as many cases as possible. In connection with this course is associated ‘the diseases of women and children.’ I need hardly tell you that to attempt to teach these with midwifery in a three months’ course, in the present state of knowledge, is an absurdity, and of course is never attempted.

We therefore endeavour, as far as possible, to convey the knowledge of these subjects through clinical lectures.

In your third winter you are now prepared to attend the courses of lectures on Medicine and Surgery with care and attention. Note-book in hand, because you must remember that your teachers will often tell you points of actual practice that you will seek in vain in books—cases of interest occurring in their own practice, or gathered from varied and extensive reading of books that you will have neither time nor opportunity to pore over. And now you begin to work with zest in the wards—again, note-book in hand, case-taking, for these are the golden opportunities that may never again occur to you in your lives. This aggregation of cases in the wards, under skilled supervision, you will only be able to avail yourselves of for a limited time. Remember, all distinguished medical men have been great case-takers, and this habit once begun of taking short notes will probably be continued all your lives to your great benefit. Even if you never look at your note-books again—which I am far from thinking will be the case—these short histories of disease are better fixed in your mind from having been committed to writing at the time. It has often happened that a medical man away in practice hundreds or thousands of miles from this metropolis, has been enabled to diagnose and successfully treat a difficult case of disease by means of the notes he had taken in the hospital wards in his student days.

Now also is the time for regular attendance in the post-mortem room, to see the condition after death of cases that have been watched during life in the wards, and this leads you to appreciation of the course of Pathology—Morbid Physiology, as it is often called, in contrast to the course of General Physiology.

And now also comes the time to attend the special de-

partments—skin, eye, ear, &c.—which have now been carefully formed and arranged within this building, so that your time need not be wasted in running over the town to the so-called special institutions. The lecturers here on these special subjects will be only too glad to see you, and impart valuable instruction to you—more difficult than any other to be acquired from books.

And here let me for a moment descant upon the advantages of this Hospital of your choice. This is, *par excellence*, a small school, and I think it would be a great disadvantage to all of us if it ever became a large one. For a student of robust health, and (this I put first), commanding talents and great industry, in a large school of from two to three hundred men, he may push his way to the front, and distinguish himself; but let it be otherwise, and he remains in the ruck only to regret afterwards that he did not attach himself to a smaller one. In a small school, on the other hand, where there is no crowding, every man has his chance, is brought more closely into contact with his teachers, is enabled often to gain instruction by asking direct questions. In the wards, again, he sees all the cases, without having to fight for the privilege, and in the latter years of student life is able to hold the various appointments, and have the direct charge of patients.

This is well seen in the special departments. Take the case of the ophthalmoscope,—how many men can attend a demonstration with comfort and advantage; and in the treatment of the diseases of women, delicacy and modesty demand that the number of men in the room at a time should be limited to a very few, else we soon have the limitation of patients to a very few indeed.

So far I have spoken generally to you who are about to commence your studies. To you, gentlemen of the second and third years, I can only say, Go on and persevere in your

work ; if you have not been as diligent with your note-book or in the dissecting-room, make up for this by renewed efforts ; if you have done with your primary examination, be constant in your visits to the wards, note-book in hand, and also in the post-mortem theatre and in the out-patient rooms.

To you who are finishing your curriculum, and are about to enter upon the rugged work of practice, let me say a few words as to your duties and responsibilities. Let me especially exhort you to practise your profession in the true medical spirit—not as mere practitioners, or more correctly drug-distributors—seeing your patients and ordering medicines by routine, as a tradesman distributes his goods through the parish, but that you will practise it intellectually. Every fresh case you see has its own points of interest different from every other case, and will afford you intellectual food, and enable you to advance at least your own knowledge a little, if not to increase the general stock. If you become dull routine practitioners, we shall indeed be heartily sorry. Remember that in addition to gaining a livelihood, in our pursuits we have the infinitely greater delight of using intellect and improving science, which cannot be said of many occupations to which men are unfortunately fitted. As an instance of what may be done in even a remote country district, I may mention the late Dr. Uvedale West, who wrote a most admirable monograph on *Cranial presentations* and *Cranial positions* ; he practised in a small town in Lincolnshire, and was unfortunately cut off in the prime of life. In the preface to this he says, ‘ The study of these subjects at the bedside has been the author’s solace while fulfilling the anxious and arduous duties of a despised profession . . . It has rendered interesting what would otherwise have been a dreary and thankless monotony of ordinary

midwifery cases, varied only by the longer or shorter period stolen from the night's rest, and enlivened chiefly by village gossip at the time and by ingratitude afterwards.'

