

William Fraser was born in Perth, Scotland, I believe in the year 1814. After having completed his general education, he entered upon the study of Medicine,—which he pursued chiefly in Glasgow, attending lectures both at the University of Glasgow, and also at the Andersonian University. He was remarkable for the ardor, industry and perseverance he displayed in attaining a knowledge of his profession. His tenacity of application and constancy in learning were such as if he had “set his life upon a cast” and was resolved that by no fault nor short-coming of his, should there be any hazard of the die.

Upon the outbreak of cholera at Rosneath, in 1832, he was sent down to the parish by the late Dr. Lawrie, his Professor of Surgery, to officiate in a temporary infirmary opened for cases of the Epidemic then raging. I mention this incident because it shews the high opinion entertained of him, at that early time judging him worthy to be trusted with a post of responsibility. And I mention it for another reason. Rosneath is the native place of our Dean, and there he made his acquaintance. As they then grasped their right hand of fellowship for the first time neither one nor other had a glimpse of the brilliant future that awaited them in a far-off land across a thousand miles wide bridge of sea, where they were to be colleagues for more than a quarter of a century, to supply the wants of the Dominion and parts which far outlie her borders with troop upon troop of skilful and accomplished practitioners.

In 1834, young Fraser received the license of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow, which is a double qualification, the same as the Medical degree of our University. It entitles the holder to the position with all the privileges of a general practitioner, in that city, so that with it he can there practice Physic, Surgery, Midwifery. Fraser, however, used it more as an honor than a power. Having heard of Canada, where “worth by poverty depressed” rises not so slow as in the Mother-Country, he left home and came out here. Soon after his arrival in this city he was made Apothecary or House-Surgeon of the General Hospital, or rather both, for in those days the offices were fused together and held by one person.

While gathering experience of disease in its protean forms in this new situation, he decided upon extending his theoretical acquirements by re-attendance upon lectures. With this view he matriculated in this University, followed the courses and, having qualified, graduated in 1836.

The graduation class of that year contained another member of high distinction, I mean Dr. Wm.

Sutherland, our Emeritus professor of Chemistry. Dr. Fraser seemed to be so drawn towards him, that an intimacy sprang up which time served to brighten; the tendrils of his heart being ever ready to cluster round the charms of a social, manly, philosophic nature. And whenever memory recounts the pleasures of a bye-gone oratory, that fell in brilliant gleams upon admiring pupils, or a physician to whom the hearts of his sick were gratefully knit in warm affection, or a friend who tenderly felt for another's smart, and could cheer the lonely way with his winsome words, then will it recount some of the graces of a Sutherland!

Having obtained license to practice in Lower Canada, which is got by proving ownership to one's degree, Dr. Fraser gave up the Hospital and engaged in private practice. He realized the fond dreams of hope, and from a slender perch climbed up to an uppermost branch to rejoice in all the pleasures which first-class success could yield. Ever ready to heed the call of the sick, to act upon the rule “*labor omnia vincit*,” and to do the best for his patients, he took at the flood the tide in his affairs which led on to fortune, and after 36 years toil, he was worth £40,000 or £50,000.

In 1845 he was chosen to fill the chair of Medical Jurisprudence. I had the benefit of his maiden course, together with your able Professor of Medicine, and four others whom I can recall. It was new and not obligatory retrospectively, and for these reasons, the attendance was so thin. Here he gave the first marks of aptness for lecturing that after years only rendered more prominent. I well remember the zeal with which he threw himself into his work, the pains-taking he exhibited in its discharge and the faithfulness with which he carried it through to a satisfactory close. His aim was to afford his class a clear, curt, well digested view of his subject, abreast with the progress of the day.

In 1847 he was elected by the board of Governors, one of the Medical staff of the Hospital. Though that year was a very busy one for doctors, owing to the spread of an extensive epidemic of typhus or ship fever imported by emigrants who had suffered from famine, consequent upon the failure of the potato crop in Ireland, Dr. Fraser showed himself equal to the emergency. In other outbreaks, as those of cholera, in 1849, and afterwards, he was also always under arms, and effective in the path of duty. His patients had great confidence in his wisdom, and his humane treatment won their esteem. He was fond of surgery, and as an operator was daring, bold and resolute; he was also fond of trying