

to find, apart from a very few, that this work is appreciated, and the chief object of many seems to be to escape with the minimum amount of labour. The advantages of this work are so obvious that I would hardly stop to consider them had I not learned by experience how often they are neglected. In the first place the art of case-taking is one which requires very considerable practice, and it is easy to pick out an ill-trained man by the manner in which his cases are reported. Systematic training and constant practice in this art would, I believe, exercise a most healthy influence on the medical literature of our day; and the vast quantity of unimportant or irrelevant matter which fills many of our journals would thereby be greatly curtailed and an inestimable boon conferred on the medical public. The habit of recording your observations accurately not only teaches you to observe carefully, but is a training of no mean value in exercising your powers of description. Accuracy in description is by no means easy, as any of you may convince yourselves by trying, for example, to describe a skin eruption in such a way that it conveys a clear picture to another. You will find that every case you report will open up fresh channels of thought and by leading you to compare and classify your facts will prove a stimulus to thinking out the various difficult problems arising in any department of serious work. The knowledge of human nature attained by the study of hospital cases is again another accomplishment which will often prove of quite as much value as technical medical knowledge.

So strongly is the need of this individual work felt by the Faculty, that this year it has been decided to reduce the number of clinics in order to leave leisure for it to be done. It is not meant that this leisure should be frittered away in lounging around the wards and enjoying the side shows and curiosities, but in careful earnest work at the bedside and in the clinical laboratories. The old method of walking the hospitals, much as one might promenade on a popular thoroughfare, will not prove of much use in becoming familiar with the features of disease. The free and easy customs attributed to those jovial creations of Dickens, Benjamin Allan and Bob Sawyer, no longer linger among us, and I fear that the natural selection exercised by examining bodies has caused this species to become almost extinct.

In the study of disease it is well as a student to obtain as large and varied an experience as possible, but thoroughness should never be sacrificed for quantity. It is far more important to see a few cases well and know everything about them, than to rush through a larger number in a careless and haphazard fashion. Cases thoroughly mas-