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INTRODUCTORY LECTURE, DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE,

October 8, 1841.

By Dr. J. L. BARDSLEY.

GENTLEMEN,—I appear before you, on this occasion, with no ordinary feelings of embarrassment—an embarrassment, arising not only from the natural anxiety felt by every one in the discharge of a duty like the present, but also from a conviction of the difficulty of communicating anything like interest to a subject so entirely exhausted, as a review of the general qualifications and duties of a medical student; which review, of course, must at all times furnish the principal material for a lecture introductory to the commencement of a medical session. Having, however, been requested by my colleagues to undertake the performance of this task, I have, from a sense of duty, waived any objections to it which I might otherwise have entertained. Many of you, gentlemen, who appear here this day, can hardly as yet be said to have commenced (properly speaking) your professional education. Your studies hitherto, I take it for granted, have been chiefly directed to literature, and to the natural sciences; and indeed, it is of the highest importance that this should have been the case, because, without such a preliminary mental culture, it will be impossible for you properly to appreciate the various branches of medical science, and impossible also for you to obtain that position in society so essential to your personal respectability, and to success in your profession. And here, gentlemen, may be the proper place for stating to you what are my own sentiments respecting the amount of preliminary education suitable for those embarking in the pursuit of medicine. I candidly confess, gentlemen, for my own part, that I am not one of those who would fix the standard of this education so very high. It is necessary for us to take into account the actual circumstances of the great majority of those who do enter, or are likely hereafter to enter, our profession, when we attempt to fix a rule of qualification that is to apply to all. We should not confound that which it is well for the student to know, with that which it is indispensable he should know. Indeed, I very much fear, that by overrating the requirements of the medical student, we tend rather to discourage his exertions than to stimulate his zeal and activity. An extensive knowledge of languages, and a profound acquaintance with the mathematical and the physical sciences, very much dignify, certainly, the happy individual who is gifted enough to have attained such intellectual eminence, probably before he is twenty;

No. 55.

but, gentlemen, most assuredly you may become intelligent and practically useful physicians and surgeons with a less amount of general information. Do not mistake me, however. It is by no means my wish to decry the importance of extensive and varied acquirements in the medical student; but it is my desire to disabuse your minds of any erroneous notions which you may have formed with respect to the direct bearing of these upon your future studies.

Now, gentlemen, having said thus much with the purpose of reconciling you in some measure to your own deficiencies, (understanding by this term whatever you may fall short of the ideal standard which books and introductory lectures but too often raise up,) it becomes my duty to put you in possession of what I believe to be really and essentially requisite, in order that you may advantageously engage in medical study, with the fair hope of hereafter becoming useful and successful practitioners. And, in the first instance, I must caution you against that too prevalent error, on the other hand, of estimating the amount of necessary acquirement according to the examinations you will have to undergo, rather than according to its relation to your future standing as medical men. I admit that these examinations must, of course, occasion you considerable anxiety; but, nevertheless, look beyond them, and be assured that your success in passing the required ordeal will never be endangered by any proceeding which a sound judgment must approve.

I hope then, gentlemen, that all of you who are now on the threshold of your medical studies have received a solid instruction in the history and literature of your own country, some knowledge of mathematics, and an acquaintance with the French and Latin languages. It would be an insult to your understandings for me to enter into any detail of reasons why you should be sound English scholars, because at the present day no one with any pretensions to respectability would suppose that he could dispense with this qualification, much less one proposing to himself to become a member of a learned profession. There is one consideration, gentlemen, however, which I think it well to suggest to you. I allude to the expectation generally entertained that, in this age of periodicals, societies, and associations, whatever of interest or value occurs in the practice of individuals shall, in some way or another, be communicated to the profession generally, or to the particular medical sphere in which each may move. How shall you, however, realize this expectation with any credit to yourselves, or profit to your brethren, unless you be qualified, by a competent knowledge of your own language, to express yourselves correctly in writing?

