

were regarded as forming the principal part of a medical education. A century ago medical students were apprenticed to practitioners, and everything they learnt was of a strictly practical character. Jenner was apprenticed to a country surgeon near Bristol, and Sir Astley Cooper began professional life, at the age of fifteen, as an apprentice at Yarmouth. In those days the didactic lecture served a useful purpose in supplementing the strictly practical instruction which the pupil received from his master. The school system gradually replaced the apprenticeship system, and made the student, we wont say scientific, but it made him a man of books and opinions, and cultivated his memory to the neglect of his powers of observation.

A double course of lectures in all the more important branches of study was thought to be necessary, and the number of lectures in each course was fixed at one hundred. Opinions have changed, and improved methods are beginning to prevail. It was found that lectures failed to replace practical instruction. The professor has now to give way to the teacher. Students were over-lectured and under-taught. Your faculty would wish to replace a large proportion of the didactic lectures by practical laboratory work and instructive demonstrations, but the boards will not let them. They exact the pound of flesh; they must have the one hundred lectures twice told.* For my part, I see no hope of a change until such time as the affairs of our profession are controlled by more enlightened men, and I look to the time when you all shall be graduates, and I confidently hope you will have the good sense to vote with the party in favor of letting the shoemaker stick to his last, and letting the teaching be managed by the teachers. With no immediate hope of a change, we try to do our best to mitigate the evil. Accordingly, a few years ago, a system of grading the course was introduced, first in the classes in clinical medicine and clinical surgery, and the plan has been extended to other courses.

The excessive time devoted to didactic lectures is the worst

* The Ontario Board have added to the course in anatomy fifty more lectures, bringing the number of didactic lectures to the ridiculous figure of 250 !!