AN ADDRESS

ON

THE CONTINUITY OF MEDICAL LIFE.

*Delivered at the opening of the Medical Department of the
Yorkshire College, Leeds, October 3rd, 1887.*

By J. MATTHEWS DUNCAN, A.M., M.D., F.R.S.E.,

Physician-Accoucheur and Lecturer on Midwifery, St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

MEDICAL STUDENTS.—At the present stage of your career, good advice is, like good food, much and often wanted; and, like good plain food, it may be common stuff and rather uninteresting, yet, if good, it is precious, and to be taken and digested. Medical students have no reason to complain that they get too much of it, for, save an occasional remark in an introductory lecture, there is no special medical preaching for them. In a good medical school this want is made up for by the teaching and encouragement which flow from the whole environment in hidden streams; the love of truth, accuracy, kindness, and diligence being everywhere paramount forces, seen and felt; and the proverb says that "example is better than precept." But the proverb does not say that there is no need for precept; and who is there who does not recognise its great value, especially for generous, impulsive youth?

In medicine and surgery example takes a large part in the best teaching, and accordingly you walk the hospital, following your teachers day after day. As the old cock crows the young one learns! In addition, however, to walking the hospital, you sit in the lecture room and take notes; you get precept upon precept, and keep them in your own manuscript.

Our topic is higher than pure, simple medicine and surgery, yet intimately associated with it, indeed, combined with it, as in chemical constitution—the science and practice of virtue. It is not quite on the surface, yet it is not deeply hidden, that, without virtue, you can make but imperfect progress in science, and you must be very imperfect if not injurious in practice. Your teachers do not, like me, lecture on this supremely important department of medicine, but, as I have said, they teach by example. You are not to go home after your day's work thinking you have learnt only cocci and metabolisms and pills and bandages. In addition to these you have been learning matters of infinitely greater importance—truth and accuracy and kindness and diligence. Were I addressing teachers instead of students, I would tell them that their chief teaching was embodied in their conduct, their bye-expressions, and their manner, although these make no appearance in the dreaded examination papers. What pupil of the great Alison does not recognise a perennial moral influence emanating even now from him, and more potent for good than any doctrine he taught, still more than any prescription he gave? A teacher in a great school has been known even to inculcate immorality and insinuate corruption. Were such a teacher a Harvey, even, or a Hunter, he is doing vastly more harm than good, and the pupils would do well to shun him, and prefer starvation to his tainted, poisonous viands.

The gardener may have the best seeds, and the finest soil and refreshing rains, but he will have no finest fruit unless there are spread over all the potent influences of light and heat in their due proportion. The practitioner may struggle to do the very best for his patient in a house badly drained and badly ventilated, but his efforts will be hampered and good results delayed by the vitiated atmosphere. Likewise, if a medical school has not a wholesome moral atmosphere the teachers will make shabby pupils, and the pupils will grow into mean practitioners.

The analogy of antiseptic midwifery is too striking and attractive to be here omitted. Since the great obstetric department of medicine began its beneficent course, progress has been, for the most part, the result of its scientific development, that is, of its anatomy and physiology. The work paramount in mere bulk has been and is a feverish, restless, hasty, and copious production of what are believed, for a time at least, to be practical improvements; and, among such, there are some of the highest permanent value. Of these, the greatest is the use of the forceps; but, unfortunately, its utility has been, ever since its introduction, marred by excessive application, and never more than to-day, when we find eminent practitioners using it in seventy per cent. of their cases. Now, in the midst of this restless advance,

[1397]

there rises the antiseptic practice of Lister, and, by its use in midwifery, a sudden fall, such as was never previously observed, is produced in the morbidity and the mortality of lying-in women. Pestiferous hospitals are changed into healthy homes. Pestiferous accoucheurs and nurses are robbed of their dangerous quality. The name of Lister is, at one step, made the greatest in the practice of midwifery, his discoveries having achieved more for the comfort and the safety of lying-in women than the combined efforts of succeeding generations of enthusiastic obstetricians. The influence of antiseptics is like that of light and heat in the operations of the gardener, and like that of a pure atmosphere in the efforts of the practitioner. Similar to these powerful beneficent influences is that of a wholesome moral atmosphere in the teaching of medicine and surgery; and I may add, parenthetically, in their practice also.