As to the mathematics, a moderate acquaintance with arithmetic will be all that is absolutely needful; but some knowledge of algebra, and of the higher branches of this science, you would

find many opportunities of usefully applying. I have no hesitation in saying, that any one who is ignorant of the French language will be entirely deprived of the facility of acquainting himself thoroughly with the medical profession, because our brethren in France have opportunities of prosecuting the study of morbid anatomy, the true basis of medical science, to an extent I believe greater than those afforded by any other country. Having such opportunities, they have most diligently turned them to account, and there is scarcely a department in pathology which has not received elucidation and its best illustrations from their labours. And depend upon it, gentlemen, that if you cannot read French, you will never properly understand what they have done. It is true that you may obtain some acquaintance with their writings from occasional translations of quotations in reviews, and, in some instances, of entire works; but any information acquired in this way will seldom be clear and distinct to your own minds, and of a permanent nature. The actual utility of classical literature in the study of medicine, I take to be much less than is generally imagined; but, nevertheless, Latin, under present circumstances, you must know; because, in the first place, your proficiency in that language will be tested in your future examinations, this being pretty generally regarded as a fair mode of judging of the previous literary education of the examinant. Again, as it is the prevailing custom to write medical prescriptions in Latin, you are of course arrested at the very onset, if you be in ignorance of that tongue; besides, medical phraseology is to so great an extent made up of Latinisms, that it would be scarcely possible to understand any portion of the literature of your profession, if you were deficient in this regard. Those of you, however, who are ambitious of standing before the world as accomplished physicians and surgeons, must add to what I have just specified as necessary, a good knowledge of the German and Italian languages, and also of Greek; but those of you at present unacquainted with these latter branches, had better abandon all thoughts of them until the completion of your medical studies. In order to the correct appreciation of several departments of physiology, as of the eye and of the ear, for example; as, also, for the proper comprehension of the other divisions of medical science, it is necessary that you should be familiar with the leading principles of optics, acoustics, and mechanics. I do not mean, gentlemen, that you need be profound in these sciences,—that may be the work of a life; but I do hold, that you cannot satisfactorily commence the study of your profession without a certain amount of information upon these subjects—such an amount, probably, as a youth of fair average capacity might obtain from twice perusing, attentively, some such work as Arnott's Elements of Physics.

Having, gentlemen, said thus much with respect to your studies and acquirements anterior to your engagement in medical pursuits, I shall proceed to bring under your notice certain considerations intended to impress you with the relative importance of the various branches of science which must occupy your attention in the progress of this and ensuing sessions. And allow me, before advancing further, to suggest to you, in the first instance,

the imperative necessity of your ever bearing in mind that the ultimate end and term of all your anxieties,—all your exertions and labours, is the acquirement of a knowledge of the practical duties of your profession. For the management and cure of disease constitute the special vocation of every medical man, whatever may be the particular department in which he may engage. It is true, that a considerable portion of your time must, for a certain period, be devoted to anatomical and physiological pursuits, that chemistry and some other collateral branches of medical science must, in their main principles at least, be mastered by you; but, still, it must ever be borne in mind that these are chiefly valuable inasmuch as they are essential to a right understanding of disease, and of a proper application of its remedies. I know well that I here only repeat a thrice-told tale—that I only repeat a truism with which many of you may be familiar; but, nevertheless, in the practical bearings of this truism there are many matters which cannot be too frequently impressed upon your attention. I shall, therefore, endeavour, by a few illustrations, to exhibit the guidance which this ought to afford to you in the further progress of your studies.

