

*B. Jackson (J. D.)*

MEDICAL

OFFICE PUPILAGE,

BY

Dr. John D. Jackson,

OF

DANVILLE, KY.

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Probably, we have no subject which has been more regular in its recurrence for discussion at our annual meetings, than that of MEDICAL EDUCATION; and probably we will have none, which will more regularly arise than this, for future discussion. It is one of those questions of the profession which have long agitated us, and which, from the nature of things, must long continue to vex us.

Its discussion has not been confined to state, local, or national associations, but the periodical literature of Medicine abounds in it, and the theme is frequently heard ringing along the pathway of the quiet every-day life of the private practitioner. Indeed, the interest of it is not confined within the professional pale, but has passed into the domains of the laity, and ever and anon, the secular press and secular circles discuss it after their secular ways.

The words heard are not generally those of laudation, but the querulous tones of complaint, not unfrequently rise in the gamut, until the shrill notes of actual denunciation are reached.

It is agreed upon all sides, that medical education in this country is not what it should be; that there is a lamentable deficiency somewhere; that the medical times are sadly out of joint; and that a great reform is needed.

Looking around for the place in which reformation should most suitably commence, it is to be noted that, by almost common consent, the medical colleges of the land seem to be viewed as the *fons et origo mali*, and that within college walls it should begin.

The catalogue of charges, brought against these institutions of learning, is long, and the items various.

To enumerate but a few of the accusations: They are charged with gradually shortening the curriculum of medical study, though the sum of medical knowledge essential to be learned has been regularly increasing—a half century ago the lecture terms extending through six months, while now they are nearer three.

The standard of examinations is said to have been much lowered instead of elevated—the meshes of the nets being now of such texture as to gather up and cast on the public market the smallest of the small-fry.

The rivalry for scientific fame, as such, among the contending schools, it is asserted no longer exists, but has degenerated into a rivalry for getting the largest number of students.

Instead of hedging in the dignity of the profession, and jealously guarding its portals against intruders, it is charged that not only has every avenue been widely opened, but the most shameful bidding been made, for the *profane vulgum*.

It is declared that the violent and open contentions of whole faculties, ventilating their quarrels in the daily prints as sometimes done, has not only lowered the dignity of the calling in the public eye, but has made the circumambient air of medical colleges most unwholesome for the ethical health of the neophytes resorting to them.

No preliminary examinations are made preparatory to matriculation as in the lowest academical schools of the country, but it is said that any full-grown idiot may be enrolled, who will deposit his fee.

It is asseverated that forty and odd schools have sprung up over the country, while the interests of Medicine plainly demand but a tithe of that number, in which the leading talent may be concentrated and nourished.

Even the Thesis, the *coup de grace*, demanded since time immemorial of every medical athlete, before quitting the palæstra, to be crowned with the honors of the doctorate, has, in certain quarters, been stricken out of the curriculum.

In fine, the accusations against the schools, is longer than the bill of charges of the Colonies against King George, or those of Cicero against Cataline.

But, after listening to the maledictions against colleges and the anathematising of professors, let us pause and ponder. While contending with the Lernean Hydra in front, must we shut our eyes to the Augean Stable in our rear? While picking out the motes from others' eyes, shall we be blind to the beams in our own? Shall we forever gaze at the tiles falling from dome and turret and roof of the temple, and curse the workmen

engaged in high places, and have never a word to say to the delinquent laborers among the mudsills, the hewers of stone, and carriers of mortar, whose botching at the foundation may be involving the whole superstructure?

Let us remember the fact, that although it is through the doors of the colleges that the medical flock is turned out into the highways of life, with M. D. branded on their sheepskins, that there have been other pastures, and other shepherds.

I would ask your attention, my brethren—you of the mountain sides and the valleys,—you whose modest shops and “shingles” are found at the cross-roads, the hamlets and villages, towns and cities—all of you, who are not wearing the caudal appendage of *Professor* to your names, to turn with me, and make an introspection, and see whether we have true cause for self-congratulation, and can say we thank GOD that we are not as they are, that not being guilty ourselves, we can cast stones at our brethren in authority.

To be plain, I have a little to say of the student's novitiate—his office pupilage.

I would ask, What right has a public to complain of black bread being returned by the millers, when they send to mill chaff and smut along with the grain to be ground? And what crop must the husbandman expect when he sows tares with his wheat?