To say a very little on the vast subject of the medical aspects of the science and practice of virtue is all that can be attempted to-day; and a lecturer may be guided in selection of a part not so much by looking for what is most appropriate, as by the current of thought at the time, and, at this time, who is not drawn into the doctrines of evolution? That charming and valuable theory has a wide application in biology, and perhaps also in morals, but it has naturally been forced to extremes by enthusiasts and by special pleaders. To such it would seem, by a kind of flank movement in dialectics, to render vain the great discussions on free will and necessity, and to solve the problem by cramming mankind into a fatalist machine which deals with human souls in the same way as pigs are treated in the factories of Chicago. But conscience and responsibility are not to be justly governed by the laws of matter or of life, and the science and practice of virtue are not mere chapters in the theory of evolution.

No one doubts the truth of continuity in morals as well as in physics, yet it is necessary to guard you against identifying it with evolution. Continuity, a doctrine of the highest importance, implies sequence with connection, but does not exclude forces, which, if they obey continuity, are as yet not known, only suspected, to do so. No one doubts the continuity of prevalence of scarlet fever; it is always among us, carrying off its victims at, at least, an average rate. But this continuity, with its average, is violently disturbed, not utterly broken, by the unaccountable appearance of epidemics which despise the average, and rage according to a different law. So in politics there is a continuity, but it is disturbed by a Cæsar, a Charlemagne, or a Napoleon. So in the science of medicine continuity is modified by a Lavoisier, a Bichat, or a Schwann. So in the practice of medicine continuity has its uniformity of course interfered with by a Hippocrates, a Galen, or a Cullen.

The appearance of great original genius in medicine is a matter equally beyond our powers of explanation or control. If it is included in the laws of evolution, it has not been shown to be so. It certainly appears to infringe the law of continuity, as that law is illustrated to us by the general progress of professional knowledge.

Every sane man, every sane school, provides according to the known laws of continuity. No sane man conducts his education as that of a great original genius. No wise school provides for other than the average intellect. But this provision, according to the law of continuity with its averages, does not imply flat sameness, does not imply absence of genius in individuals, does not imply uselessness of individual effort. Were such perversion of the laws of continuity into the fatalist form of evolution sanctioned, then individual effort, if not utterly useless, would be at least discouraged or paralysed; and these remarks would be baneful and misleading.

Medical students have to study the continuity of their individual lives, the continuity of their social lives as members of a school, the continuity of their social lives as members of a profession.

The life of a man from his mother's knee to the terminal grave is likened to a thread whose continuity, maintained till then, is abruptly broken. We hold to a different doctrine, that the continuity across the dark valley is still maintained. Enough for us now to consider only a part of this eternal life, the part occupied by medical studies, not a new part separate from that of school and of college, but a growth from school and college into medical studentship and on to professional practice.

It is always a growth, there is no standing still, no arrestment. If it is not a growth towards higher and better, it is certainly a growth to lower and worse. As you are carried on in the great stream of Yorkshire life you are not mere toys of a compelling current, or, rather, you ought not so to be. By individual effort you must push this way and that, always taking care that the direction is to higher and better. The aims are accumulation of knowledge, acquisition of skill, improvement in virtue, the last being paramount, and bringing all the rest in its train.

