

of the hospitals for a time before presenting himself at the College of Surgeons or the Apothecary's Hall. Keats went to the, at that time, United Hospitals of Guy's and St. Thomas, where he studied during the sessions of 1814-15 and 1815-16. He became a dresser at Guy's in the latter year under Mr. Lucas, and on July 25, 1816, he passed the Apothecary's Hall. The details of Keats' life as a medical student are very scanty. In after years one or two of his fellow-students placed on record their impressions of him. He doesn't seem to have been a very brilliant student. Poetry rather than surgery was followed as a vocation; one of his fellow-students says, "all other pursuits were to his mind mean and tame." Yet he acquired some degree of technical skill, and performed with credit the minor operations which fell to the hand of a dresser. He must have been a fairly diligent student to have obtained even the minimum qualifications of the "Hall" before the completion of his twenty-first year. In the *Biographical History of Guy's Hospital* Dr. Wilks states that Sir Astley Cooper took a special interest in Keats.

What attraction could the career of an apothecary offer to a man already much "travelled in the realms of gold," and who was capable at twenty of writing such a sonnet as that on Chapman's Homer? So far as we know he never practiced or made any effort to get established; and in 1817 he abandoned the profession, apparently not without opposition. In a letter to his friend Brown, dated September 23d, 1819, he says, "In no period of my life have I acted with any self-will but in throwing up the apothecary profession."

During the next four years he led, to use his own words, "a fitful life, here and there, no anchor." While a student he had made friends in a literary circle, of which Leigh Hunt and Haydon, the artist, were members, and he had a number of intimates—Brown, Taylor, Bailey, Dilke, and others—among the coming men in art and science. From his letters to them, to his brother George (who had emigrated with his wife to America), and to his sister Fanny, we glean glimpses