

benefit to be obtained by the medical student from a portion of his present studies. Of what use is Botany to a medical man that it should occupy the valuable time of the student? What more of *Materia Medica* does he require than to know the properties, therapeutical indications and doses of drugs? A mass of material is expounded which might have done for the days when medical practitioners compounded their own medicines or gathered their own simples. But what use are they now? We do not rely on our own observation as to the quality or kind of opium we order, but leave it to the druggist to supply. Prof. Huxley says in one of his addresses that the student might as well learn how to make surgical knives as to know how to make every drug that is employed, and we are not apothecaries that it is requisite to understand the difference between Alexandria, Tripoli or any other variety of senna. Let such matters be left to those whose special business it is, and confine ourselves to what is of more concern. How much more necessary is it for the student to be possessed of those details which seem to be considered trifles, as they are not practically taught; trifles which, in the aggregate, tend to perfection and often make or mar success. Few students on leaving college can apply a bandage evenly, pass a catheter or open an abscess. There is not one in twenty who has had any practical knowledge of such things. Such men, if conscientious, must begin practice with fear and anxiety for they cannot feel that confidence in themselves which will make them bold without being rash. We have known graduates who could not tell a scalpel from a bistoury, and as for vaccination or bleeding these seemed to be among the lost arts. Now, there is something radically wrong in thus ignoring these small practical details of our profession which would often save the young practitioner from much bungling before he finds them out for himself.

Let there be a preliminary year for all these extraneous subjects, if they are necessary, but they should not encroach on the period of his proper medical studies.

A reform in these matters is urgently needed and we are sure that most, if not all, medical practitioners will concur in this opinion. We consider the time is ripe for a discussion on the merits of some such change, and trust that it will receive some attention at the next meeting of the Canadian Medical Association. Shakespeare says:—There is a time and tide in the affairs of man, &c. We believe this

time has arrived for these old conservative ideas to be set aside, and that those studies descended to us from days gone by, and of no further practical use, should be relegated to their proper place. We live in an eminently practical as well as scientific age, and there is so much to be studied that it is not well to burden the mind of the student with matter he will be glad to forget so soon as he leaves college. We also look upon the present system of examinations as pernicious to the proper advancement of the student, and would recommend the mode as carried out in other departments of education. The yearly graduation from a lower to a higher class; as in Arts and Law. This is the only true course, for we might as well expect a child to study history before he has mastered the alphabet, as to expect a student of the first year to understand the principles of pathology before he is acquainted with the fundamental branches of medicine. We trust that sufficient has been said on the matter and that a word to the wise is sufficient. Let those who have influence to institute reform bestir themselves and not allow medicine to relapse into theory or routine and thus open the door for all sorts of quackeries. Place the graduate in such a position that the public, who judge by outward actions, can see that he is superior to a quack. For we have known a graduate who attained to high honours in his University, ousted from a country practice by a six months' graduate from the States who happened to be better informed on these minor details.

DEATH'S HIGHWAY.

An article with the above heading is published in the *Philadelphia Press*, which gives a curious account of Homœopathic Hospital treatment. A man fell from the fourth story of a building and sustained a compound comminuted fracture of the thigh, so that a piece of bone three inches long was found on the pavement. He was taken to the Homœopathic Hospital, the police having received orders from the Mayor to carry all accident cases to it. It appears that the visiting surgeon was absent from town and the resident physician, notwithstanding the severe nature of the injury, thought that it did not require immediate attention. Another doctor, who was not connected with the institution, saw him during the day and agreed that they could wait till the surgeon returned, but, at nine o'clock in the evening, twelve hours after the accident, the same doctor was again called in and amputated at the lower third. The patient sank rapidly and died