One of the subjects which will very properly receive a large share of your attention is *anatomy*, and how zealously and eagerly does the industrious student enter upon this pursuit; but, herein, the check of sober reflection must occasionally interfere; for I hesitate not to state, that even in the cultivation of this, the basis and ground-work, and *sine qua non* of our whole art and science, the main design of the whole is sometimes forgotten. Often have I known the well-informed, the acute, and well-intentioned student, inflamed with an ardent enthusiasm for anatomical knowledge, consume too large a share of the limited period ordinarily devoted to the learning of the elements of his profession, in making preparations, in tracing out the minute ramifications of every little artery or nerve, and all this, without the slightest consideration of a practical application of the same. Do not mistake me, gentlemen. It is far from my intention to undervalue anatomical acquirements, or to discourage you in the pursuit thereof; on the contrary, perfectly coinciding with all that my friend Mr. Turner may urge in commendation of his favourite department, I am sure that he will agree with me in my exhortations to you to bear in mind that you must attend to anatomy, not for the mere purpose of being anatomists, but that you may in your future practice be acquainted with the relations of the various parts of the human body to the phenomena of life, and to the departure of those from the normal standard, so that you shall be in a condition to form a proper diagnosis of disease, and to select and apply the appropriate treatment. In a word, anatomy, as the foundation of all that is scientific in medicine, must receive a careful and solid attention; but, in your anxiety about the basis, you must never lose sight of the superstructure. The same view will hold good, and the same cautions must be observed in the attention which it will be your duty to bestow upon the various striking phenomena which the science of *physiology* unfolds. This science, as you are doubtless aware, is that which explains the functions, or the duties performed by the several structures of which the human body is composed; and

in the wide range which this field of inquiry opens, a large amount of important and interesting facts is afforded, and yours must be the care to exercise a proper judgment and discrimination in the selection of matter for permanent recollection. In order that you may become sound and intelligent practitioners, it will not be necessary that you have your memories charged with all the experiments and reasonings of Magendie, Bell, Dutrochet, Mayo, Ehrenberg, Müller, Bellingeri, and other luminaries in this department, but with the leading principles of all that is positive and determinate in physiology you must acquaint yourselves. You must, for example, understand well the ascertained laws of the circulation of the blood, of the functions of the viscera, and of the brain and spinal cord, and also the main facts which establish the prevailing doctrines on these points; and this, not merely because they are curious and improving to your minds, but because, without such information, you never can properly understand the phenomena of disease; if you are not familiar with the normal condition of the human body, you cannot say what constitutes its abnormal state, which is disease. Study physiology, then, gentlemen, but never lose sight of the principal reasons recommendatory thereof.

The science of *chemistry* holds out attractions so abundant and varied, that many students are in some danger of being so allured by these, as to neglect and lose sight of the intention of the directors of medical education, in ordaining that chemical knowledge shall be included therein. With what object, then, has chemistry been recommended to your attention? why, mainly, that you may be enabled to understand the nature of those substances which, as medicines, you will be called upon to administer in the treatment of disease. The chemical properties of the various articles used in pharmacy, the general laws of their combinations, the nature of chemical affinity; how, for example, substances under certain circumstances acquire totally different powers of operation upon the animal economy;—all this, absolutely essential to the intelligent and conscientious practitioner, is quite inappreciable and incomprehensible without a certain familiarity with the fundamental principles of *chemistry*. But it is not desirable that at present, at least, you should devote any exclusive or all-absorbing attention to that subject—that you should construct a chemical laboratory, and bestow your days and your nights in the repetition of chemical experiments; but it will be quite sufficient for you to understand the great laws of this science, and to be somewhat familiar with the details of most that actually relates to matters in direct connexion with the practice of your profession; and if any of you feel a special vocation to the elaborate pursuit of chemistry, let this be neglected until the completion of those studies which are more strictly medical.

It is of the highest moment that *materia medica* receive a considerable share of your time and diligent application, because, herein, we have included a species of knowledge which you will be constantly required to exercise, and without which, in your future practice, it is impossible for you to move one step. I must regret, that students in general attach sadly too small an importance to this division of their labours. Often do we hear this subject proscribed as dry, uninteresting,

and tedious in its details, and as furnishing no proper material capable of interesting the intelligent mind. But yet, gentlemen, I can assure you that this is a most erroneous mode of thinking, as will be shown by a very slight consideration of the objects embraced by *materia medica*: these are the various substances used in medicine, derived from the three great kingdoms of nature, the animal, vegetable, and mineral—a knowledge of their various properties, of the mode of their administration in disease, and of their general effects upon the animal economy; these matters, you will perceive, allow abundant scope for intellectual activity. If by *materia medica* you understand a mere learning by heart the names of drugs, their sources, their average doses, and so on, I grant you that this subject constitutes but a dry sort of study; but when you combine this detailed information with the higher views to which I have just alluded, you will see ample reason to agree with me that *materia medica*, properly regarded, forms one of the most important and even interesting points of your medical education. Having for a period of thirteen years been entrusted with the duty of teaching in this department at this school, you will, I am sure, give me credit for some capability of forming a judgment upon the nature of this study, and of its just claims to your sedulous attention.

