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CUS417/105.114 1/3

THE MEDICAL SESSION.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

The session was opened at University College yesterday, when the distribution of prizes took place in the library and a short introductory address was delivered by Sir R. Douglas Powell, M.D., president of the Royal College of Physicians. At the conclusion of the address medallion portraits of the late Professor Christopher Heath and Professor G. V. Poore were unveiled in the entrance hall of the school.

SIR R. DOUGLAS POWELL took for his subject "University College and Medical Education." He began by congratulating the professors and students of University College Hospital on the magnificent new medical school which had been built by the munificence of Sir Donald Currie, to whom University College and the University of London, of which it was a part, were very gratefully indebted. Most grateful acknowledgments were also due to the building committee for the labour and thought they had bestowed in formulating and supervising the requirements of a completely equipped school of medicine, and to the architect, Mr. Waterhouse, jun., for the skill with which he had carried out those requirements within the limits of a very handsome building. Sir Richard then proceeded to remind his hearers that but a few years ago, by the public-spirited generosity of Sir Blundell Maple and the genius of the present architect's father, University College Hospital across the road had been entirely rebuilt; no stone was left of that hospital which in his student days had seemed so good and sufficient, but the tradition and spirit of the old place remained, changing only to meet the developments of time. It seemed to him that Sir Donald Currie, in his noble munificence, had pointed the lesson of wisdom to those who attempted to think of the possibility of an efficient hospital without a medical school; such must be an emaculated institution, wanting in inspiration and cerebral direction, and lacking the wholesome stimulus of youthful criticism, appreciation, and ardent work in its administration, and shedding no enlightenment of experience and scientific methods abroad to quicken the advance of medicine for the service of mankind. Sir Donald Currie, by building this great medical school, to be incorporated in management and control with the hospital, had expressed in a very practical manner his view of the vital and organic dependence of the one institution upon the other. With the opening of this new medical school University College inaugurated a new departure in medical education which had long been under discussion at the University of London and had been partially adopted by King's College—namely, the separation of the first part of the student's curriculum, including the more purely science subjects of anatomy, physiology, chemistry, physics, and biology, to be taught at the college and under separate college control, leaving the second part, including the more strictly professional subjects of medicine, surgery, pathology, therapeutics, midwifery, gynecology, and bacteriology, to be taught at the medical school. The preliminary science of medicine had become too vast and complex a matter, involving too great an expenditure in time, money, and teaching power, to be satisfactorily dealt with in many centres as a part of the medical curriculum at each of the hospitals of London. And University and King's Colleges were but responding to the drift of events in preparing to receive students for the preliminary science half of their education, thus leaving the hospital schools proper with greater resources to complete the equipment of their students in more strictly medical and clinical subjects. Sir Richard pointed out that there were certain dangers in thus segregating the early subjects of medical education from the medical schools. There was the danger of a want of sympathy with the true aims of medicine that might arise from the teaching of subjects that should have medical application by professors who possibly might not have any sympathy or training in medicine. The science teaching might become so academic as to be entirely beyond the scope needed for the medical practitioner, and might involve, by length of courses or the difficulty of the examinations, an expenditure of time that would seriously encroach upon that available for the final and more practical subjects of the medical course. Preliminary science teaching might be overdone if not in keeping with the more practical course; a man might be a good scientist but a very bad doctor. These and other drawbacks required the wise and careful supervision of the college authorities, the General Medical Council, and the examining councils of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons. He ventured to hope and think that the strictly science subjects of chemistry, physics, and biology might, and would in the near future, be taught in the public schools as a part of general education to be disposed of before the student entered upon his medical course, so that the first two years of that course would be chiefly occupied with anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology—subjects that were of the utmost importance, and were in the closest relation and in unbroken continuity, through pathology and bacteriology, with medicine and

the different kinds of massage. One difficulty was that nurses had been allowed in the hospitals to do a great many things that the medical students should do. An all-important subject was psycho-therapy. At each school there should be some one interested in and conversant with modern methods. Let them once gain the confidence of a patient and inspire him with hope, and the battle was half won. Then again the action of the great drugs should be studied with every care—not of too many of them, but of a certain number. Let them remember, however, what Benjamin Franklin said—"He is the best doctor who knows the worthlessness of most medicines." The art was indeed long, and it was lengthened since the days of the father of medicine, but his famous aphorism was still the credo of the faithful physician, who, in his words, must not only be prepared to do what is right in itself, but who must be prepared also to make the patient, the attendant, and the externals co-operate. In conclusion, Professor Osler paid a high tribute to the late Sir William Broadbent, whose career illustrated all that was best in the successful physician.

A vote of thanks to Professor Osler was afterwards heartily passed.

KING'S COLLEGE.

A public inaugural lecture was given yesterday at King's College, by PROFESSOR PETER THOMPSON, M.D., on "The Study of Embryology."

