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of inculcating principles both of forbearance and of practice very different from those established by Indian usages.

Our College, Gentlemen, it must be owned, is a young Institution. She is, so to speak, still in her childhood,—for she only this day enters on her *teens*. But though your Alma Mater be a very young Mother, she but in this respect follows the custom of her own country; and I feel assured that She will never have occasion to blush for any of her Children.

11

GENERAL INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

ADDRESSED TO

THE STUDENTS

OF

The Calcutta Medical College,

AT THE

OPENING OF THE SESSION, 15th JUNE, 1848.

BY

Henry Henry Sales Goodeve

H. H. GOODEVE, M. D., F. R. C. S. ENG.,

PROFESSOR OF MIDWIFERY.—PHYSICIAN TO THE FEMALE AND LYING-IN-HOSPITAL—SURGEON BENGAL ARMY.

CALCUTTA:

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PREFATORY NOTICE.

The Council of Education have done me the honor to request the publication of the following Lecture.

It was delivered on the occasion of my return to India for a short period, after some years' residence in Europe; and has no other claims to public notice, than the correctness of the sketch of the rise, progress, and present constitution of the Medical College, which my long, and intimate connection with that valuable institution, has enabled me to give to those interested in the advancement of Education in this country.

H. H. G.

Calcutta, June 1848.

GENTLEMEN,

I have undertaken to deliver the Introductory Lecture this year from no vain belief in my peculiar ability for the task. I should indeed be presumptuous to assume such distinction to myself in the presence of a body of men standing so high in public estimation as my colleagues, many of them enjoying a European reputation, against the brilliancy of which I have nothing to adduce in my own behalf but my connexion with this institution from its foundation, and my exertions—such as they have been—to promote its prosperity.

I present myself to you this evening chiefly because this long association with you, and indeed with the medical profession generally, is about finally to close; and in all probability I may never again have the opportunity of meeting you on a similar occasion; for my return to this country, and the resumption of my professorship, are but temporary measures. I am anxious therefore to seize the opportunity thus afforded to me, of addressing you publicly for the last time, although I am aware that I have thus taken the duty from those who could do more justice to the subject.

On such an occasion many topics necessarily crowd themselves upon my attention. Let me begin by congratulating you upon the prosperity you have enjoyed during my absence. It is indeed most gratifying to me, in thus revisiting the scene of my former labours, to notice the great state of efficiency to which this school has at length been brought; forming as it now does one of the most extensive and useful institutions of the kind in existence; our organization so complete, our lectures recognized by the Colleges of Great Britain, and our students permitted to rank amongst the graduates of her most distinguished Universities.

In thus congratulating the natives of India upon possessing so important an institution, so powerful an *engine* for the amelioration of their country, we cannot fail to remember how recent its

origin and how rapidly it has obtained the efficiency, we have such good reason to admire. If we reflect upon the state of medicine in the East a few years since, I confess I can scarcely believe that so great a change could have been wrought in so brief a period. Whatever may have been the degree of success with which the study of medicine was pursued in this country in the days of its ancient magnificence—and we have reason to believe that our art had then attained to very great eminence amongst the Hindoos—nearly all traces of this learning have long passed away. A very few years since the native practitioners of medicine knew little more of the science they professed than a routine acquaintance with the properties of certain drugs, which they used empirically. Or if they pretended to give any account of their treatment, and assigned reasons for the exhibition of their nostrums, their pathology and their therapeutics alike, were a farrago of unintelligible nonsense, compounded of ignorance and pedantry. Fortunate indeed was the patient whom they contented themselves with treating by simple and harmless medicines commingled though these often were of 50 or even 100 ingredients. They possessed, and very frequently employed at haphazard, most potent and deadly drugs, the baleful effects of which too often proclaimed their poisonous character, and the culpable ignorance which had dictated their administration.

Of *surgery* they were confessedly and most lamentably ignorant. The simplest wound, the most trifling accident which the commonest knowledge of anatomy, and the most ordinary principles of treatment would have sufficed to relieve in a few minutes, in *their* hands often became fatal to the sufferer, or terminated in a permanent and distressing deformity. Whilst the diseased structures now so rapidly removed by the skilful management of the educated surgeon, were to them hopeless maladies which they dared not handle, or which became infinitely aggravated by their mischievous interference.

