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THE TEACHING OF CHEMISTRY IN MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

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With very natural curiosity, the teacher is often asked by the medical student, to what end, and for what purpose, is the teaching of a mass of chemical facts, such as that given in the ordinary course in chemistry in a medical college; and it must be confessed that, on serious reflection, there is a certain amount of saneness in an apparently idle question.

In the four years that embrace the student life of the average student, much is to be learned, and much, in fact, that is of obvious and instant value, and which provokes no question. One must therefore be careful, in a purely scientific study such as chemistry, that its aims and practical bearing be brought into view as prominently as possible. At the same time, admitting that it is a strictly scientific pursuit, the other extreme must be avoided, namely, that the scientific interest should be excluded in the furtherance of the practical or clinical side.

In the medical course as given to the medical student of to-day, much time is given, and rightly so, to the study of anatomy, physiology, pathology, surgery, and medicine, and usually the time allotted to chemistry is insufficient to go over the ground which the student is expected to cover. Two remedies for this state of things may be advanced. Either the time given to more purely medical work should be curtailed, which is highly undesirable, or a previous knowledge of chemistry should be exacted from the student on entrance. The latter is the ideal way, but it, too, unfortunately, has its disadvantages, which are more patent to the teacher than to others. Among these are, that the chemistry taught in some of the higher schools is to say the least superficial and unsatisfactory. For lack of other assistance, the teaching is done by men who have not themselves received a proper training and are, therefore, even with the best of intentions, not in a position to lay the proper foundations for the work to be followed out in the medical college. It is here