Now we untitled portion of the profession, of the highways and by-ways, the market towns and country places, are the recruiting-officers and drill-sergeants of the great army—medical, and what right have we to complain of the ineffectiveness of the field and staff, if we enlist into the service the lame, blind, halt and idiotically afflicted? If we but keep our ears open, we may hear some things said of *us* which are anything else than creditable.

There is a pretty wide-spread impression, that we doctors will take anything for a medical student. That when one whose desire is to be a professional man, goes to the law and fails, and thence to Methodist preaching and don't succeed, that the “omnium-gatherum” of Medicine is his safe refuge, one ever ready to receive him with open arms. From our limited field of observation, we are humiliatingly compelled to acknowledge this to be too true. A father whose family pride has grown *parsi passu* with the increase of his lucre, wants a stupid son to be a professional man, and knowing the boy's dullness to unfit him for the law, applies to the family doctor to receive him as a pupil, and nine to one is the chance that he is willingly received—for does it not seem a “little big” to have students; and besides,

if one should refuse, and honestly tell the father the truth, that the boy is a natural fool, and that it will be impossible for him to ever master one of the most difficult of all the professions—one which requires the best of native capacity and the best of educational training to succeed at it, why the ill will and loss of patronage of the family would at once follow—a thing as we know, much to be deprecated.

Perhaps the boy is of moderate parts and a pretty good education, but very sickly; and since the peculiar province of doctors is known to be to cure sick people, the parents think learning him to give the physic he is to take, will be an economical thing in the youth's future, inasmuch as he will receive all he will give, and they thus desire to apprentice him to physic, and instead of being told by the one who is to be his future master, that the successful practice of Medicine demands a strong back-bone as well as strong head, and that though the applicant may be mentally fitted he is physically incompetent, they are allowed to remain undeceived of their false ideas, and another candidate for the "*jura privilegia et honores Medicinæ*" is admitted, probably in future years to curse the day when, and the master by whom, he was admitted to the study of Medicine.

But suppose the embryo doctor once taken into an office, what are the aids usually found there to develop him? What is the amount of assistance which he may on the average expect from his master? What shall truth reply? The chances are even that he will have to inspire him—the paraphernalia of an office, which has its counterpart in the *shop* of the Mantuan Apothecary in "*Romeo and Juliet*:"

—“And about his shelves

A beggarly account of empty boxes,  
Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,  
Remnants of pack thread, and old cakes of roses,  
Were thinly scatter'd to make up a show.”

Added to this shop furniture, the few text-books which his preceptor furnished himself with on entering practice—it may be seven years before—it may have been a half century—as the scientific springs from which his thirsty cravings for knowledge are to be supplied, and the possibility of the possession of an incomplete disarticulated skeleton, and we have his surroundings.

He may be put to work reading Anatomy—it may be the Practice of Medicine, but most likely is it, that the first task assigned him by his future Mentor, will be the braying of something in a mortar. Leastways, he probably soon finds his preceptor to be a practical man, and that attending

calls and mixing medicines are certainly not the least important of the labors assigned him. As to his course of reading, whatever the book may be, he finds soon that its study gives him full scope for his talents; for by his talents alone must he unravel the mysteries, and surmount the difficulties which it contains. If his teacher tries to teach him—most probably he does so in the most desultory way, he possibly *examines* him once a week, and probably it is once in the month, averaging twelve times a year. Such tutelage, of course, inspires corresponding ideas of the nobility of the calling for which the juvenile *Æsculapius* is preparing to fit himself, and he soon has his soul to be imbued with two chief ideas: firstly, to get a "sheep-skin," and secondly, to get practice, probably the *ultima-thule* of his imagination; if he is given to day-dreams, being to farm it and practice medicine together, to raise his supplies on his place, and make a thousand dollars a year by his practice. With these two main ideas possessing him, he whiles away the first year of his pupilage; if he is studious, it may be doing a certain amount of study, but if not so by previous training, it is most apt to be in a sort of happy-go-lucky way—doing a little reading—much loafing, and if he be naturally of a festive disposition, a right smart frolicking. So between pestling and pounding, and reading and fiddling, and dancing and ogling, and eating and drinking, the knight of the pestle and mortar has been trained for the schools, which being the finishing places of one's medical education, are expected to make up for his any little deficiencies, and send him out into the world a model medical man.