Of the *obstetric* branch of the profession they were if possible still more fearfully uninformed. It is impossible to conceive any

thing more dangerous or ill adapted than their regulations of the lying-in room. Where the labour was most natural, their interference was beyond any thing injurious and inhuman—aggravating the sufferings of the woman tenfold by their absurd and cruel directions, and often sacrificing the lives of the mother and her infant, where nothing more was needed, than permission for nature to work out her own arrangements without interruption from art. On the other hand, in cases where human aid properly directed would be invaluable, they were paralysed, and incapable of affording the smallest assistance. Prayers and charms were their only resource, and the woman died undelivered; or if the child alive or dead were expelled, the mother was permitted to expire without an effort being made to save her, under the influence of some of those fearful accidents which not unfrequently attend upon parturition in all countries.

How pleasing to turn from these painful scenes to the magnificent establishment in which we are now seated, and to witness the effects of its influence. To behold its capacious lecture rooms filled with attentive students, successfully pursuing the study of our science under the guidance of a body of well qualified instructors, who possess ample means of illustrating their lectures in the resources of our museum and library, our well filled hospitals and our noble dissecting rooms. More pleasing still to follow these students from the institution, when they have finished their College career. To see them filling responsible and independent professional appointments in all parts of India, where daily called upon to practice the lessons they have acquired in our school, they afford the most convincing proof of its utility, in the successful management of dangerous cases of every description, and in the skilful performance of the most formidable surgical operations. Thus gaining for themselves a well-earned reputation, and dispensing over the land the blessings of humanity and science.

When I thus look around me with feelings of pleasure, not altogether unmingled with pride that I have been permitted to

take part in promoting so important an undertaking, I cannot help also casting a glance backwards upon the steps by which we have ascended to our present consequence, and contrasting in my own mind the dignified position we now occupy, with our very insignificant commencement.

To those interested in our progress this is a most pleasing retrospect, and it may not be altogether out of place here to dwell for a few minutes upon this subject, and to trace briefly the steps by which we have advanced on our career.

Many here to day may probably remember the formation of the College, by Lord William Bentinck in 1835. The institution consisted of an old house in rear of the Hindoo College, in which two young Assistant Surgeons—to whom a third was subsequently, and after much difficulty, added—were expected to teach the whole circle of medical science to a class of upwards of fifty Students. There was neither Library, Museum, Hospital or Philosophical Apparatus, and we had to combat national prejudices against the study of anatomy, which were considered so deeply rooted, that the greater part of the community laughed the attempt to scorn as a vain chimera—and our best friends assisted us with a very modified degree of encouragement; uncertain of the propriety of committing themselves to approve what appeared at best but a very doubtful experiment.

The basis of the plan upon which the institution was founded, you must be aware, consisted in adopting the European system of education in all its details; more especially in pursuing anatomy by dissection, as the foundation of all medical knowledge. At the same time instruction was to be conveyed through the medium of the English language exclusively. All this was considered so preposterous as I have before remarked, that the Superintendent of the late Medical School, one of the most learned men in India, and long engaged in native education, forfeited his appointment rather than risk his reputation for sanity, by taking part in what he considered so utterly quixotic, as expecting Hindoos of good

caste to touch the human corpse, and to study a learned profession by means of any other language than Arabic or Sanscrit.

Fortunately those who were appointed to fill the situation he thus rejected, were not so easily daunted. We resolved to devote our best energies to the duty assigned us, and in good truth we have been amply repaid for the cost of our exertions by their subsequent success.

An admirable class of intelligent and well educated young men was soon collected, many of them of good family and high caste, and our labours began on the 20th February 1835. We had not long completed the preliminary arrangements for teaching, when attempts were made to commence the new system of Anatomical instruction. Parts of the human body were first introduced in illustration of the daily instruction, and replaced the sheep's brains, goat's livers, wooden models, and tin representations, which formerly served the same purpose. It was not however until the institution was removed to its present site (an event which occurred about six months after our first appointment) that a regular course of Anatomical lectures was delivered, and an opportunity was afforded me to place an entire subject on the lecture table before the assembled class; an event which of course created much interest and some excitement amongst them, but which soon became familiar from daily repetition.