After some introductory remarks, the lecturer said that in tracing the history of embryology we saw that, although the study of the actual development of animals during their evolution from the egg had attracted attention from very early times, little advance had been made until comparatively recent years. Indeed, it was only within the last 20 or 30 years that the enormous powers of embryology, as an instrument for unravelling the problems of early growth, had been manifest; and one could clearly see the main factors which had contributed to this change of affairs—the promulgation of the cell theory, the discovery of the microtome, Darwin's theory of the origin of species, and, lastly, the many observers who, with modern weapons, had explored the little-known country, hitherto visited by a small but valiant band. Striking, therefore, as were the advances made in all branches of biological inquiry during the 19th century, in few was this advance more marked than in that of embryology. From its commencement, through the genius of Harvey, Haller, and Wolff in the 17th and 18th centuries, little progress was made until the early years of the 19th century, which, through the researches of Pander and Von Baer, practically witnessed the birth of embryology as a science. After tracing the history and development of the science, the lecturer went on to say that to the medical student anatomy meant simply human anatomy. But this was anatomy in a very restricted sense. Anatomy when regarded as a science included embryology and comparative anatomy, while anatomy essential to the physician and surgeon was really applied anatomy. The three subjects—human anatomy, comparative anatomy, and embryology—constituted what was known as morphology; and the specialist in anatomy of to-day must be acquainted with all three. Similarly, a well-equipped anatomical institute must contain laboratories for the prosecution of research in these three directions. Moreover, in view of the supreme importance of a precise and accurate knowledge of the anatomy of the human body, and the limited time for the study of the preliminary and intermediate subjects, it was not surprising that the medical student should have less regard for the study of embryology and comparative anatomy than for human anatomy. But practical embryology was a fine training for anyone who proposed to enter the medical profession, whether he intended to be a surgeon, physician, or a general practitioner. The patience, skill, and thoroughness necessary to work successfully through an embryo trained his powers exactly in the right direction, and in some of the Universities in Germany medical students who had the time and inclination were encouraged to take up work of this class. The lecturer then described the modern methods of manipulation employed in the study of embryology, and gave a demonstration of Born's method of wax plates. Continuing, he said that most of them would doubtless remember the following words of Lord Avebury in his charming book "The Pleasures of Life":—"There never was a time when thought was freer, or when modest merit and patient industry were more sure of reward." How very applicable these words were when applied to the study of embryology by means of modern methods. We must not, however, regard embryology "as a master key that would open the gates of knowledge" and remove all the difficulties in our way without great efforts on our part. As A. M. Marshall remarked in one of his lectures, it was rather to be viewed and treated as a delicate and complicated instrument, the proper handling of which required the utmost nicety of balance and adjustment, and which, unless employed with the greatest skill and judgment, might yield false instead of true results. We were indeed only just beginning to understand the real power of our weapons and the right way of employing them, and in the future embryology, especially when studied in connexion with palaeontology, might be confidently relied on to afford a far clearer insight than

P. V. Early, Rydal Mount School, Colwyn Bay, and University College, and B. Woodhouse, Cheltenham College and University College.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL.

Professor Osler, Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford, yesterday presented the prizes and certificates of merit to the successful students of St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, London.

PROFESSOR OSLER, in an address to the students, said that prizes and certificates, while of good omen, were of no value unless they received them as an impulse to higher and better efforts. These were but the trial heats and preparation for yet greater efforts. The preliminary canters were valuable as testing brawn and wind, but the Derby was ahead of them where the field was long, the scratchings numerous, and the pace killing. (Laughter.) For final success the winner must have reserves, not merely capability and energy for a short run such as that in which they had been engaged, but endurance, or, as the expression was, staying power. Only those who by education had got mobile reserves would attain success. How might they acquire those reserves? Let them learn early to take the best possible care of the machine, never overdriving it or allowing rust or damp to accumulate in its bearings. Unlike any ordinary mechanism, the more they used it the more, within limits, they could get out of it. Healthy action in a well-built body was the best asset in the race. Let them not forget that as a class they were notorious sinners in these matters. If they did not work too hard they smoked too much or kept late hours or were indifferent about exercise, and the very best of students seemed to pay the least attention to Nature's laws. A delicate constitution, well handled, might develop unsuspected staying powers. They would be glad to know that in training they had only three subjects—science, art, and the man—he meant the patient. These were of equal importance. It was a very hard thing nowadays to get the right sort of science into our medical students. Unless scientific man got no true perspective as he looked out on the world and man, and their work dealt with the most interesting and valuable bit of it, from one cause or another out of gear. What he meant was that a man needed an understanding of the methods of science, its meaning, and an inoculation of its spirit. It was an attitude of mind which at once, on the presentation of a problem, made a man burn until the solution was accomplished. Education was not worthy of the name scientific unless it imbued a man with this spirit. It should be inculcated from the start. But there were two great difficulties in the way. Sent into the medical school without the preliminary sciences over which they had to spend a hurried year stolen from the strictly technical part of their profession, it was small wonder if they never reached a vantage ground from which a good perspective could be obtained. If they had deliberately set themselves the task of devising a plan by which the all-precious investigating spirit, which, he repeated, was the very life of the physician, could be quenched, they could not have found anything half so effective as an examination system which made the end and object of study the meeting of certain tests, and these not tests of capacity to act, to think, but tests of how far a man had made himself a talking machine or a human monotype on which an examiner might play. Of course, as a concession to human weakness, an examination now and then might be allowed—two or three only in a career (laughter), and those designed rather to bring out a man's knowledge of methods than to ascertain how far he was familiar with the minutiae of medicine and surgery. He would repeat the motto which he had been dinning into the ears of medical students for the last 25 years—"take no thought for the morrow." Let the interest in the day's work absorb all their energies, and the future, with the examinations, would look after itself. A devotion to science, a saturation with its spirit, would give them that most precious of all faculties, the sane, cool reason which enabled them to sift the true from the false in life, and at the same time kept them well in the van of progress. The students' whole energy should be directed to the knowledge of what was called therapeutics in the widest sense of that word. A hopeful sign of the times was that it was not by lectures that methods of treatment might be taught. He wished we could introduce what was known in Germany as the *Seminar*, in which, at a meeting between the teacher and the students, special literature was discussed and special articles were read. We too often allowed the student to pick up his information in a haphazard, irregular fashion. It would be better if it was the duty of the junior member of a staff to carry out systematically special treatments with the students. He should be taught to prepare personally the various nutritive injections, and to know

CUS417/105.119 3/3