There have been some in the profession, who have strenuously insisted that it is not only necessary that a student of Medicine should be endowed with an ordinarily good native intellect, but that it is essential prior to his entering upon the study of as intricate a science as that of Medicine, that the intellect, though even of more than ordinary native strength, should have undergone a certain amount of training. With these, some little knowledge of the classics, a little knowledge of Latin, and at least a slight smattering of Greek have been deemed essential prerequisites to entering upon such studies. Not that the study of the classics is a better means of training the mind than mathematical studies or the pure logic, but that inasmuch as the technology of Medicine is based on Latin and Greek, that a certain knowledge of those languages had to be gained while pursuing the course of medical study, if not before, and that it would be an immense economy of time to enter upon the study thus prepared, was the reason.

But there have been other some, who have told us that they thought quite differently, and who have not only declared that they would not object

to receiving students ignorant of Latin and innocent of Greek, but they decried all learning, and scouted everything beyond "*hard-sense*," referring to Hunter and Drake as illustrations—indeed, have gone a step beyond this, and seemed to think that the successful practice of Medicine was more a matter of instinct than reason—that as "the woodpecker tappeth the hollow beech-tree," and instinctively findeth the nidus of the worm, so may a doctor by his instinct tap his patients' hollow chests, and find the tubercle.

To this latter some, we would say, that though asses yet live, it should be remembered that Balaam is dead, and that miracles are not common in modern days, and from the *natural percussors* of Medicine, as from the *natural bone setters* in Surgery, may the good Lord ever deliver us.

To be eternally presenting instances of the rise of Drake and Hunter and a few other prodigies in the profession, who were gifted with powers sufficiently prodigious to make them by limited means to overcome the greatest obstacles, is to us absurd, and if these gentlemen carry to the bedside such a philosophy—drawing their general rules of practice from such special exceptional instances as they can find, we can only say, we would dislike to fall into their hands as a patient.

Such conclusions from special instances have seemed to us as foolish, as it would be to say that there was no necessity for a multiplication-table or the rules of addition, subtraction and division, and slates and pencils in their application, since Zerah Colburn, Joseph Bidder and some others have had the power of working out mathematical problems without such aids; or that because there are some men like Weston the walker, who can walk their seventy-five miles a day, that there is no use for horses and buggies, but that we doctors ought all to practice afoot, or that since Hugh O'Brien, the Irish giant, standing eight feet six inches in his socks as he did, could write his name on the ceiling, that the average of mankind wouldn't require to stand on something to do the same, or that since Blind Tom composed and played the most difficult pieces without ever having seen a note, that all this thing of musical notes is needless, and the gamut, music-masters, and musical conservatories, should be abolished.

Since Dr. Drake has been so freely alluded to upon this floor in past days as an instance of the futility of all classical knowledge in the study of Medicine, we will take the liberty of quoting a page or so from an Address on Medical Education, delivered in the city just opposite us, before a class of students of the "Medical College of Ohio," some years before we were born:

“Although Medicine is ranked with the *learned* professions, not a few of its professors are signally deficient in learning.\* This is the case, not only in the Western States, where for obvious reasons it might be expected, but in almost every part of the Union, with the exception of some of our large cities. Writing as I do, for practical effect, and to promote *reform*, I am constrained to say, that even at this late period the profession abounds in students and practitioners, who are radically defective in spelling, grammar, etymology, descriptive geography, arithmetic, and I might add book-keeping, but that they generally apply themselves to the study of that important branch, with a diligence which supplies the want of early opportunities. Grammar, and spelling especially, (to use the language in which I once heard a physician speak of the circulation of the blood), appear to be among the ‘*secret arcanums of nature which Dr. Hamilton said never would be found out!*’ Nothing is more common than to commit gross violations of both in the directions which we write for our patients; and what is still more humbling to the pride of the profession, it would be an affair of little magnitude; but extending to many of the graduates of *all* our Universities, it calls for unreserved exposure, and unqualified reprehension. Before the Revolution the schools of the Colonies were generally bad, and till lately those of the West were not fitted to impart a good elementary education; but at present they are so improved as to leave no excuse for the literary ignorance, which disgraces the profession. It would certainly not be unreasonable to require that every youth who aspires to connect himself with a liberal pursuit, should first learn to spell and write his mother tongue with as much accuracy as a country school-master; if either his genius or misfortunes preclude such requirements, he had better take to some calling which does not demand them.

