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THE STUDY OF ANATOMY.*

BY D. J. GIBB WISHART, B.A., (TOR.), M.D.C.M.,
L.R.C.P., ENG.

Demonstrator of Anatomy, Trinity Medical College,
Toronto; Professor of Ophthalmology, etc., Woman's
Medical College, Toronto; Otologist and Laryn-
gologist to the Hospital for Sick Children,
Girls' Home, Toronto, etc.

In its association with Physiology and Pathology, Anatomy ranks probably as the most fundamental of those sciences which lie at the foundation of a scientific medical training. Without anatomy, physiological investigations would lack the necessary precision. Without anatomical knowledge, the surgeon who attempts any operation on the human body is no better than a quack or an adventurer. Without anatomical knowledge, the physician would be helpless in the diagnosis of disease.

The study of anatomy is, therefore, of great importance. This has long been acknowledged, and enlightened public opinion has aided in the good work by enabling the student to obtain the material for his investigations, while year by year facilities for study in the shape of accurate casts, models, sections, etc., are being produced, all of which combine to make the study of anatomy much easier and more satisfactory than our predecessors ever dreamed could be the case.

This is as it should be. A substantial foundation of sound anatomy is needful to the production of the polished, erudite physician, or skilful surgeon.

The subject of the study of anatomy may be looked at from two standpoints—that of the student, and that of the teacher—which I propose to do briefly in order:

THE STUDY OF ANATOMY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE STUDENT.

Vicary, our earliest English anatomical writer, in speaking of anatomy said, "The chirurgion must knowe the anatomie, for all authors write against those surgions that worke in man's body not knowing the anatomie; for they be likened to a blind man that cutteth in a vine tree, for he taketh away more or less than he ought to doo. And here note well the saying of Galer, the prince of philosophers, in his Estories, that it is as possible for a surgion not knowing the anatomie to work in man's body without error, as it is for a blind man to carve an image and make it perfyt."

For your guidance in study, I would venture to lay down the following propositions:

Book-ism must be avoided. As one of the foremost teachers of anatomy in England at the present day—Thos. Cooke—has lately said, "Book-ism is the fatal error of the day." I would emphasize what I have mentioned before, that the only way for you to learn anatomy is by actual dissection—practical investigation of the nerves, arteries, and muscles; practical inspection of the structures in all their relations as they join together to form the shapely limbs, or well developed body.

Do not imagine that to know *Gray* off by heart is to know anatomy. No lecturer, no text-book, can compete with the actual subject as a source of information. The knowledge which you gain by careful and laboriously painstaking investigation with your scalpel and forceps, is the only knowledge in anatomy which is worth gaining.

It is not the pilot who can recite an accurate description of the rapids that we would employ to steer us down the fierce current at Lachine, but the one whose knowledge of the hidden rocks and shoals has been gained by actual experience, and the physician's anatomical knowledge to be of use must similarly be practical in every sense of the work. Use your text-book then, be it *Gray* or *Cunningham*, as a *guide* only, and depend for your knowledge solely on what you learn from the body itself.

Your knowledge must be accurate.—This is of fundamental importance, whatever be the amount of knowledge you possess. Your study of anatomy

* Part of an address delivered at the opening of the 45th session of Trinity Medical College, Toronto, 1st Oct., 1894.