Regarding this growth there is much to consider. There are many parts to be pruned, and there should be much digging about and dunging, or fostering. In the former category are the tendencies to loitering and idleness, to sensual indulgence or excess, to overmuch dilettantism in subjects foreign to your medical pursuits. In the latter category are devotion to work—the work set before you by your school—accuracy, thoroughness. Failure in accuracy and thoroughness is a great fault of medical students, the chief basis of their bad answers at their examinations. You must, therefore, at every smallest step ensure accuracy and thoroughness. In other words, you should make certain that you know what you know. Of this you may make sure, and may thus have some notion, though inexact, of the amount and extent of your knowledge, that is, *inter alia*, how near you are in fitness for going up for examination. This knowledge of what you know is a true note of modesty. You will, alas! find the amount to be very small, and you will look with all the more greed into the vast fields of the to you as yet unknown or the to you as yet imperfectly known. An example of thorough inaccuracy may amuse you; it is not very rare for an examiner to ask, as a bye question, Who discovered vaccination? and to get the verbal or mere parrot accuracy of answer, Jenner. Where did he flourish?—London! When did he flourish?—He is living still! Better examples still are to be found every day in the course of medical teaching. "Here," says the teacher, "is a picture of a deep ulcer. Now you will see it through the speculum." The speculum slips, and nothing is to be seen but a pale cream-coloured mucous surface. Yet the careless student looks, and says he sees the ulcer. It will be hard work to drive anything into this student's head, and the hard work can scarcely be expected from the teacher of a large class. Accuracy is, like conviction, a short process, which you may have at once and at all times. Thoroughness is, like persuasion, a long process, and generally susceptible of improvement or of being strengthened. It is interesting to observe how much a good teacher values it and how little the raw student; the former dwelling with evident pleasure far longer, and for the thousandth time, on testing such a sign as the hardness or elasticity of a tumour than does the quick and superficial student for the first time. Another example of want of thoroughness may be taken from practice. The student and such an observer as the "public" think the drugs the great point, say, in the treatment of a fever, while the almost infinitely greater matter of keeping steadily in a warm bed is never even thought of or regarded only as a comfort. In like manner, when a patient is sent to some special part of the Riviera, he may think his clever physician is selecting to a nicety some peculiarity of air, while the physician is probably thinking only of rest and change.

But I pass from the subject of the continuity of your individual life with two remarks, and with these only, as there is provided for you, on Sundays and otherwise, a great amount of valuable teaching regarding it.

The first remark is that you cannot suddenly or quickly change yourselves. That would imply a nearly complete infringement of the law of continuity. Whatever may be true, in another department of mind, as to sudden conversion, as of St. Paul, it is certain that a medical student cannot, otherwise than by a slow and laborious process, make out of a lazy idler an industrious, accurate, thorough pupil. Habit is a second nature. You can force yourselves into good habits, and thus improve your nature. You can be regular in your engagements. You can choose diligent and good companions. You have it thus in your power to make yourselves happy, accurate, thorough students.

The second remark is that in the theory and practice of virtue, love is the greatest force; and that, as good students, you must begin, continue, and end by loving medicine, loving your teachers of medicine, and loving your patients, the subjects of medicine. With hearts so attuned you will be happy and victorious, however humble your career may be. With hearts otherwise attuned you will be neither happy nor victorious, however much of the mere outward emblems of success you may carry on your breasts, glittering and dazzling, and satisfying only mere time-servers.

In the membership of a medical school your individual condition is not lost but modified, controlled, and complicated by the new relations in which you are placed. You are thrown into a too rapid current over which you have no governing power; and it carries you on from matriculation through many different courses to the final examinations and the licence to practice. The arrangements of the school are not adapted to any individual capacity, but to an average; an adaptation not discovered by the ingenuity of teachers, but arrived at as the result of long experience; and it falls to every individual student to supplement this so adapted course, prescribed by statutes

and common to all, by such special studies as the peculiarities of his case may demand. The continuity of individual education must not be utterly forgotten, or merged in the continuity of the school life.

The paramount object of the school is to teach the science of medicine; specimens, experiments, and cases being copiously provided, in order to illustrate the lessons and to keep the minds of pupils constantly in touch with facts or realities, hugging the firm land of positive truth, keeping them, as much as may be, to observation and induction; and also restraining the teacher in his flights of theory and irrepressible use of the deductive method. While the school uses the hospital as an aid in teaching science, as it uses the museum, it uses it also as an invaluable introduction to practice—the final aim of all your work.

Little more than a hundred years ago there were for students in London no human dissections, no specimens, no experiments. The physician had some university education, he defended a thesis, and he walked the hospital. His teachers took a view of their duty diametrically opposite to that taken by your teachers. Not observation and experiment and induction, but theory and deduction. Above all things, they inculcated a system (which was really a flimsy hypothesis), believing it to be as essential to the practitioner's guidance as the pole-star is to the mariner. The theories of Hippocrates or of Cullen, or some other system, were regarded as embodiments of medical wisdom by those best able to judge. And, though it is now recognised that all medical systems are premature and erroneous generalisations, yet such are not utterly banished from medicine; for we have flourishing still the puny and sickly system of Hahnemann, recognised as an embodiment of medical folly by those best able to judge. Of what you understand as medical education the surgeon—then in social position much inferior to the physician—had very little. Besides walking the hospitals, he may have assisted at the dissection of a dog.