\* \* \* “But is the education which our common schools confer a sufficient preparation for the study of Medicine? It certainly is not. To a familiar acquaintance with the branches which have been enumerated, the intended student of Medicine, should add a competent knowledge of the elements of physical geography, general history, the art of composition, algebra, geometry and mechanics. If these acquirements are not made before he enters on his professional studies, he will most probably remain without them through his whole life; the effects of which will be sufficient-

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\*Of course, on this occasion. I expect the reader to understand the word *professor*, as synonymous with *practitioner*, and not as referring to public teachers, whose commissions must be regarded as evidence of learning, should other proofs *happen* now and then to be wanting.

ly obvious to others, if not felt by himself. \* \* \*

"The United States are, perhaps, the only civilized country in modern times, where it has been seriously doubted whether the language and literature of the ancients should make a part of the studies of professional men. Of the various causes which have combined to suggest this question one of the most operative is the spirit of liberal inquiry, which originated, and is cherished by our free institutions. No people are so unshackled by prejudices and precedents; none so excursive; none so experimental as the American. If they do not 'try all things, and hold fast to that which is good,' they try many and are strongly disposed to fix upon something new.

"Another cause contributing to excite some doubt, is the successful acquisition of business by physicians who lived and died in ignorance of Greek and Latin. With such examples before us, it was natural to ask whether the study of the dead languages should be regarded as indispensable or even beneficial to the candidate for the honors of the profession; and not a few have been ready at all times to answer in the negative. In this inquiry there has been much to lead us astray.

"Our fore-fathers (most of whom were illiterate) emigrated to a forest, which it has been the work of their sons to subdue. In the prosecution of this Herculean task, and the subsequent establishment of institutions—political, social, and literary, they frequently experienced a want of appropriate means, and were compelled by the exigencies of their novel and trying situation to think and act with originality. Hence arose a feeling of self-reliance; a spirit of independence; a disregard of ancient custom; to which we may, in a great degree, ascribe that indifference to the languages and learning of antiquity, which characterizes the majority of our citizens. Thus physical circumstances have indirectly exercised a mastery over moral causes, and given a deflection to our European character, which promises to become permanent. Moral causes, however, have contributed to the same effect.

"In migrating from the Old World our ancestors took leave of the institutions devoted to classical instruction; and hence a generation of necessity grew up in comparative ignorance. It would be in vain to hope that a due respect for the learned languages, or even a conviction of their utility could survive such a transition; and hence we find that in the United States a want of acquaintance with them has been no obstacle to the attainment of high *relative* distinction in any of the pursuits of society. How long this will continue the case, it is not easy to foresee. A perception

of their value appears to be returning; but I cannot suppose that they will ever attain to the rank which they hold in the estimation of our brethren of Europe.

“Meanwhile it is the duty of those who can exercise any control over public sentiment in this respect to exert themselves; and if all who are interested in the dignity of the medical profession, could be brought to unite their efforts in favor of a more classical preparation for young men designed for the study, it cannot be doubted that much might be accomplished in a single generation.

“A physician who is ignorant of the Latin and Greek languages, whatever may be his genius and professional skill, must, to the eye of sound scholarship, appear defective and uncultivated. For more than two thousand years these languages, especially the former, were the vehicles of all medical knowledge, except the little contributed by the Arabians; and 'til within a century our professional ancestors wrote and prescribed, and thought and lectured in Latin. It was indeed to the profession a universal language; affording the means of an easy and accurate correspondence among all the schools and physicians of Europe. Even down to the present time, the lectures in most of the Italian and German Universities are delivered in Latin; while the examination of candidates, in many others, is conducted in the same language. Thus it has had a most protracted and intimate companionship with Medicine; to the nomenclature of which it has freely lent its opulent vocabulary. Many of its words, no doubt, as well as those drawn from the dialects of Greece, are intended to convey, in their new situation, ideas materially different from their vernacular import; but in attempting to understand even these, the student is greatly assisted by an acquaintance with their primitive signification. With this knowledge of our dependence on the languages and literature of the ancients to deny that the study of them must be beneficial, is scarcely less absurd than to affirm on the other hand, that every classical scholar is of necessity a physician.