Thus, gentlemen, it is obvious, on a moment's reflection, that the sciences of anatomy and physiology, chemistry and *materia medica*, furnish the materials by whose aid the student is in a condition to observe and understand the phenomena of disease, and its modes of management; and without which aid no correct appreciation of the practice of medicine can take place; for which reason, the corporate bodies presiding over medical education have very wisely determined that an attendance upon at least one course of lectures upon each of these subjects shall precede the course upon practical medicine.

Pathology and morbid anatomy are to disease what physiology and anatomy are to the normal condition of the body; and hence you see that, without a previous possession of the latter knowledge, the former never can be properly or advantageously obtained; and without a due acquaintance with chemistry and *materia medica*, therapeutics, or the employment of the means for promoting the cure of disease, can never be safely exercised. You will have perceived, from what I have before advanced, that no one is more disposed than myself to attach a high value to anatomy, physiology, and the collateral departments of medicine in general; still I am desirous that you should never lose sight of the great fact, that these, however essential to the comprehension, do not teach disease. Thus, for example, a minute anatomist or learned physiologist may constitute but an indifferent practitioner, for, after all the accessory knowledge shall have been acquired, still it is indispensable that the sick should be personally visited and examined, that the properties and modes of action of remedies should be carefully watched, and that the progress of symptoms during life, and the morbid changes of organization after death, should be diligently explored.

Having thus attempted to set before you the relative importance properly to be attached to the various subjects which will have to engage your

attention in the progress of your studies, I am anxious to make a few observations respecting that pursuit which must be paramount to every other, that which embodies in itself the application of all your accessory knowledge,—I allude to the investigation of disease at the bed-side of the patient, in other words, to *clinical medicine*, as it is technically called.

Well then, gentlemen, after you have obtained a general knowledge of descriptive and structural anatomy, of physiology, chemistry, and the *materia medica*, you will be in a condition profitably to study disease as it exists in nature. For this purpose, let me beg of you to let nothing interfere with your attendance upon hospital practice, for depend upon it that it is upon information acquired in this way alone that you can advantageously build in your future career. I much regret that the ample opportunities for practical improvement afforded by our hospitals are but too often lost upon students, and, in many instances, not from any wilful neglect on their own part, but purely from the erroneous mode in which their observations are conducted. And when this is the case, no wonder that young men should proclaim that the importance of witnessing hospital practice is much overrated, having themselves had their anticipations of profit therefrom grievously disappointed. But, gentlemen, the cause of this disappointment is with themselves. If, in your walks through the hospital, you adopt an irregular system of observation; if, for example, you note symptoms only in one patient, treatment merely in another, and morbid appearances after death in cases never seen by you during life, then, indeed, much of the benefit fairly deducible from hospital attendance will assuredly be lost, and you, too, may experience a somewhat similar feeling. In order that you should receive the full amount of good from your clinical studies, it will be requisite that you fix your attention upon particular cases which you may select as examples of certain forms of disease; the symptoms of these you should closely watch from day to day, comparing what you see with the descriptions which books and lectures afford. The effects of various modes of treatment, too, must be traced upon those patients whose cases have been rendered available for the study of symptoms; and it would be well if, in some of the more remarkable instances, notes were taken, which you might afterwards contrast with the morbid appearances observed after death, in the event of a fatal termination. Thus, should you, in the progress of a *post-mortem* examination, discover a highly injected state of the minute vessels of the cerebral substance, you might refer to your notes to ascertain if any derangement in the functions of the brain had been remarked during life, which you could connect with the lesion in question, and so on throughout the investigation. Clinical study thus pursued leads to results of a permanent character; knowledge thus obtained will seldom be lost; trains of reflection will arise during its acquirement, not only advantageous in themselves, but eminently conducive to that independence of thought, so essential to the successful and the judicious practitioner.

