INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

ON

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HOSPITALS
AND MEDICAL SCHOOLS.*Delivered at the opening of the Liverpool Royal Infirmary School
of Medicine, Session 1879-80.*

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MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—The commencement of the winter session of the Royal Infirmary School of Medicine is year by year inaugurated by a formal introductory address. It has devolved upon me to perform this duty. Much may be and has been said for and against this custom. I can only aver that upon such an occasion as the present, surrounded as I am by such a learned and distinguished audience, I feel very much my shortcomings and inability to do full justice to what I have undertaken, and begin to wish most heartily that introductory addresses had been abrogated before my accession to the Chair of Midwifery and Diseases of Women in this school. However, I have discovered on my journey so far through life that the most effectual way to overcome a difficulty is to face it boldly, and to get speedily engaged *in medias res*.

In the first place, then, I bid you all welcome on my own behalf, and on behalf of my colleagues, on this the opening day of the session of 1879-80. We feel ourselves under a great obligation and owe a deep debt of gratitude to Professor Lister for having honoured this school by coming specially from London to take the chair. We also feel much honoured by the presence here to-day of Professor Sayre, of New York; Professor Turner, from Edinburgh; Dr. Matthews Duncan, from London; Professor Ferrier, from King's College; Dr. F. Roberts, of University College, one of our late lecturers; Dr. Clifford Allbutt, Dr. Wright and Mr. Wheelhouse, from the Leeds School; Mr. Baker, from the Birmingham School; and of the numerous fellow-practitioners we now see around us, who all take a kindly interest in the prosperity and reputation of the Royal Infirmary School of Medicine. We are all pretty well agreed that the higher the standing of the school, the more elevated will become the position of the medical profession in this great town of Liverpool. To the old students of the school, returning to resume the arduous work of preparation for the after-business of life, we bid a hearty welcome, because your return seems to us a vote of confidence in the ability and teaching power of the Alma Mater you have chosen. Imbued with this feeling, we shall be animated by a stronger resolution, and endowed with a greater energy to work still harder on your behalf. This, we trust, will stir your enthusiasm, and bring forth a corresponding response on your part. To the freshmen, we hold out a helping hand in the most cordial manner. I say helping, because you will require encouragement and aid in surmounting the difficulties which chiefly beset the commencement of the study of medicine. By our guidance and a fair amount of steady industrious application on your part, "*nulla die sine labore*", let me assure you you will have nothing to fear in the way of success. It is often the habit in such addresses as this to hold up the finger of warning to those in your position, and to draw a picture of the difficulties to be surmounted before a licence to practise can be obtained, and that, even then, the battle of life has to be begun for a living, and nothing more is to be expected, for fortunes are only for those who spend their lives on 'Change. Well, there may be some truth in all that; but it is the dark side of the question. I am inclined to look upon the other—the bright side; and I advise you to do likewise. If money-making alone be your object, then turn away at once; but, in so doing, recollect there are prizes, even in the medical profession, for those who can win them, and that every merchant down town does not make a fortune. It is not all gold that glitters. Look around the Exchange; notice how many heads are prematurely grey, how many faces deeply lined with care, and ask yourselves, "Is there nothing in life to struggle for but to obtain the means of existence, or to make money for the mere love of it?" It is true, that habit becomes second nature; but a miserable old age is laid up for the man who has nothing else to fall back upon.

"It's no in titles nor in rank,
It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
To make us truly blest."

But, gentlemen, there is a heartfelt satisfaction and pleasure in the study and practice of medicine. It has been called noble, and justly so, for what nobler mission in life can be imagined than that of subduing pain, curing disease, and often warding off the attacks of the last enemy, or at least depriving him of his terrors. Your interest in your studies will increase with your knowledge, and the enthusiasm—the "*perferendum ingenium*"—begotten of science and applied in art, will, I trust, animate your whole soul, and lead you on to success. Cultivate this enthusiasm, and your course of study will become easy and pleasant. You will continue to be students throughout your whole lives. You may not all become eminent, but you may all become useful practitioners; and, depend upon it, in ours, as in other professions, the rule prevails that the degree of eminence to which a man attains is the degree also of his worth.