Very shortly after this a few courageous pupils led by the example of one whose conduct on that and many other occasions cannot be too highly appreciated—our respected Pundit, Moodsodon Goopto,—secretly, and in an outhouse of the building, ventured under my superintendence with their own hands to dissect a body which had been procured for lecture. Gradually their boldness was communicated to others, and in less than two years from the foundation of the College *practical anatomy* became as completely a portion of the necessary studies of the Hindoo Medical Student as amongst their brethren in Europe and America. The practice of dissection has since advanced so rapidly amongst us that the magnificent rooms erected four years since, in which upwards

of 500 bodies were dissected and operated upon in the course of last year, has already become too small for our purpose; we have been compelled to construct an adjoining shed for the convenience of the class, now amounting to upwards of 750 youths of all nations, colours, religions and castes, commingling together in this good work as freely and amicably as the more homogeneous frequenters of an European school.

I know no where a more striking example of the powerful influence of science in promoting liberality and good feeling amongst her votaries, than in this very interesting example.

During this time the other departments advanced with equal energy, as might be expected from the character of those who were entrusted with their superintendence.

In consequence of the melancholy death of Mr. Bramley, which occurred within a year of the formation of the College, and by which we lost a most valued and talented coadjutor, considerable alteration was made in the professorial staff. It was largely increased, and thus rendered far more efficient. A Professor of Surgery and a Demonstrator of Anatomy were thus added. Mr. Egerton, the distinguished Oculist, took charge of the former, and Mr. Richard O'Shaughnessy, who has subsequently done so much to promote the credit of Surgery in this College and in India generally, was appointed to the latter. Dr. O'Shaughnessy continued his invaluable services as Professor of Chemistry and Materia Medica; whilst to the Anatomical Professorship previously held by me, I added the chair of practice of Physic. Some short time previously the museum had been placed under the care of Mr. Evans, who continued for many years its indefatigable curator.

So far we were sufficiently organized for teaching the mere theory and elements of the science; but very great deficiency existed in the absence of all Hospital instruction. By the liberality of that distinguished Statesman, Lord Auckland, to whom education in India, and especially this College is under such deep obligations, this want was supplied. Our Male Native Hospital

was built, and by arrangement with the Police a large number of European cases were also placed under our charge.

When this desideratum was accomplished, another defect and of a similar kind, was still apparent in the school. We had no means of teaching the Obstetric art. It had always been considered unnecessary hitherto to provide for any instruction in this branch of medicine, under the impression—subsequently proved to be very erroneous—that the peculiar prejudices of the native population with regard to their female relatives would render such instruction inoperative and valueless. This objection was however at last removed, and by the assistance of a liberal private subscription the present Female and Lying-in Hospital was formed; our kind patron, Lord Auckland, again assisting to promote our wishes by appointing a Professorship of Midwifery, to which I had the honour of succeeding; Dr. Jackson being most judiciously selected to relieve me from teaching practice of Physic and the charge of the medical patients in the Male Hospital. The prosperity of this department has since been uninterrupted, and under the admirable management of Dr. D. Stewart, who has occupied the appointment during my absence, with a degree of energy and talent to which I have much pleasure in thus publicly bearing testimony, the Lying-in Hospital has become a model for such charities in India; whilst we have daily proof of the utility of this addition to our College, as well in respect to the number of cases relieved in our wards, as in the constant demands upon our Students for assistance in cases of difficult and dangerous labour amongst the families of their countrymen.

Almost coterminous with the Lying-in Hospital another and most important addition was made to the College by the formation of the Military or Hindoostanee class. This race of Students formed the old school for Native Doctors, abolished when the present College was established. Much difficulty having in consequence arisen to supply their places for the service of the Army, Dr. O'Shaughnessy proposed to re-establish the class—and by engrafting the old institution upon the new one, to

improve the character of the former, and at the same time extend the utility of the latter. Success the most complete has proved the wisdom of the suggestion, and has added another obligation to those already due from us to the brilliant talents and energetic exertions of my former colleague. These young medical soldiers, if I may use the term, are admitted by every one who comes into contact with them to form a most valuable addition to our Army Hospital Staff. They are in every way superior to their predecessors. Indeed their education in practical matters is very little inferior to that of the English class, and in the study of Anatomy and the practice of dissection and operative Surgery in which they were formerly so deficient, they appear now to be remarkably distinguished.

