

of victims. It seemed nowadays as if the medical profession before 1868 were blindfolded, and that their blindness was almost criminal—a sad history doubtless, but happily now no more than historic memories. Left to their own resources practitioners of medicine, during long centuries, could do nothing against erysipelas, against purulent infection, or against puerperal infection, but basing itself upon science surgery has been able to triumph over these odious diseases and to relegate them to the past."

The proceedings in the section of medicine commenced with an interesting address by the president, Dr. Stephen MacKenzie, on "The influences that have determined the progress of medicine during the preceding two and a half centuries." During the course of his address the condition of medicine was contrasted with that which existed when Maisonneuve and his companions landed on what is now the Custom House Square in Montreal, in 1642. At that time anatomy, although it had been prosecuted for some centuries, formed no part in ordinary mental education; physiology, in the scientific sense, was unborn, and organic chemistry not yet created. The medical teachings of that day consisted mainly of the ancient doctrines of the four elements and their corresponding temperaments; of the separate functions of the vegetative, sentient and rational souls; of the agency of the natural, vital and animal spirits, that had continued to be taught with very little variation from the time of Galen.

The section of surgery was under the presidency of Christopher Heath who opened the proceedings with an address on "The teachings of surgery." In speaking of the advances of abdominal surgery he said that twelve years ago while engaged in editing a dictionary of practical surgery neither appendicitis nor the operation for the removal of the rectum was mentioned in it. In his student-days to witness Fergusson cut for stone was to witness an operation as near perfection as was conceivable, and the dexterity and rapidity with which the calculus was extracted were only marred by the frequency with which death from septic causes spoiled the skill of the surgeon. He was particularly severe on some classes of young surgeons whose stock in trade of professional knowledge was often of the slightest