

perimental method in medical education, I must refer you to the interesting address delivered three years ago, on an occasion similar to the present one, by one of the members of this Faculty.<sup>1</sup> But "the head and the hoof" (to use an expression of Kipling) of the argument in favour of the educational value of laboratory work is to be found, just as in the analogous case of individual clinical work, in the fact that such work teaches how to observe and to think correctly.

I have outlined somewhat sketchily the programme of your studies as laid down in the curriculum—what may be called the fixtures of the medical course. There remains a considerable portion of time which is not officially provided for. It may be asked how, in view of the amount of intellectual pabulum you are daily required to ingest and digest, the sorely taxed brain can possibly be stimulated to further effort. This is a matter that must be left to the individual worker, and each one must be a law unto himself, remembering the adage—*il ne faut pas forcer son talent*. It is to be assumed that a portion of this time is to be devoted to independent study, and this usually takes the form of reading. If done at fixed hours and not in a desultory way, this may be productive of much good. The object of such reading should be in the first place to revise the work of the day and crystallize the knowledge acquired. This the excellent text-books in every department of your work should enable you to do without much expenditure of mental energy. The student of even average ability should find no difficulty in keeping up with the daily work in reading if he bears in mind two cardinal points—to have regular hours and to refrain from memorizing. For the advanced student, who is supposed to have already an elementary knowledge of the subjects he is studying, and possesses or has acquired facility and despatch in his work, there are at his disposal in the library of the faculty, numerous books of reference with which an instructive hour may be spent, comparing the opinions of the masters in our profession. I would dissuade you entirely from devoting much time to the perusal of current medical literature. It is safe to say—and it is a humiliating confession to make—that fully nine-tenths of the material published in the medical press of this country, and perhaps of others, is worthless from an educational point of view—not to say from any point of view,—and you have neither the time nor the mental perspective required to sift the wheat from the chaff. With the student perhaps even more than with the busy practitioner it is "*omne ignotum pro mirifico*." Far better, if you

<sup>1</sup> The Place of Chemistry in a Medical Education, by R. F. Ruttan, M.D., *Montreal Medical Journal*, November, 1893.