About this period also Botany was added to the course of instruction by the acceptance of Dr. Wallich's offer to give a series of lectures on the subject gratuitously. This interesting collateral branch of our art has ever since been embraced in the College curriculum of study. The Professorship of the department now forms an essential part of the duties of the Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens, and the magnificent contents of the latter are at the same time made available to the Students. The gentlemen who have filled the chair thus created,—Wallich, the deeply lamented Griffith, McClelland, and the present distinguished occupant Dr. Falconer, are too well known through the scientific world to require any eulogium from me to indicate their value. They are names which would reflect honour upon any institution with which they are connected.

To these earlier improvements I would add the late changes made in the Anatomical department, wherein by dividing the original Professorship into two branches (*one for Physiology and general Anatomy, the other for descriptive and surgical Anatomy,*) and placing them under the care of separate teachers, we assimilate ourselves completely to the organization of all the modern European schools, and conform to the rules of the London Colleges. At the same time we have secured to ourselves a

more perfect system of instruction in this most important branch of medical study, which under the management of its present distinguished head Doctor Walker, and his active coadjutor Mr. Webb, cannot fail of ample success.

Yet one other subject is there connected with our history which remains to be spoken of, and which I cannot pass over in silence, though in alluding to it I may be accused of egotism. I refer to the late expedition to Europe from hence, which independent of its intrinsic importance and the noble example it holds out to the imitation of our Students, is certainly the most interesting recent event in the history of the College. In saying this, I trust that I may escape the charge of self-flattery, because I can truly claim a very insignificant share in the merits of the undertaking. I merely *guided the arrangements*, assisted in developing the scheme, and superintended the execution of the work. To those who originated the idea, but still more to those whose zeal and ability rendered it so successful, are due the credit and honour which belong to it.

Many of those present to day will remember that the plan of sending native Students to Europe for education is by no means a novel one; it originated in Mr. Bramley's desire to imitate the example of Klot Bey, who some time since carried with him to Paris a number of young Egyptians, subsequently educated in the schools of medicine in that city. The early death of Mr. Bramley and other circumstances prevented the scheme from then taking effect; and it remained in abeyance for ten years, when the much-lamented Dwarknauth Tagore, the patron of all that was charitable and useful in this country—himself one of the noblest examples of enlightenment and emancipation from national prejudice amongst the natives of India—offered to take with him when returning to Europe for his health two of our Students, and to educate them at his own expense in the London University. The scheme was communicated to the College Council, and with permission of my colleagues, I undertook to carry out its object. By the liberality of Government and the

assistance of a munificent private subscription, I was enabled still further to increase the utility of the measure, and in March 1845, four pupils* embarked for Europe under my charge.

But here let me pause to do justice to the courage and enterprize of the young men who accompanied me. I have often been asked both in England and in this country, by those who were astonished at their progress, whether I had not of course selected the best Students of the College for the expedition. Little indeed are people generally aware of the difficulties attendant upon such an undertaking and how large an amount of resolution and freedom from prejudice, are required to overcome the difficulties which beset the path of any Hindoo who embarks on shipboard; or how great are the sacrifices he must undergo in thus leaving his country and friends even under the most advantageous circumstances. The difficulty of procuring eligible young men to embrace this opportunity for improving themselves was so great, that at one time I thought the expedition must have been abandoned, and Dwarkanauth Tagore himself repeatedly assured me that he never believed in the possibility of its being carried into effect until he saw the young men at the Sandheads beyond the possibility of returning. So far from selecting as I would have desired, I confess that if I had had the power of choosing there is perhaps not one amongst the four whom I did take, that I should then have selected if my choice had been free. My pupils were all volunteers, but a little reflection ought to have convinced me that instead of regretting the limited field of my choice, the qualities which thus shewed these youths so superior in courage and enterprize to their fellow Students, were the elements of that future success which throughout attended them in the undertaking.