In order to facilitate this pursuit, the time of lectures and your other routine duties have been so arranged in this and in other schools, as to afford ample opportunities for attendance at the hospital.

It will be seen, gentlemen, on consulting the history of our profession, that the success of nearly all its distinguished members has originated in their constant devotion to the bed-side of the patient. It is true, that, in some instances, charlatanism, eccentricity, or the mere fashion of the day, may usurp the position properly due to character and talent, combined with industry and assiduity in the investigation of disease; but, depend upon it, these do not form the rule, but the exception, and it is because of their comparative rarity that they become the more noticed. Moreover, distinction in the profession, properly speaking, can only be obtained by a close and persevering study of disease as it is actually witnessed in patients. What was it that gave renown to those lights of our profession, Sydenham, Boerhaave, Heberden, Cullen, Baillie, Abernethy, and Cooper? Why, it was the devoted application of their powerful minds to the practical investigation of disease, and all its related circumstances. Eminence, certainly, may be obtained in the collateral departments of medical science, without any very persevering attention to clinical pursuits; but then it must be remembered that such eminence is not, strictly speaking, *medical*. Indeed, attendance upon and careful examination of patients at the bed-side is not only useful with respect to its immediate result, the addition to your own knowledge, but, it is highly important to you, inasmuch as it initiates you in that habit of mind absolutely necessary to your right progress hereafter. For the whole life of a medical man, who is engaged in practice, must, if he do justice to those who confide in his professional skill, be passed in fulfilment of the duties of a clinical student.

I have thus, gentlemen, endeavoured to give you certain general notions respecting the character and amount of preliminary education, which I deem to be desirable for medical students to possess, and have, further, cursorily passed in review the various subjects that must engage their attention in the prosecution of that course of study prescribed by the examining boards of these kingdoms; and, as some who now hear me may be near the termination of their student's career, and will shortly have to embark in actual practice, it may not be improper for me here to throw out a few hints respecting the conduct to be pursued in this eventful period of every young man's history. Now, gentlemen, it is of the highest consideration that you start in the world with an inflexible determination to maintain an integrity and uprightness of moral character. This, indeed, is a principle which, of course, must apply to every one, whatever be his vocation in life; but, nevertheless, there are reasons of no mean moment which render it of especial application to the medical man. It is imperative that he be sober and temperate, regular and diligent in all his habits, and, above all, that he be a stranger to those vices which distinguish the libertine. The fulfilment of these duties, common to mankind at large, is demanded from the medical man in a particular manner, because of the remarkably delicate position in which he is placed with respect to those whose sufferings compel them to confide in his purity, whilst they appeal to his skill. Further, it must be borne in mind, that as the full measure of success in our profession is but seldom attained until a somewhat advanced period of life, a constitution impaired by

the vices of youth is but little calculated to encounter the anxieties and fatigues inseparably connected with active professional exertion. Examples but too frequently occur of individuals who are rendered quite incapable of taking advantage of fortunate circumstances when they have arisen, owing to a serious deterioration of their physical powers and moral energy, the result of dissipation in early life; and this, too, at a time when they might have reaped the reward of years of tedious and anxious expectation. There is another attribute essential to the medical practitioner, which, though it be not of the same importance in a moral point of view, is, nevertheless, most indispensable to him who would obtain and retain the confidence of the public—I mean *discretion*. This quality, gentlemen, displays itself in a prudent management of his intercourse with his patient, in neither prematurely announcing to him danger which may probably be only remote, nor in yet lulling him into a false security by withholding from him the truth, when such a disclosure may intimately affect both his temporal and eternal interests. Furthermore, let every medical man be careful to check any undue or irregular volubility of tongue; let him be cautious in making the ailments of his patients the theme of his gossip; and, above all, let him ever regard as sacred whatever communication of a private nature individuals or families may, in the warmth of unsuspecting confidence, repose in him. It is also necessary that the candidate for success in practice should strive to obtain a gentlemanly address, and a kindness of manner; for although he should possess talents, scientific attainments, and sound morals, yet if he be rude in his deportment, of uncomplying temper, evincing but little sympathy either with his patients or the afflicted relatives, he will most probably fail in securing that position in the profession to which his other qualities may have led him to aspire. A tone of sympathy and forbearance should ever characterize our demeanour towards our patients, for we should never forget that long-continued disease is sure to induce more or less of a querulous impatience even in the most placid tempers, and that it is by a soothing, gentle, and yet firm manner, that the medical attendant must gain the confidence of the sick, so necessary to the happy issue of disease.

