

heartened. The students of to-day bolt more, and cram more, and observe less, and think less, than did those of ten to twenty years ago. There seems to be little continuity between the teaching of the primary and the final subjects. In the early years the students are now swallowing pure and applied science in masses too big for their assimilative organs; or, in other words, are largely memorizing facts without understanding them. It is believed by many that this unfortunate condition of things exists in many, if not most of the best medical colleges in North America, as well as in the old world. It would appear that the level-headed Britishers are realizing the situation more fully than the teachers of any other countries.

Francis Shepherd, of Montreal, in his presidential address before this Association in 1902, referred to certain defects in modern laboratory teaching. There is probably no man on this continent who understands this subject more intimately than he from two standpoints—the scientific and the practical. He expressed the opinion that in many of our modern hospitals with their laboratories “students are not taught to observe so carefully the evident symptoms of disease, and are becoming mere mechanics. . . . The higher and more intellectual means of drawing conclusions by inductive reasoning are almost neglected.”

On the other hand we have scientists who think that such ideas are entirely wrong and not even worthy of consideration. Some of our advanced educationalists are even growing a little tired of Johns Hopkins, because those Baltimore men still stick to the old-fashioned idea that the student should be encouraged to observe and think and reason. We are told that they hope soon to be able to manufacture machine-made physicians and surgeons who will be vastly superior to the home-made article.

As a matter of fact, the differences between the schools of thought commenced many years before Shepherd sounded his note of warning. About fifteen years ago the late Sir George Humphry, Professor of Anatomy, Cambridge University, in an address delivered in Oxford, spoke as follows about methods of teaching medicine: “There is too great a mass of facts heaped on the memory and too little reflection on them. . . . The sciences of physiology and histology have become, and those of pathology and anatomy are becoming, more separated from medicine, delegated to special teachers, doubtless to the advantage and width of scope of these sciences, and to the greater knowledge of them, but I fear there is hereby engendered a tendency to take the student too far afield. . . . It is apt to