Nowadays, with a host of subjects each pressing for room, medical policy has no more difficult department than settling and arranging in order your medical studies; and the difficulty is demonstrated by the frequent changes made in them. Money, time, and the amount and kinds of knowledge required are the chief considerations.

Of money little need be said, but much thought has to be carefully given to it by each individual for himself, since medical politicians are at ease so long as a sufficient number of pupils appears on the benches year after year. Yet it is only just to add that there should be maintained some proportion between the expense of education and the lucrativeness of the practice it leads to. A parent is not to be expected to spend on the professional education of his son money which will not yield to him 10 per cent. Meantime, however, money is in no respect a pressing consideration, for there are plenty of young men willing to give it. And it is not to be forgotten that in most schools, as in this one, the evil of excluding a poor yet specially clever student is to some extent averted by scholarships open to all comers. One or more of these the poor student may win, and so not only demonstrate his desirableness as a pupil, but also secure for himself special honour and favour in the school.

Always and in all circumstances time is short. In medical education it has to be considered in three of its epochs—three knots in the thread of your life: the age of matriculation, that is, when your minds are matured for professional studies; and in ascertaining this maturity, occasion is at the same time taken to test the quality of your preliminary education as an introduction to medical education. Then comes the age of responsibility, 21. Subsequently comes, especially for those having a very complete education involving much that is preliminary, the age of being settled in life. It is not fit, considering the span of human life, to have pupils above the age of 25.

The amount of knowledge required is always increasing, and with it the amount of time needful for its acquisition. Not long ago three years were enough; now four are required, and it looks as if it would soon rise to five.

Among medical politicians there seems to be unanimity as to raising higher and higher the amount of knowledge and of time required, the elevation having no check but the supply of pupils. The higher the standard, the better for the public, so long as the supply is ample. It is not here that difficulty intervenes; it is in fixing the line between a mere technical, narrow, mean education, with its cramming and its tradesman-like ideas, and its reliance on examinations, and a broader and more philosophical, or more real education, relying on what a man has thought or digested more than on what he has been coached to produce at an examination table. And the difficulty is enormously increased by the compromise required in the United Kingdom by the co-operation of two sets of bodies whose aim is not in all respects the same. You have the universities and the corpora-

tions both sending out qualified men with identical privileges; the corporations charged by the State to look after public medicine and that alone, the universities charged to look after religion, morals, culture, and medicine, all together; the corporations giving a licence; the universities giving an honour which carries with it the licence.

Without wishing to derogate from the honour of the corporations or to add to the honour of the universities, we may, for convenience sake, call the one kind of education that of a university, and the other that of a corporation. It will at once be granted that the university kind of education is that to be aimed at, that which should be taken by all who can afford the time. Every medical school should keep the university ideal before it, and this is implied in your Leeds school being now in process of incorporation with a rising university. In the universities of Scotland and Ireland the ideal is maintained. There are schools in which the ideal is almost forgotten. If you turn to the reviving medical schools of the old English universities, Oxford and Cambridge, you will recognise the struggle to keep up the university ideal; and I may refer you specially to the Oxford scheme, gradually matured, chiefly under the fostering care of Sir H. Acland, for an embodiment of the best modern medical education, keeping it as a department of biology specially developed for practical purposes, yet not utterly separated from classics, mathematics, and philosophy. Degradation—scientific, practical, or social—is a sure consequence of neglect of the university ideal. We cannot wish prosperity to any school whose object is merely to turn out good answers at a modern examination board.

Sad to say, it seems vain to regret the gradual lessening in all medical curricula of the true nobilities of education—classics, mathematics, philosophy. Increase of the amount of strictly medical knowledge painfully necessitates diminution in extent or kinds of valuable acquirements. But surely we can do more than shed a tear over the tomb of Linnaeus. Is there no room, even in a five years' curriculum, for vegetable physiology? Happily it has still a place in some university curricula. Whether it is prescribed or not, every student should devote some time to it; and its importance is recognised in most medical schools by a lectureship, in some having only a small lingering class of voluntary students.