\* \* \* “It is sorrowful to see what every physician must have seen, the exertions of a generous young man consigned to the study of Medicine, with a mind untutored and unstored; to witness his ill-directed efforts—strong but comparatively unavailing; his fitful application; his embarrassments under every difficulty; his disappointments and despondency; above all his mortification, from consciousness of superior abilities, united with a perpetual conviction of inferior progress. No devotedness

to study, no intensity of ambition, no energy of intellect, not the whole combined, can make such an one what he would have been with early culture, nor raise him to the standard erected by his own vivid imagination. He may satisfy his friends, but must himself remain dissatisfied and unhappy.\*

To quote a man who had written thus in behalf of a high standard of preliminary education, as an advocate and example of the futility of anything like a high order of learning in Medicine, must have required great boldness. We could not have summoned courage to have done so, we confess, fearing lest the bones of Drake should have turned in their resting-place, and his ghost have revisited earth to have haunted our midnight pillow.

But regarding this part of our subject we will simply say that in England the law does not permit any man to *commence* study as an Apothecary, until he has been registered as having passed a satisfactory examination in the following subjects, viz: 1. English Language, including Vulgar and Decimal Fractions; Algebra, including simple Equations. 3. Geometry: First Two Books of Euclid. 4. Latin, including Translation and Grammar. 5. Greek, and one of the following subjects, at the option of the candidate: 1. French; 2. German; 3. Natural Philosophy, including Mechanics, Hydrostatics and Pneumatics.† Yet with a foundation generally far inferior to that of the English Apothecary, do we plume ourselves, and with Yankee modesty boast the superiority of American Medicine, and American Doctors over all the balance of creation.

But we will not weary you further regarding this part of our subject. Mrs. Glass says, in her Cookery-Book: "First catch you a hare, then proceed to cook it." So having gotten our young gentleman, what shall we do with him? And here, just, as next in importance to getting the hare is the importance of getting the good cook to prepare it, so we might say a word or so of the preceptors' qualifications, which we can not put better than in a sentence from Dr. Drake, from whom we again quote:

"It is not sufficient that a private preceptor has talents and learning. He must be devoted to his profession, jealous of its character, and ambitious of its honors. With such feeling he will awaken high aspirations in the bosom of the youth, whose destiny is committed to his keeping, enamour him with the sciences, whose rudiments he is to acquire, and animate him in the toil which their difficulties impose."

\*Practical Essays on Medical Education and the Profession in the United States. By Daniel Drake, M.D., Professor in the Medical College of Ohio, Cincinnati, Ohio. Published by Roff & Young, 1832.

† Vide—Medical Times and Gazette (London), June, 1867.

There is a custom prevalent regarding the taking of office pupils against which we would earnestly protest—it is the charging of no fee to the student. It is a general law in political economy that those things which cost nothing, are worth nothing, and it applies in all its force here. The doctor, like every one possessing the ordinary instincts of humanity, is inclined to demand a *quid pro quo*, and where nothing is given, is too apt to require nothing of the student in the way of study, and to give nothing in return in the way of instruction. Let the rule be to demand a moderate fee, and the obligation will then be mutual, as it should,—the student will feel the obligation to study to be greater on his part, and the preceptor, that his obligations to endeavor to instruct the student, to be then imperious upon him.

The first thing which we believe a preceptor should do for his pupil, should be to give him a general idea of the field which lays before him, and the pains and penalties, the pleasures and honors, which await him in its cultivation. Let him at the entrance be taught the difference between medicine and quackery, the distinction between the true and false laborers. Give him clear ideas of the ethics of the profession by having him read the "Hippocratic Oath," and the "Code of Ethics of the American Medical Association," or better still, Dr. Percival's little work, from which our code was extracted. And let the master see to it, that his daily life, in the presence of his student, illustrates what he indoctrinates—that he ever practices what he preaches—"*minus valent præcepta, quam exempla.*" As Dr. Drake has said, teach him to be "devoted to his profession, jealous of its character, and ambitious of its honors." In one word, if the preceptor can infuse into his student *a love of his profession*, success is half insured. However, not only should the pupil be fully imbued with the responsibilities of his situation, but the preceptor, we would say, has equal responsibilities on his side and should be just as fully conscious of them, when he assumes the serious trust of the medical education of a young man, in whose charge are to be placed the future lives and bodily comfort of his fellow-mortals. He should never forget that, in a great degree, the young man's future success as a member of the medical profession, and the lives and happiness, probably, of a large community will hereafter depend on the efficiency with which he shall instruct the now doubly impressionable medical neophyte. The teacher and taught should alike be inspired by a laudable ambition—the master to have his scholar advance beyond his own attainments, and the scholar to prove himself worthy of his master, by giving all his efforts