In bringing before you these considerations, I by no means advocate the employment of officious and degrading attentions on the part of the practitioner, for the distinction between nurse and medical attendant should ever be observed. No unworthy compliance with the caprices of the sick, no volunteering of services incompatible with the dignity of the professional character, should ever be practised. Such conduct, no doubt, generally proceeds from an injudicious anxiety to secure the favour of those on whose behalf it takes place; I say injudicious, because I believe the attempt often frustrates its own object. I will venture to narrate an anecdote bearing on this point, with the circumstances of which I happened to become acquainted. A lady of distinction was taken suddenly ill whilst upon a journey, and was obliged to stop at a certain town on the road. A medical man of some celebrity in the neighbourhood was sent for, when, instead of permitting the attendants to carry her to her chamber, he insisted upon performing that office himself. The lady, when reporting this occurrence, remarked, that Dr. —

was, she believed, a very clever man, but had so degraded himself by his familiar and servile behaviour in carrying her into her apartment, that she had lost all respect for him. This sort of thing, gentlemen, depend upon it, will nearly always result from any overstrained or derogatory kind of attention.

Punctuality in regard to all your engagements, and more especially to all that concerns your attention to your patients, is scarcely less indispensable to the satisfactory prosecution of your medical career, than the possession of the other qualities which I have just enumerated. It were superfluous for me to enter into any general disquisition upon the importance of, and the advantage flowing from, habits of exactness in the ordinary avocations of life; but I may here, not inappropriately, remind you of the strict necessity that exists for your being scrupulously punctual with respect to the time of your professional visits. Let it be your study to discharge all your current engagements early in the day, so that your time afterwards may be completely at disposal for any sudden or urgent demand that may be made upon you. It is also very desirable for your patient's sake that no procrastination should take place in this respect. Those only who have been the subjects of indisposition can fully appreciate the anxiety and eagerness with which a suffering patient anticipates, probably after a night of tedious and harassing restlessness, the morning visit of his medical attendant. Thus, feelings of humanity alone forcibly prompt to the performance of this duty. Accustom yourselves, also, gentlemen, to let the patient understand the period at which he may expect your next visit, for a somewhat considerable experience has satisfied me that mischief not unfrequently occurs from the nervous excitement occasioned by any uncertainty or disappointment felt upon this point. Should you happen to be attending in consultation with any of your medical brethren, I hope you will feel yourselves bound to respect time which is not your own; for when you disregard the virtue of punctuality on these occasions, you not only infringe the rules of politeness and gentlemanly behaviour, but you violate the very laws of common honesty. Time, gentlemen, is most valuable to the medical man, and he, therefore, who encroaches unduly upon the same, deprives him of what constitutes his property. But in respecting the time of your professional brethren, in being careful how you improperly intrench upon the same, never forget what you owe to their character. It is your bounden duty, on all occasions, to act towards them as you would that they should act towards you. Whatever be the temptation, however you may suppose that your interests are forwarded thereby, never by word, deed, or gesture, conduct yourselves so as to injure the reputation of a fellow practitioner. Any unworthy attempts to undermine the character of another will mostly terminate to the discredit of him who practises them. A temporary advantage may certainly, in many instances, be obtained by such means, but seldom any of a permanent nature; for here, as in other cases, it will generally be found that honesty is the best policy. However, I do not recommend to you the practice of honourable conduct merely because it may happen to constitute the best policy, but because it is in

itself right and just, and dictated both by divine and human laws.