Students have much more to do than is implied in being good subject-members of a school, in whose arrangements they have no controlling voice. When you affectionately call it your *alma mater*, you do not coldly indicate mere continuity of descent, you imply qualities that are not merely intellectual, but also emotional, and which demand a response from you. Not merely diligent studentship, not merely midnight oil, but honour also and affection. As it is a solemn consideration for the school that it is not only avowedly your intellectual parent, but, by occult action, your moral parent also, so it is for you a solemn obligation to make a due return of good deeds and reverence to this your mother, remembering that she does much for you, and far more than you can ever do for her in return. As you stand before her as children of an *alma mater*, you stand towards one another as brethren, and in that pleasant relation you take as much as you give, or give as much as you take. It is a matter not so much of honour and affection as of mutual regard, mutual assistance and forbearance. Here again it must be recognised that example is better than precept. No student lives for himself alone; his good and his bad qualities are alike infective, and, by their influence on his fellows, either elevate or degrade the tone of the whole school and of each constituent of it. Every school ought to exercise discipline, and it is good to turn out of the hive of workers not only the incapable and the idle, but also the vicious. The incapable are removed with care and kindly consideration; the idle, till they give evidence of reform; the vicious, however diligent and clever, as doing much more harm than good, are sent away not without pity and good wishes.

There are many analogies between a school and a regiment. Each, with ever changing and advancing elements, has a continuity of life and a continuity of character. Each has its glorious achievements, of which it is justly proud. A regiment has on its flag, not its commanders, but its victories—this one Blenheim, that one Waterloo, this one Inkermann. A school has its heroes, not its achievements, and the Leeds School boasts of Hey, and Nunneley, and Teale, and numbers among its present chiefs names which will, in after times, raise its renown higher than it has ever yet been.

No medical school has a more interesting or more honourable history than that of Leeds—a history that plainly indicates vigorous life, and shows great rapidity of healthy growth. Started, in an imperfect form, not much more than half a century ago, by the wise enthusiasm of a few medical men of the town, it has grown into a completely equipped and recognised medical school; and, already forming part of the Yorkshire College, it will soon, I understand, be completely incor-

porated with the prosperous Victoria University. You may well be proud of the nursery in which you are reared and passed on to the ranks of the medical profession.

And, now, what is the nature of this profession in which you are raw recruits, to which you look forward as to the home of your future activity? You have a glorious prospect, and I can assure you that, when you have run your short course as doctors, you will have a glorious retrospect, if you continue in it the same good qualities as carried you through successful studentship; but, alas! it is a matter of course that you will have much to lament also.

Your professional life is to be a life of science, of practice, and of trade. It is not quite correct to say that yours is a profession, not a trade. It is a profession truly, and among the noblest; but, like all other professions, it is in some degree a trade. You expend medical wisdom and skill, and you get money in return. This is the essence of trade, and in this realm everyone is or ought to be a tradesman. It matters not whether the money is paid over the counter, or paid as a fee, or paid as a rent or as a civil list; it is the remuneration got for work done.

It is common to speak with contempt of trade and of tradesmen, and nothing is more foolish. We are all in that category; and we are mere tradesmen if our great object is money, and if we value our knowledge and skill merely as means to that end. Men who do this are only nominally in professional rank. We rise higher and higher in professional status in proportion as we have more and more of science and more and more of skill, and use wisely these attainments. We sink from high status into low in proportion to the smallness of our scientific attainments, and the imperfection of our skill, and the meanness of our objects. Nothing need be said in praise of money-making. Love of that keeps, without fostering, a high place in our motives, and a just place too, if it is never allowed to become overmastering. And the profession of medicine is a good trade. No one utterly fails whose attainments give him any right to expect success, and whose conduct is such as to deserve it.

Who will dare to slight the trade aspect of our profession who recognises that we have beloved wives and dear children? Who that knows the charity of our profession, lavish with its knowledge and skill, will not honour it for this part also of its use of its well-earned money gain? Yet it is ardently desired that each of you should justify your title to rank in a profession, and should by your conduct render it slanderous to call you mere tradesmen.

It is an open question to what extent a great income truly elevates a professional man, to what extent a general high level of income elevates the profession—and one difficult of solution. It may be now passed over with the slinging of two stones from the brook. Who has done more to elevate the profession than John Hunter? And he died poor. Who have done more to degrade the profession than our unworthy rivals the quacks, whether within or without the regular ranks? They make large incomes, and not rarely leave great hoards of wealth behind them.