to the attainment of the goal set up before him. As in every other vocation in life no teacher is apt to be successful, who has not got his heart in his work, and who does not go at it *con amore*. Whenever inclined to weary of his work, let him remember "*qui docet discit*," and knowing that in teaching others, he is learning himself, his self-interest will assist in sustaining him. A word as to the paraphernalia required by the teacher.

While some men have the gift of illustrating by few and very simple objects much better than others with many, yet every preceptor will require something more than the ordinary text-books—a certain number of specially illustrated works, a certain number of instruments, a certain amount of apparatus, and a few preparations.

As to the text-books to be chosen, and the order of their study, this is a matter for the judgment of each teacher, and something in each case may depend upon the individual peculiarities of the student. But this much we will say, that the preceptor who does his duty by his pupils, must try to have them recite daily. Daily recitations in the study of Medicine are just as essential as the recitations which are daily demanded of all students of literature and science in the academical institutions of the land. As in all efficient literary teaching, the teacher selects and dwells upon the important things, directing the scholars' attention particularly to them, so should the medical teacher. A pupil ought to be made to write out digests or synopses of certain parts of his reading, and when somewhat advanced, and having seen one or several cases of disease, to keep notes of them, read what may have been written by certain authorities with reference thereto, and write a thesis thereupon, to be revised and commented upon by his preceptor. As in the teaching of the natural sciences, every good teacher tries to illustrate by experimental demonstrations as far as possible, so should it be when practicable, in the teaching of Medicine, a large portion of whose field can be taught in no other way effectively. Every private preceptor should teach his pupil, as far as possible, all the surgical or manipulative parts of the profession, and he should go from his office to the schools an adept in minor surgery, skilled in the application of bandages and the ordinary apparatus, together with some practical knowledge of microscopy, ophthalmoscopy and laryngoscopy. We believe that it is especially during the period of the student's office pupilage, that he should devote himself to practical Anatomy, that he should go up to the schools with a fair knowledge of Anatomy gained by actual dissection. Doubtless many are ready to declare the feasibility of gaining a knowledge

of practical Anatomy while studying in a country office, as impracticable. To these, we would say, that we are personally familiar with all the difficulties and dangers incident to such study, which are not a few in a State like ours, which while it continues to make all dissection penal, still vies with the more enlightened countries in exacting the highest degree of knowledge and skill from medical men in the exercise of their vocation; but, as "where there's a will there's a way," we will say that there is scarcely a country doctor who has not got it in his power to dissect, if he desires to, and is only willing to spend a little money and trouble for the purpose; a greater difficulty than the legal one is in the bosom of the profession itself, the narrow-minded jealousies so frequently existing among doctors, preventing that co-operation, which could easily surmount all obstacles.

Where two or three practitioners live together in a town, who are properly qualified, and who properly harmonize, by a union, private teaching may be made much easier, and more efficient than as usually conducted by single individuals.

Where Medical Societies exist, it would not be a bad move, we think, for all practitioners to agree to take no pupils, who were not pronounced properly prepared to study Medicine, after having undergone a preliminary examination at the hands of the Society.

But,—although we have not near said all we have in mind, and especially regarding the minutiae of office instruction, we perceive that we are wearying you, and will close by saying that no member of the "Kentucky State Medical Society," who has, or ever shall have an office pupil, but should feel the weight of responsibilities to be as great, and should be as proud of them as any public professor. Let him do his full duty by his profession in refusing all students whose talents and acquirements are not such as to make future success in the profession very probable, and let him do his full duty by his students when he may have taken them.

I would say, as a plain country doctor,—as in the case of charity, so let our reformation commence at home; when having done our whole duty, we can then conscientiously and freely devote ourselves to the attacking of abuses in other quarters.

In the freedom of what we have said, doubtless there are some who will take offence, but old sores need vinegar, not oil, and malignant growths require no soothing unguent, but rather the knife and actual cautery.





