

that they are desirable or necessary I am far from satisfied. It is the Scottish system to treat every main subject in the curriculum in either fifty or one hundred lectures, no fewer, no more. Is it reasonable to suppose that all the subjects can be treated in the same way, and that all teachers shall have just this amount to say of each of them? Lectures are of supreme value in bringing the mind of the student into close touch with that of his teacher, but for the mere setting forth of facts they are worse than useless.

Edinburgh has great traditions, and the work done by her alumni affords ample justification of the method in the past; but in common with many others I cannot help feeling that much of the professional lecturing might, with very great advantage, be curtailed; that the remaining lectures might be expository and illustrative, and that some of the time thus set free might be devoted to practical work, to explanation and criticism of good text-books by the professor or his assistant demonstrators, or to actual reading.

The professor would thus come to be the friend and companion and leader, not the fingerpost or pointer. In the newer schools where tradition does not demand these lectures, there may be a tendency to go too far in the opposite direction, and I know many teachers who, because lectures on one subject or by one teacher are of no value, will not allow that they should ever form part of a medical curriculum. I believe in laboratory and practical work, and believe in them most thoroughly, but I think that the lecture has still an important place in the training of the medical student if only that it brings the developing mind of the student into contact with that of the man who is supposed to be his master and educator. Moreover, it is a good thing for the teacher himself, if he will not be content with stereotyped and text-book lectures. He must have things clearly defined and well arranged in his own mind before he can hope to explain them to others. If his teaching is to be up-to-date, his own reading and observation must not be allowed to lag behind, and the student profits.