And now let me say a few words with reference to the Royal Infirmary and School of Medicine, and particularly to the close relationship which exists between them, and the influence this confers upon both for their mutual advantage. The Royal Infirmary was founded in 1745, opened for patients in 1749, and its objects were clearly stated in the following quotation from the first annual report, as having "not any partial view in serving the town, for which a very small building would have been sufficient, but to make provision for the many objects that appeared in distress from all parts of this nation and Ireland". The School of Medicine was founded, in 1834, by a grand old band of workers, whose memory will ever be held green in its annals. The names of Formby, Dawson, Batty, and Long were; and are still, household words in this town; and the latter we gladly welcome amongst us still at our yearly gatherings. It is not my purpose to dwell upon the history and development of the school at present. It is sufficient to know that it is prosperous, and year by year attracting an increased number of students. I would rather wish to point out this prominent fact—that its success, nay perhaps at one time its preservation and very existence, have all been largely due to the fostering care of the Committee—I might say a succession of Committees—of the Royal Infirmary. In the report for 1844, from which I make the following quotation, we find evidence of this. "Although the direct object of this institution (the Royal Infirmary) is the relief of the disabled poor, there are other advantages accruing to the public which meet consideration. Viewed as an extensive school for the practice of medicine and surgery, the Infirmary has an additional claim to support; and it is a satisfaction to the Committee to inform the trustees and subscribers of a fund raised by the liberality of a few individuals, that the erection of a new medical school has been commenced, and that it is already partially available for the education of the medical and surgical student. When finished, it is hoped that such an opportunity for education will be afforded as will render it unnecessary for the resident student to incur the expense of resorting to similar but distant institutions." Again, in the report for 1846, we find another statement to this effect: "It is necessary also to speak of the Medical School, for which a sum of £500 was voted by the trustees at a special meeting in 1846. One part of the building, having been finished in 1844, has been occupied by the Professor of Anatomy, and it is expected that the remaining part will be completed early in the present year, so that the whole course of lectures may be delivered within its walls. To this school the Committee will render every assistance in their power, as it will afford those means of education which other towns of less importance have long possessed, and supply, it is hoped, a succession of men fully instructed for the important duties of their profession."

Thirty years afterwards, in the Report for 1874, we have the atest evidence of the interest taken by the Committee of the Royal Infirmary in the advancement of the School of Medicine. "The Committee cannot conclude this report without calling the attention of the trustees and subscribers to the list of liberal donations for the enlargement of the school of medicine, amounting to a sum (nearly £6,000) which enabled the Council to carry out those extensive and important additions to the building which they felt to be necessary for the promotion of the best interests of the school." It will thus be seen that the prosperity of the school has largely depended upon the patronage and practical aid of the Committee of the Royal Infirmary, from the time they granted the site upon which it is built until the present day, when it is now well equipped with all the departments of theoretical and practical teaching required by the examining bodies. Some gentlemen may be inclined to ask, Have you been able to give to the Infirmary any return for the benefits so freely conferred upon you? This important question can be answered in the affirmative in a very decided manner by referring to the replies to a series of inquiries which I entered upon some time ago, and which I sent to nearly all the metropolitan and provincial hospitals in England and Scotland. The following were the questions.

1. Do you find it advantageous or otherwise to have a medical school attached to your hospital?

2. Under existing conditions, do you think the work of the hospital could be done as effectually without the aid of the students and school generally, and with as little expense?

3. With reference to the patients, do you think their diseases are more minutely inquired into, and treatment better carried out by clinical teaching, and under the observation of many, than could obtain under other conditions, namely, where there is no medical school?