It is not pelf, on the one hand, nor is it philosophy on the other; it is science that has elevated our profession, maintains its high position, and by its growth will continue to aggrandise it. Every one of you should be a grateful admirer and devotee of medical science, the grandest and most useful work of the profession, and work that has done for each of you far more than you can ever hope to do in return. No doubt the immediate administrators of our utility are practitioners; and there are great practitioners—men, it may be, of enormous temporary fame and local renown, having fine special endowments; but they do nothing towards the permanent elevation of the profession; their great talents are well employed, but they are for the most part barren except in immediate good results. Our high level of professional position is not maintained by practitioners, however great and successful, however much admired and envied. On the other hand, all of us, high or lowly, reap the profit of the scientific advances made by truly great, though pecuniarily unsuccessful, and it may be for a time obscure, men. These elevate the whole profession, and that permanently. They leave behind them for our behoof a fund of wealth in moral, social, and general professional position, upon which we should be proud to stand and to build, and at least careful not to neglect, far less ignore.

Many professional men, and those often in remote districts, do, in their humility, fail to recognise their own position as men of science. They seem to think this designation suitable only to men in the great centres of scientific activity, or to such as are Fellows of a Royal Society. But this is a great mistake. The country districts contain many unknown Jenners; and it may afford you amusement to attempt to count whether the towns contain proportionally more than rural districts.

To all professional men who have even a little real science, and who have been in some degree impregnated with its spirit, it is a perennial spring of the purest pleasure. Think of a tedious case, whether medical, surgical, or obstetrical, making heavy drafts on your time, your health, and your patience. What a dreary affair for you! a dreariness untouched by the fee (whether it is paid or not), a dreariness which is scarcely felt, or, if felt, is disregarded, thanks to the tender feelings of humanity implanted in your hearts by Almighty God. When science sheds its warm glow over the scene, the dreariness is gone, and in its stead you have the noble pleasure of intelligent observation and scrutiny, a pleasure bearing with it utility, not only to you, but also to your patient.

But though from science you do derive great profit, and may derive much pleasure, and dare not hope to make any adequate return, you yet may, and you should contribute somewhat. In this temple there is room for all kinds of workmen; and although we cannot, like Harvey, build a tower, or, like Hunter, raise several pinnacles, yet each of us is able, and should be proud to assist, be it only in carrying freights of bricks or hods of mortar. If you cannot do even that, you can shout to cheer and encourage those who do.

Though medical science is, in some respects, remote from medical practice, yet you cannot be good practitioners without being learned in science. The more science applicable, the better the practice. The more science in the practitioner, whether that science is applicable or not, the better, *ceteris paribus*, is the practitioner. The mere practical man, often the subject of much silly praise, is either a mistake or he is a humbug.

But who is able to describe the great practitioner—such as you should all aim at being? Such a fine admixture of qualities and powers! educated, sympathetic, strong in intellect and will and body, subtle yet simple, adaptive. Subjectively, he may be characterised, like the good student whose life he continues, as filled with love of medicine, love of his patients, love of his professional brethren. One of our greatest medical philosophers gives up the attempt to describe such a man, and resorts to the comparison with a great artist; but this is mainly an evasion, for he does not give us the qualities of the great artist, nor does anyone else. We may at least say that anyone can learn to paint a landscape, but there have been few placed beside Claude and Turner. Many can do what is absolutely necessary, very few can do it in the very best manner. Though few can fully accomplish, all can attempt. Though few greatly succeed objectively, all may be highly meritorious subjectively. All may deserve the highest honour, though few may do the best work.

In the course of this address nothing has been said of philosophy, the highest, the most engrossing, and, in some senses, the most important, certainly the most difficult, department of human activity. But it is not to be ignored, and it is mere trifling to label any department as "agnostic," or forbidden ground. Such a designation rather tempts generous spirits to overleap the barrier. The narrow scientific man may hate the insecure territory of philosophy. The presumptuous philosopher may loftily despise the prosaic ground of science, Both, so acting, do wrong. As there is sea around the solid land, and as there is sky over all, so, beyond science, there are many more or less insecure regions of philosophy which we do tread and must tread, for all men in all times have done so. "Some people (says John Murker) who would fain be esteemed wise in their generation, tell us that our belief endeth where mystery begins. What! (he adds) will anyone tell me that travelling stops where the sea begins?" No, we are all travelling far beyond the secure land of science. Each of us trims his little bark and puts out to sea, gazing at the stars as he goes. You have to do so; nay, you are indeed now doing so, and you are not to be discouraged, far less to stop; but you should be modest in your attempts, humble and circumspect in your proceedings. When you lose sight of land you may still proceed, sure to escape from shipwreck if you have as your guide the pole-star shining in the sky of eternal truth.