A few days after our arrival in London the young men were entered as pupils at University College, one of the most distinguished Medical Schools in Europe, and from that period their course has been one uninterrupted course of triumph. Each followed

* Bholanath Bose, Gopal Chundra Sen, Dwarkanath Bose and Soorjoo Comar Chuckerbutty.

some separate branch of medical study as a favourite subject, without, however, excluding the rest from due share of attention.

The result I need not here stop to relate. The published documents of the College and the journals of England, attest the honours they obtained. The gold and silver medals repeatedly awarded. The posts of importance and responsibility in the Hospitals always reserved as prizes in that admirable institution. The high University degrees they gained. The marked notice, and the valued testimonials of the most celebrated scientific men in Europe, and the patronage of statesmen and rulers (who knew them only by their deserts) sufficiently bear witness to the conduct and character of these distinguished pupils of our College. At the same time it serves to shew the inhabitants of Europe, what natives of India can accomplish when struggling in a fair field of intellectual competition with the Students of the more civilized world. Such are the triumphs which courage, conduct and industry, combined with ability, are able to effect in the person of our young friends—triumphs not confined to the narrow limits of these walls, or the bounds of our own profession, but the influence of which embrace a wide range of national interest and involve the reputation of the East.

We may, I think, without vanity assume to ourselves a just pride in the fact of this institution being selected to supply the materials of such an important experiment. Indeed we may go further, and say that it is the only one in this country, where it would have been possible to find those possessing sufficient courage, with a corresponding degree of intelligence and information, to offer themselves as pioneers in what appears to the natives of India generally, so dangerous a path; and thus to set forth so glorious an example to their timid and ignorant fellow countrymen. It has often been the boast of the medical profession that its members are on all occasions foremost in the cause of civilization, and most willing to make sacrifice of their own immediate interests where the great objects of humanity are concerned. Surely we have ample proof in this instance, that

those educated in the art of medicine in India, are prepared to vindicate this assertion, and are willing to rival their Western brethren in ministering to these great ends.

These then have been the steps of our progress, and it is truly gratifying to me on returning from countries where I have had the opportunity of visiting the most celebrated schools of medicine in the world, to witness the admirable position attained by our College, and to find it bear comparison in so many respects with these renowned institutions of Europe. There are of course points of deficiency and imperfection which may be discovered by critical examination. Many of these are unavoidable in so young an institution, and will I doubt not gradually disappear under the judicious management of the enlightened body who preside over education in this country—but as a whole, it is assuredly not surpassed by any of the professional schools under British rule if we except the great Metropolitan Medical Institutions of London, Edinburgh and Dublin.

In one department we may say without fear of contradiction that even these great emporiums of learning are inferior to us. I allude to the opportunities of learning Practical Anatomy and Operative Surgery. I do not hesitate to affirm that when our Museum is more perfect, and our Hospital somewhat extended, which I trust will soon be the case, our means of Anatomical and Surgical teaching will be unrivalled in the whole world. Strange pre-eminence in a country apparently so unfavorable to these pursuits; and where but a few years since the cultivation of these branches of study was considered impracticable, whether regarded as a Physical difficulty from the rapid putrefaction of the dead, or a Moral impossibility by reason of the powerful national prejudices existing against touching a human corpse.

If I ventured further to draw any favorable conclusion to our system of instruction here in comparison with that pursued at home, I would speak of the importance we endeavor to attach to *practical* studies generally, above those of more theoretical import, now so much cultivated in England. I much fear that

these schools have lost somewhat of the practical value they formerly possessed in the undue consequence now attached to these collateral branches of medical study. The new system at present so generally applied, gives us more gold medallists in Botany, Chemistry, Natural History, Comparative Anatomy and Physiology it is true, but I suspect we get fewer great practical Surgeons and Physicians than formerly. The midnight oil is consumed at the expence of the midday labour by the bedside of the patient and the dissecting room table. I do not say this from my own observation merely, though I confess it struck me forcibly, it is the opinion of many most distinguished members of our profession at home, with whom I have conversed on the subject.

