

practical pharmacy in the hospital under the direction of Mr. Cameron, the Apothecary of the institution. It may be the only opportunity open to some of you to become familiar with the preparing and compounding of medicines.

You should also avail of the comparative leisure of the summer months to supply any deficiencies of your preliminary education, and I would venture to advise you especially to work at Natural Philosophy, French and German.

Gentlemen you are entering upon the study of medicine, at a favourable period in its history. I am not alluding to the repeal of the laws of Theodoric which were in operation till the eleventh century, according to which a physician forfeited his *fee* if his patient died, and the surgeon was delivered over to the friends to be dealt with at their pleasure if his patient being a gentleman should succumb after an operation—nor to the removal by the Pope in 1452 of the edict which had condemned physicians to a life of single blessedness—nor even to the salutary direct and indirect influence upon medical science exercised by the general diffusion of knowledge in the present day as compared with the withering influence exerted by the general ignorance of Europe from the seventh to the twelfth century, when it was rare to find a layman who could read or write. I allude rather to the temper which now pervades medicine in common with other sciences, and to the great additions to pathology and therapeutics which have been made of late years. No doubt it is as true to day, as ever it was, that

———“ Every worm beneath the moon  
Draws different threads, and late and soon  
Spins, toiling out his *own* cocoon.”

But at no period have men been more severe in dissecting, unspinning, even destroying, not alone the theories spun by others, but their “own cocoons” also. The “quod semper, quod ubique” sentiment of Theologians has no place amongst modern physicians. Mere authority and opinion, however fossilized by age, have comparatively