AUSTRALIAN HEALTH RESORTS.—Mr. Bruck, of Sydney, New South Wales, is preparing a work of reference on the health resorts of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand. It will contain articles on climatology, and will give a full account of the numerous mineral springs and bathing places of Australia, with a special article on the thermal springs of New Zealand.

The foundation-stone has been laid of a new cottage hospital which is to be erected at Ashburton at a cost of £1,241.

OLIVE OIL.—The oil yielded by the olive plantations recently established in South Australia and Victoria is reported to be of excellent quality. This is an entirely new enterprise for these colonies, and promises to develop into an important industry.

AN ADDRESS ON THE MEDICAL PROFESSION; ITS HARDSHIPS AND ITS REWARDS.

*Delivered at the Opening of the Winter Session at St. Mary's Hospital,
October 3rd, 1887.*

By ANDERSON CRITCHETT, M.A. CANTAB.,
Ophthalmic Surgeon to, and Lecturer on Ophthalmic Surgery
at, St. Mary's Hospital.

HAD Dante written in the nineteenth century his magic pen might have done justice to the sufferings of those unfortunate members of our profession who, possibly by way of atonement for errors in diagnosis and faults in treatment, are condemned to pass their short vacation in a vain endeavour to infuse some interest and originality into an introductory lecture. I readily acknowledge, however, that for my own poor part, although for some weeks past I have languished under this cloud of work, it has not been without a silver lining, for I am enabled on my own behalf and on that of my colleagues to offer a cordial and hearty welcome, at the opening of our winter session, alike to those who have already borne with us the heat and burden of the day and to the new recruits who now join our ranks for the first time. I know that I rightly interpret the feelings of the staff when I express an earnest hope that you will always regard us as your sincere friends, for, believe me, we are actuated by a single desire to promote your welfare and happiness. In return we ask, and I believe we shall not ask in vain, for your confidence and your co-operation. There must be none of the innate distrust with which a pupil too often regards his pedagogue, for we are here all students; and, though some of us have been pursuing the steep path of knowledge for more years than we care to remember, we all have the same goal in view; we are all striving to compass the same end—the relief of human suffering.

It seems hard that those gentlemen who appear amongst us for the first time should at once be lectured, for as yet they have done nothing to deserve such an infliction; and I feel somewhat in the same position as the stern parent who invariably gave his children a sound thrashing before breakfast, on the ground that they might possibly need it later on in the day when he would not be there to administer the correction. I cannot, however, too strongly impress upon you the wisdom of adopting a methodical mode of work. Doubtless "distance lends enchantment to the view," as far as the College examinations are concerned; but that student alone can regard their approach with confidence and equanimity who begins to work steadily and with method from the commencement of his career.

Anatomy and physiology should at first engage your almost exclusive attention, and your knowledge of these subjects must be sound and practical. Begin by studying the skeleton thoroughly, and be constantly in the dissecting-room. Here I would offer a word of advice which may perhaps surprise you; it is this: do not occupy too much time in making elaborate and ornamental dissections. It is, of course, essential that you should acquire manual dexterity and neatness, but I am convinced that the most reliable anatomists are those who relentlessly pursue each muscle and nerve, and investigate each hidden bony cavity, as opposed to others who hesitate to be thorough because they might spoil the appearance of their dissections.

I may, perhaps, shock the feelings of our officers of health by advising you to live as much as possible in an anatomical atmosphere; but I mean by this expression that you should so far allow anatomy and physiology to absorb your attention that they almost enter into the pores of your skin, and that they should form the chief subject of discussion with your fellow students, for whose delectation and instruction you should at all times be ready to produce some hidden treasure, such as the bones of the carpus or a special cervical vertebra. In the evening you should, by study, not only consolidate the practical knowledge which has been gained during the day, but anticipate the work which lies before you on the morrow, so that, scalpel in hand, you may know what to look for, and where the object of your search is to be found. To those happy beings who have successfully passed the dread ordeal of the first examination I would offer a few words of friendly warning—"Labuntur Anni." In less than