As to your duties : your first is to cure, otherwise why should you be employed as doctors. You must not do as an eminent foreign physician is reported to have done ; he walked round the wards of his hospital, remarking upon each of the cases, and stating what the conditions of the organs would be found to be after death. At the termination of his visit he was reminded by a friend who was with him that he had forgotten to prescribe for the patients. Again people have said, Why can you not put us to rights when ill, as a watchmaker does our watches ? They forgetting that the watchmaker stops the watch and takes it to pieces, while we are unfortunately unable to do so with the far more complicated piece of mechanism, the human body. There is no doubt of the paramount importance of finding out, in the first place, what is the matter with your patient, and the art of diagnosis has been greatly helped of late years by the invention and application of instruments of precision for this purpose. Where would the physician be without the stethoscope, thermometer, and other aids ? But with all these let him not neglect the old-fashioned art of Observation, otherwise he will be in the same position as the doctor who, early in practice, and thinking more of the rare than the common diseases, had a patient call upon him, suffering from a raised mark of discoloration on the forehead. After examining with a magnifying glass, asking questions as to family history, &c., he pronounced it as probably a case of *Addison's disease* or bronzed skin. The patient however, an intelligent man, states that he put the recipe where it could do no harm to any one, and, having talked with his landlady, applied vinegar and brown paper to the spot, which soon removed the bruise, for such it was.

Do not, however, neglect to learn the use of these instruments, and make use of every opportunity afforded to you of doing so ; but remember, also, that a great deal of the practice of medicine is, and must be, empirical, and do not on this account despise it. Remember that quinine or bark, although we do not know how it acts, still puts away the ague fit ; and that vaccination, though discovered by simple observation, is yet perhaps the most important discovery ever made in the medical art. In our profession we deal largely with the firm of common sense, founding our practice on just principles ; if our hypothesis is bad, our practice will be bad also, and you will see—if you have not already—that when diagnosis is uncertain, our treatment is also very uncertain.

Again, bear constantly in mind, the potency and impotence of our art. Watch nature closely, and give her her way when she is acting well ; it is far easier to do great operations, and administer powerful drugs, than to abstain from doing so ; and it requires a far larger experience to trust nature than to use effective remedies.

But if you cannot cure your patients, do not at any rate do mischief ; and never be guilty of untruth to them. If one comes to you with incurable disease it is by no means necessary or advantageous that you should tell the whole truth, although this should certainly be told to some near relative, husband, wife, &c.—but to say that you can cure it, knowing it to be incurable, is very unpardonable. It at once lowers you to the level of the quack—that horrid parasite, which has been, and will, I fear, long be the pest of the medical profession. One word as to moral treatment. You will find many cases in your practice that used to be classed under the convenient name, hysteria, largely benefited and cured by judicious medical and moral management, and greatly injured by the other mode, often adopted from a fancied too great conscientiousness, of roughly telling the patient there is

nothing the matter. However, whether you can cure or not, always cultivate a kindly and genial manner—not that I would recommend a frivolous one to you, but I would counsel you to avoid the undertaker as much as possible—to be hearty and cheerful when the mischief is not great, but in the sadder and more unfortunate cases to be sympathetic and gentle.

Next as to preventive medicine, likely, and very properly, to be more and more highly valued every day. And you will have but too many opportunities of seeing that prevention is indeed better than cure; the numerous cases of fever that will come under your notice from water or milk poisoning, where your medical knowledge will be impotent to cure, you will find could be prevented easily were but decent sanitary precautions taken. Again the many untoward accidents contingent upon midwifery practice, you will, I hope, find rarer every day, if you by preventive measures do not allow labours to be protracted to the shameful extent that used formerly to be the custom. The earlier application of the forceps has been a greater saver of human life than any other improvement in practice of late years.