4. Does teaching necessarily demand a higher class of physicians and surgeons; and, if so, what is the effect upon the reputation of the hospital?

5. State any disadvantages arising from the connection of a medical school and hospital, so far as the welfare of the latter is concerned.

I received replies from thirteen hospitals. They are all in favour of association with medical schools, for mutual help and benefit. So decided was this opinion in Glasgow, that when the University School of Medicine was removed from the Royal Infirmary to the Western Hospital, the authorities of the Royal Infirmary at once set about the establishment of another school of medicine, which they have now completed. A few examples will suffice.

"St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, London, W., August 25th, 1879. Dear Sir,—In the absence of Dr. Shepherd, I venture to answer the questions in your note received this morning. (1) I find it a decided advantage to have a medical school attached to the hospital; for (2) Without such association the work of the hospital, both as regards the in-patients and out-patients, could not be done so effectually, nor, I imagine, could so much be done at so little expense. (3) I am of opinion that in-patients do derive a definite advantage from clinical teaching, so does the medical attendant himself, and so, indirectly, does humanity at large. (4) By a process of selection or development, a hospital with a school attached secures, as a rule, a higher standard of efficiency in its staff, so the reputation of the hospital is increased. (5) This may be considered a disadvantage—that the quiet of the wards during certain hours is broken by the students taking notes and making examinations, but this is a matter of comparatively little importance.—I am, yours truly, EDMUND OWEN, Acting Dean."

"135, Gower Street, London, W.C., August 28th, 1879. Dear Sir,—I herewith send my answers to your questions. (1) Decidedly advantageous. (2) No. (3) Decidedly. (4) Better men compete for the post where there are students, and if they are good men and teach the students well, when the latter become practitioners they will send them patients. To teach well a man must keep himself well abreast of the knowledge of the day, and it is, therefore, an incentive to work. The effect on the reputation of the hospital is decidedly good. (5) Where the number of students is very large in proportion to the number of beds, occasionally the patients get examined rather more frequently than is pleasant, but the resident and visiting staff take care that no real injury is done to a patient.—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully, H. RADCLIFFE CROCKER, M.D. Lond., M.R.C.P., etc., Physician to the Skin-Department of University College Hospital."

"Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, September 4th, 1879. Dear Sir,—I found your letter of the 20th August waiting on my return from my holidays. In reply to the queries contained in it, I would answer,—(1) That it is advantageous to have a medical school attached to the hospital. (2) I do not think the work could be done so effectually without the students. It might be done at less expense, but their fees help to balance the additional expenditure incurred. (3) I think the patients are better treated, and are likely to be better treated, where there is a school. (4) Teaching does demand a high class of physicians and surgeons, and the reputation of the hospital increases in consequence. (5) I know of no disadvantage.—Yours truly, M. THOMAS, M.D., Superintendent."

"Westminster Hospital, 19, George Street, Hanover Square, August 27th, 1879. DEAR SIR,—I have only just returned from abroad, and found your letter yesterday at the hospital. I may briefly refer to your questions as follows—(1) It is advantageous to have a medical school attached to a large hospital. (2) It is impossible to keep up the supply of dressers without, and an increased number of house surgeons would be required, who, in addition, must be paid. These house surgeons are honorary appointments with a school. (3) I do not know that the patients are directly better off with a school, except in such cases as aneurism and serious operations, where relays of students are invaluable in many ways. (4) I think that a school compels the staff to keep up with the modern improvements and discoveries of science, and attracts and retains the services of good men, whereby the reputation of the hospital undoubtedly benefits. (5) There are no disadvantages, except the trouble of ordering a body of students, and this, nowadays, is very slight.—Yours faithfully, GEORGE COWELL."

"London Hospital, Whitechapel Road, E., September 3rd, 1879. Dear Sir,—I am directed by the House Committee to return the following answers to your queries of August 20th—(1) It is considered here *advantageous* to have a medical school attached to the hospital (2) No. (3) Yes. (4) Yes; and the general reputation of the hospital is raised. (5) No disadvantages are known to arise from the connection.—I am, dear Sir, faithfully yours, A. G. SNELGROVE, Secretary."