This error certainly cannot be laid to our charge, and I should very much regret to behold it creep in amongst us. It may be very desirable in Europe to afford every facility for studying each branch of our art to the utmost perfection, leaving the Student to select those which he wishes most to pursue, but even granting it admissible there, it would be utterly inappropriate here. We cannot afford so to distract the attention of our pupils. We must be content to make them practical members of the profession, and for the present at any rate we must sacrifice the ornamental to the strictly useful. At the same time do not mistake my views on this subject, and believe that I desire to undervalue these important *aids* to the study of medicine, or wish you to exclude them entirely for your attention. You cannot do so without losing that which is most necessary to your success. No one who watches the progress of medical science can be insensible to the deep obligations we are under to the Chemist and Botanist; and who can study the profession without gratefully acknowledging the lights which have shone forth upon the most obscure passages in our art, from Comparative Anatomy, and occasionally from other branches of Natural History. All I desire in respect to them is, that they do not assume an undue prominence and occupy too much attention from our pupils. Let them be culti-

vated, but in subordination to the more essential branches of our profession.

There is indeed one department especially of these collateral studies largely cultivated at home, the *total* neglect of which in this College is unworthy its general reputation—I allude to *Comparative Anatomy*; a subject not strictly indeed a portion of the prescribed course of medical education, but so intimately allied to human Anatomy bearing such relation to Physiology, and so essential to the illustration of both, that independent of its general value for other purposes, the attention of the pupils should undoubtedly to a certain extent be directed towards it, as towards Botany or Chemistry. I trust ere long therefore that a course of instruction on this subject, either alone, or in combination with Natural History, will receive the sanction of Government for establishment in these walls.

Pursuing these comparisons, I am reminded of another point wherein we are seriously deficient, and in which they infinitely surpass us at home. *Clinical instruction* has of late years assumed an importance in England, which I cannot too earnestly desire that we should imitate here. It ranks second only to Anatomy in value to the medical pupil, and is justly insisted upon most rigidly as a necessary part of their curriculum of study. It forms the most powerful, though not entirely a sufficient counterpoise to the abuse of theoretical study to which I have above alluded to. There never was an epoch in the history of medical education in any part of the world, where the opportunity of giving to young men the means of acquiring experience in the treatment of disease was so great, should they choose to avail themselves of it, as it is at present in Europe. I wish I could say as much on this subject for our College. On the contrary, I regret to remark that this branch of instruction is behind most others in efficiency. In the first place our Hospital is far too small. In respect to the European patients disgracefully so—they are crowded most inconveniently and oppressively into a ward insufficient for half their numbers, whilst the limited space

left for native patients precludes the possibility of admitting the requisite number of cases to form a clinique in any respect adequate to the wants of the pupils.

I do hope, however, that ere many months are passed away, we shall see this glaring defect remedied by the erection of a building more worthy of our College, and filled in proportion to its extended accommodation. Whilst in connexion with these improvements, more direct means will be taken to induce our pupils to avail themselves of the important instruction thus afforded, and that on their own part they will be more ready to take advantage of it. Let me remind them that such opportunity will perhaps never again be presented to them in after life. I would entreat them not to forget that ours is strictly a practical profession, wherein the deepest learning, the most profound theory, the most acute judgment, will be unavailing unless guided by the light of ample experience gained in the Hospital wards, and by the bedside of the patient.

It might have been expected that I should on this occasion speak at some length to the Students on these and similar duties connected with their studies here, and their course of life hereafter as medical practitioners. But I have already occupied so much of your time and attention in other matters, that I must confine my remarks on such subjects to a very few words; and (more especially with regard to their studies here,) I have the less reason to regret this inability to give such advice, because our young men are not left so much to the exercise of their own judgment as in England. A certain course of study is wisely marked out for them by the rules of the College, and when needing further advice they have ever at hand the assistance of my valued friend, our talented Secretary, Dr. Mouat, whose private counsels are not less judicious than his public lectures are instructive and complete. Nevertheless I would crave your indulgence for a few moments while I allude to one or two points of general import, which, as my parting advice, I would desire to

impress upon my young friends in reference to these matters, although I must do so in a very cursory manner.