The study of preventive medicine in its public sense is one in which the medical profession is largely interested. The numerous appointments of medical officers of health forming not only a great boon to the public at large, but some of the few prizes of pecuniary value within the reach of the medical man. It may be a source of some encouragement to you to know that one of the best of these appointments in the Midland counties was gained by a student of this hospital, who left us but a short time ago. By preventing disease you at any rate remove it from the class of incurables.

In a similar way you have also great opportunities of doing good, by warning people against baneful and vicious habits that you know that they are indulging in—cases of

drinking, opium-eating, immorality of all kinds, will come under your notice, and your power will be great to snatch these unfortunates from the misery into which they are fast sinking.

What I said just now as to order in medical studies, applies with equal force to medical practice. You will find regularity and system greatly conducive to your keeping your time and your temper; it is surprising how much work you can get through in an orderly way, whereas in disorder it is only attained at a great expenditure of time and personal fatigue. Whilst speaking of fatigue let me not forget to advise you to take periodic rest—annual holiday that you have earned by the year's work. The public are becoming much more sensible on this point now than they used to be. It was formerly quite the custom for the doctor to recommend change of air to his patients, which they were seldom loth to take, though never at the same time to take it himself, who stood so much more in need of it. I need not so much urge this upon you who are students, as on this point you are well able to take care of yourselves, and do not, as a rule, neglect any opportunity of taking a holiday when it presents itself. But to you in active practice I would say, Never omit to take a rest at least four weeks in the year, and take it as a duty; you will return stronger and better able to do your work; and instead of the day coming when you are sent away ill, you may have the enjoyment and benefit of the holiday, when you are well and able to profit by it. The number of deaths that have occurred in our ranks during the last year from over-work ought to be a warning to us all. The rest of the year, however, must be devoted to hard work, if you wish for success, for this, though sometimes dependent upon accidental causes, in the majority of cases is the result of industry and honest work more than anything else.

A word as to your relations to each other. Avoid as

much as possible medical squabbles ; these only tend to bring your profession into disrepute. -Collisions and differences of opinion must occur in practice from time to time, but always try and bear your part satisfactorily. If a case comes to you that has been under the care of another practitioner, if you are in agreement with him about it, do not hesitate to tell the patient so plainly, and at once. If otherwise, rather endeavour to keep this from him, and discuss it in private with your fellow-practitioner, than endeavour to let the patient suppose that you would have treated the case better. Of course this does not apply to disgraceful practice. Your rule then should always be—it is far better to suffer than to injure.

As to your responsibilities, always remember what was said by the good and learned Sydenham :—

‘ Whoever takes up medicine should seriously consider the following points,—

‘ 1. That he must one day render to the Supreme Judge an account of the lives of those sick men who have been entrusted to his care.

‘ 2. That such skill and science as by the blessing of Almighty God he has attained, are to be specially directed towards the honour of his Maker and the welfare of his fellow-creatures ; since it is a base thing for the great gifts of Heaven to become the servants of avarice or ambition.

‘ 3. He must remember that it is no mean or ignoble animal that he deals with. We may ascertain the worth of the human race, since for its sake God’s only begotten Son became man, and thereby ennobled the nature that He took upon Him.

‘ Lastly. He must remember that he himself hath no exemption from the common lot, but that he is bound by the same laws of mortality, and liable to the same ailments and afflictions with his fellows.

‘ For these and like reasons let him strive to render aid to

the distressed with the greater care, with the kindlier spirit, and with the stronger fellow-feeling.'

And now, gentlemen, my task is done ; many subjects of interest connected with medicine I should like to have introduced into this address, but I considered them out of place here. Of some that I have touched upon I could have dwelt with advantage at greater length had I not feared to exhaust your patience. In conclusion, then, and wishing you all success both as students and practitioners, let me say in the words of our great humorist : —

' Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
 Let young and old accept their part,
 And bow before the Awful Will,
 And bear it with an honest heart.
 Who misses, or who wins the prize,
 Go lose or conquer as you can ;
 But if you fail, or if you rise,
 Be each, pray God, a gentleman.'

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