From this evidence it will be observed that the question of advantage or disadvantage of the association of hospitals and schools has passed out of the region of controversy, the whole weight of opinion being overwhelmingly in favour of the former, so much so as to place it beyond the reach of any reactionary endeavours. We of the Royal Infirmary and School of Medicine are therefore at one on this matter with the great centres of medical education elsewhere, and we trust the process of evolution and growth has not yet come to a standstill, but, on the contrary, that it has just begun to advance even to a greater development. This we hope to see in the near future, when our coming University College of Liverpool has seen the light. What has become of its committee? *Parturit montes*. The process seems tedious and slow. Does the twin brother, the Bishopric, block the way. If so, some form of interference must be demanded, and the attention of the town called to a difficulty of such pressing importance. Is it not sufficiently known that, even in our own case, there are over a hundred students attending lectures at the Royal Infirmary School of Medicine every year, not one of whom, from the want of opportunity for scientific training, can completely qualify here for the matriculation examination of the University of London. May not the finger of scorn be justly pointed at the greatest and wealthiest seaport in the world, and the question be asked, what of your enormous commerce and immense riches, if you close your eyes and ears against knowledge, against that science and art which have been and are still at the foundation of all your prosperity? I, for my part, can hardly think that the people of Liverpool are solely given over to the grosser pleasures of life; but they seem to have forgotten that knowledge ought to be placed within the reach of all. A grand opportunity now exists for a wealthy citizen to make his name here immortal. Owens College in Manchester is a fitting example. But we do not need to travel so far from home. Is there no one who has the ambition, the courage, the self-sacrifice, the scorn and disregard of Mammon to imitate the noble example of Sir William Brown, who built our Free Library, or of Sir A. B. Walker, who has but just recently finished that splendid pile the Art Gallery? If there be, then we shall hope soon to see the University College, a stately building, spring up, it may be adjacent to the School of Medicine. The institution that stands there now is an anachronism. It was once in the country—where it ought to be—but the town has grown around it. It ought again to be removed to the country, where it would become a source of profit to the Royal Infirmary, supply a need much wanted, and so be a real boon to the public.

Dr. Wallace then proceeded to the consideration of some of the recent advances in our knowledge of the diseases of women, first pointing out that in the Royal Infirmary there are peculiar advantages for the study of these subjects, for in 1862 the late Mrs. Thornton left £10,000 to build and endow two wards, called the Thornton, for the sole treatment of diseases peculiar to women. There is in Liverpool no Royal Infirmary Maternity, but arrangements have been made by which the practice of the Ladies' Charity and Lying-in Hospital has now become available, and as 2,500 cases are attended yearly, it will be unnecessary for students to go to Dublin, London, or elsewhere for midwifery practice as they have hitherto, to a great extent, been obliged to do. There will thus be enough practical work and to spare.

TRURO.—Last year the death-rate was 26.79 per 1,000, no fewer than 92 of the 296 deaths occurring from zymotic diseases. Moreover, 150, or more than half the deaths, were those of children under five years of age. All these facts point in the direction of bad sanitary conditions, and the prevalence of typhoid fever is even more conclusive. During the year, 9 deaths from this disease were reported, and 50 cases came to the knowledge of Mr. Sharp. The chief incidence of the epidemic fell, as might be expected, on localities having imperfect systems of excrement removal. Whooping-cough was terribly fatal, carrying off fifty children under five years and two above that age. We believe the Local Government Board are in correspondence with the Town Council on the subject of the sanitary state of the city; and it certainly seems extremely important that defective sewerage, suspicious water-supplies from wells, and a system of excrement-disposal, allowing soakage into the soil, should not be permitted any longer to foster disease in the place and poison its inhabitants.