In the first place, I would urge upon you ever to bear in mind, that medicine though a very profound science is by no means an exact one. The modes of practice to be adopted and the rationale of our proceedings are constantly varying, as the researches of philosophy develop new facts, or give birth to new views upon the subject. It differs from the other learned professions essentially, in the impossibility of laying down any specific rules to be followed implicitly in all cases, or of confining our management of individual instances to any long established precedent or unchangeable rule of action. The most skilful practitioner must therefore ever continue to be a Student, and with all his knowledge he will find himself perpetually at fault, having always much to learn. There is no profession therefore which requires such unremitting devotion, such constant attention to keep pace with the general advancement of science and of professional research. At the same time, there is none where the general cultivation of the mental powers, where the exercise of a correct perception, and an unbiassed judgment are so essential to success. The acute reasoner, the profound thinker, and the enlightened scholar, will always make the most accomplished medical practitioner, if he will earnestly devote himself to study his profession by the necessary exercise of observation and industrious research. It is only because we too often find those who are highly gifted with other acquirements, despising the true method of giving practical information, that we hear it remarked so frequently that deep scholars and accomplished men make inferior Surgeons and Physicians. Believe me it is strikingly the reverse, when such individuals choose to apply themselves to the study of our profession in the right direction.

But in cultivating these essential qualities of the head, not less importance should be attached to the gentler, though perhaps less brilliant attributes of the heart. The sufferings of our fellow creatures demand from us sympathy, kindness and careful

attention. The exercise of these feelings often does more to relieve even corporeal agony, than the most skilful administration of professional aid: whilst behavior of an opposite character may completely neutralize the most admirable medical advice. Coldness of demeanour, brusquerie and imperiousness of manner, if assumed, are strong evidence of mental weakness. If real they form a material drawback to the qualifications of the medical practitioner. At the same time believe me the exercise of these better feelings are perfectly compatible with independence of character, the preservation of self-respect and of professional dignity. They as little denote sycophancy or subserviency, as the reverse demeanour ensures an absence of these despicable qualities.

To these high toned feelings must be added a nice sense of honour and the strictest morality. The intercourse between the patient and his medical attendant necessarily engenders a degree of friendship and intimacy which call forth confidence from the former, and which require that the latter should in all things be worthy the trust and faith reposed in him. The man who is unfit for the higher duties of friendship in the ordinary relations of life, is equally unfit to be received as a Physician. In him who would practise our science successfully and worthily, must be united the qualifications of a skilful Physician, and the characteristics of a good man and an honourable and high minded gentleman.

Next with reference to practice, I pray you to avoid binding yourselves to the slavery of any particular theory or system. These have long been the bane of our profession, and are as injurious to its progress as the merest empiricism that ever was guided by ignorance. You will too early find out the uncertainty of all the best devised means of treatment, and the impossibility of discovering any thing of universal application. Whilst therefore you are not wedded to any particular mode of practice, because it is followed in this school, or advised by that teacher, pursuing it blindly without further enquiry into its merits, and are not too

ready to seize upon any thing which is new, merely because it comes recommended under some great name; avoid the other extreme. And because they are novel and you cannot explain their *modus operandi*, be not too hasty to despise at first sight—and lifting up yourselves in the pride of self-conceit—deny as mischievous, or quacklike or unphilosophical, methods of cure, which may not yet have obtained the sanction of universal authority.

Remember that some of the most valuable discoveries of modern times have thus been ushered into the world and too often thus received. Recollect too how little of your own practice you can give any rational account of, and how often you can assign no better reason for your treatment than its success in some few previous cases. Every thing which professes to relieve human suffering is worthy your enquiry. It may not always be presented through the most legitimate channels, but you have no right to reject it with scorn on that account only. It is far more philosophical under such circumstances to pause and examine its merits, than to throw it aside without investigation as beneath your notice. There are very few even of the most empirical remedies or systems of treatment in fashion, which upon enquiry will not yield some good principle. It is utterly impossible that they should meet public support without it. They may be encumbered with a mass of rubbish and exhibited in the garb of chicanery and fraud, but it is your business to remove these encumbrances, and if there be any thing there beneath, to make use of it. I could adduce numerous examples of this truth—one will suffice. The Homœopathic treatment of Hahneman and his disciples. No one in the possession of his senses will for a moment believe in the power of a millionth part of a drop of any thing however potent—yet great success has undoubtedly attended this apparent quackery. But it is easy of explanation, and teaches us a most valuable lesson. The treatment consists in leaving the patient to nature under judicious direction for general management, and in the total absence of all those

