

want something a little out of the way of routine work, are the essays of Holmes and of Austin Flint, and many others equally refreshing and instructive.

Finally, to those who perchance may still have leisure—though that is barely credible—I would say, dip a little into the history of medicine. What can be more interesting than to try to appreciate the genius and sound common-sense of Hippocrates, to trace the gradual growth of modern ideas from the fantastic superstitions and grotesque practices of the Middle Ages, to realise the condition of mind of those who propounded the "vitalistic," the "Brunonian," the "inflammatory" and other equally extraordinary and exclusive theories of disease; or again, to read the lives of the great masters of the profession—Vesalius, Ambroise Paré, Harvey, Sydenham, Boerhaave, Laënnec, Jenner and many others equally distinguished, ancient and modern? At the risk of being called a medical Torquemada, I would suggest as the next addition to the curriculum of studies, a course of lectures on the history of medicine. I firmly believe that the extra labour entailed upon the student, would be amply compensated by the result—the cultivation of the philosophical spirit, the stimulation of a deeper interest in the fundamental discoveries in medicine, and a proper appreciation of the genius of the pioneers in our art, coupled with a due spirit of humility and modesty with respect to our own efforts.

We are only too apt to take for granted as elementary truths, discoveries that in years gone by were the battle ground of the fiercest controversies, and to think that the present period of medical science is the only one that can lay claim to the gratitude of suffering humanity. In the introduction to his "Grundriss der Geschichte der Medicin," Baas emphasises as follows the value of the study of the history of medicine: "An acquaintance with the history of his science is, however, especially indispensable to the practical physician, if he would thoroughly comprehend and penetrate the secrets of his profession. To him, indeed, it is the bright and polar star, since undoubtedly it alone can teach him the principles of a medical practice independent of the currents, the faith and the superstition of the present. Moreover, it offers him as scientific gain, thorough knowledge of the past, the measure for a just and well-founded criticism of the doings of his own time, places in his hand the thread by which he unites past conditions and efforts with those of the present, and sets before him the mirror in which he may observe and compare the past and the present, in order to draw therefrom well-grounded conclusions for the future. An acquaint-