In all that I have, upon this occasion, advanced, it has been my object to present you with my views and sentiments respecting the most appropriate proceeding for you, in the three several stages of your progress. First, I have explained to you the character of that general education which, in my own opinion, ought to precede the commencement of your professional studies; I have then attempted to exhibit to you the relative importance of the several branches of science which lead to the formation of practical medicine; and, lastly, I have in some respects gone beyond the ordinary objects of an introductory address, in offering for your consideration certain suggestions, principally regarding your self-conduct in the early stage of your career in practice. I have been led to this latter course by the reflection that it is extremely desirable that young men should, from the beginning, entertain correct notions upon certain points in medical ethics, which more immediately concern their duties to themselves, to their patients, and to their brethren.

Having proceeded thus far, I must now draw towards a conclusion; and, in concluding, let me me entreat you to keep in mind the important truths which I have this morning attempted to enforce upon your attention.

Do not withdraw from the lecture-room in the mere spirit of criticism with respect to the manner of the lecturer, and the style of his address, as is but too frequently the custom; but if there have been anything in the matter commanding the assent of your judgments, let it exercise a proper influence upon your future proceedings. Yours, gentlemen, is a most critical period in human progress. Your own welfare in after life, the happiness of your family connexions, and the peace of mind of all your friends, will, to a great extent, hinge upon the mode in which, during the next few years, you dispose of that valuable gift of God, your time.

Do not, in the course of this, or other sessions, let your diligence be in paroxysms; do not, one week, dissipate your energies in idleness and folly, and another, overtax your enfeebled brains in fruitless attempts at amends for mispent time and lost opportunities; but let your application be steady, uniform, and systematic, the result of a just appreciation of the importance of the duties you will hereafter have to undertake, and of the serious responsibility which attaches to the proper performance of the same. Be not dismayed, however, gentlemen, when you contemplate the more rugged and gloomy aspect of your present vocation, for though difficulties and trials will beset your path, take courage from the assurance which I give you, that if you only combine persevering industry with moral rectitude, you will readily surmount those difficulties, and come out from those trials unscathed.

ON THE

TREATMENT OF DYSMENORRHOEA.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—The following cursory remarks on the treatment of this distressing and most painfully obstinate affection, are principally prompted by the perusal of Mr. Toogood's observations contained in your last number. In detailing these I offer nothing strictly original, but having decidedly found the treatment hereafter described more successful than any other I have tried, I am anxious that members of the association, having given it a fair trial, should subsequently make known the result of their practice.

The treatment of dysmenorrhœa may justly be divided into that requisite for the relief of the paroxysm, and that to be adopted during the intermenstrual period, with a view to the cure, or at least to the prevention, of the expected periodical attack. The former being the condition in which we in general first see our patient, the mitigation of the present suffering must be our primary endeavour.

For this purpose, I have found nothing afford so speedy relief as ipecacuanha, given with a view to excite and keep up a considerable feeling of nausea for some hours. One or two grains administered at the commencement, and repeated in half or one grain doses every half hour or hour, will in general fulfil the intention. Full doses of camphor and opium taken at the same time, at intervals of four or six hours, appear materially to favour the operation of the ipecacuanha. Tartar emetic alone, or combined with opium, has been recommended by some authors; the ipecacuanha, however, will, I think, in most cases, be found preferable. The application of local warmth is a useful adjunct in the mitigation of severe suffering; but, as will be presently noticed, the paroxysm is not the period in which warmth exerts its most permanently beneficial effect. Still, however, as an auxiliary, it should not be neglected; for this purpose nothing answers so well, as the encircling the pelvis with a band of flannel, three or four times doubled, and at least ten inches broad; to this should be attached posteriorly another slip to be brought over the perinæum, and fastened in front in a similar manner to the T bandage; these should be soaked in water as hot as can be borne, and renewed till relief be obtained.

Stramonium, belladonna, and ergot of rye, have been severally recommended during the paroxysm, and may be tried should the above means fail. But by far the most important period for treatment, with a view to a radical cure, is the interval between two attacks; and in this I would urge the propriety, in all cases, of carefully examining the state of the abdomen, being perfectly satisfied that many severe cases of dysmenorrhœa, which have fallen under my notice, have owed their accession and continuance to a torpid and loaded state of the colon, with deficient secretion, together with a congested state of the liver and biliary apparatus, and that treatment sedulously persevered in, with the intention of correcting this depraved secretion, has perfected the cure. On