medicines which too often complicate and aggravate the complaint. At the same time the patient's mind is kept at ease, and he is amused with the belief that he is taking some very important and powerful drug. Without this *latter* tickling of the imagination the other treatment would probably be unavailing. How often might we imitate this practice with advantage—adopting the philosophical and rejecting the juggling portion upon which it is based.

In speaking of this subject I am naturally brought to the last topic I would impress upon your mind—the power of nature in curing disease. It is the constant error of the young practitioner to believe in the all-potent charms of certain combinations of the *Materia Medica*, without the aid of which he believes it impossible that any malady can be removed. In this belief he is moreover borne out by the credulousness of the greater portion of his patients, who would rather suffer any amount of disgust and annoyance by taking physic, than trust themselves to the remedial power of nature alone. They too believe most implicitly in drugs, and are utterly incredulous of the efficacy of treatment without physic. The Physician is thus too often compelled in self-defence, even after he is convinced of its impropriety by experience, to practice a species of quackery and prescribe medicines where if self-interest permitted him he would have devised merely a patient reliance upon the efforts of *nature!*

Too often under these circumstances the very means taken to remove the disease produce an equally troublesome malady or seriously increase the original complaint. Believe me the longer you practise your profession the more convinced you will be of this truth, the more firmly you will rely on the powers of nature, and the more you will be desirous of confining your professional assistance in a large number of cases, to permitting this all-important power to act without interruption from art.

But in thus recommending you not to rely so implicitly upon medical interference; not to place so much confidence in mere drugs, and to trust more confidently to the curative power of

unaided nature—do not conceive me desirous of shaking your confidence in the resources of our noble profession, for whom no one entertains a greater respect than I do. What I have just said in no way militates against the important position it so deservedly enjoys. My anxious desire is rather if possible to elevate it still further, and by rendering it more free from the possibility of censure make it still more worthy of esteem. It is impossible to appreciate too highly the value of a judicious method of medical treatment in the hands of the scientific practitioner. One of the most grateful pleasures we enjoy—the most unsullied reward of our exertions—will be found in the success of our well directed efforts to relieve the sufferings of mankind. I know no situation in life capable of affording a sensation of such pure intellectual delight, as that in which after anxious watching, laborious attendance and the exercise of a carefully devised plan of treatment, or the skilful application of operative dexterity, we behold our fellow creatures relieved from suffering, rescued from danger, snatched perhaps from the very jaws of death itself, and we can conscientiously appeal to our own hearts, and say to ourselves, we have done this thing by the aid of our professional ability. Take for example a formidable case of dysentery or croup; or the striking instance of a parturient woman unable to expel the contents of her womb; or pouring out her lifeblood in gushes which threaten instant death; or the still more impressive spectacle of a great Surgical operation performed while the patient (by the influence of one of those marvellous anæsthetic agents which are the greatest of modern discoveries) is insensible to the torture which would otherwise have been almost unbearable, and in which the patient is relieved by our assistance from certain death or life-long suffering and deformity. In such cases as these, in the exercise of such godlike functions, the medical profession stands unrivalled in importance, and deserves all the pride and confidence of its votaries.

May it frequently be your lot to reap these rewards. Believe me they are ever within the grasp of those who by the zealous

exercise of their abilities in the pursuit of knowledge—the earnest discharge of professional duty, and the strict maintenance of good feeling, honour and morality, steadily pursue the course open before you.

But I must delay you no longer, and if I have overstrained your patience and wearied your attention, I trust you will forgive me on the plea of its being the last time I shall ever be guilty of such an offence. Let me assure you, however, that wherever I may be situated, this College will be entitled to my best efforts to promote its welfare, and will ever possess my warmest interest and most sincere aspirations.—Adieu.