

THE UNFETTERED CANADIAN.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, JULY, 1849.

No. VII.

ROBINSON'S LECTURES.

LECTURE V.

MEDICINE, AS IT IS TAUGHT IN THE SCHOOLS.

WE must survey the whole extent of a science, in order to understand the value and relation of its integral parts. When we know the extent of an evil, we are more resigned to our lot, than while the subject remains doubtful. The mind winds up her power to the contest or the endurance, and displays an extent of energy and resolution, which the man, before, never even dreamt that he possessed. And so it is with science; when we have surveyed its outline and mighty range, we are then prepared to meet its most threatening aspect, and grapple with its formidable strength. There is a fortitude of soul, distinct from that physical fortitude which braced the Nemean lion's nerve; and I am persuaded that it is from the lack of the former, that many men are deterred from encountering the difficulties of science, and facing that imposing front, that would soften into a placid smile before the energy of perseverance. I have known a boy to weep, and abandon school forever, because he could not solve a single problem, though formerly he had been considered one of the smartest in his class.

I shall now hasten to give you a brief view of the several parts of medical science, as it is taught in the schools, and embraced by the literati of that profession.

The *Institutes of Medicine* are divided into *physiology, pathology and therapeutics*.

1st. *Physiology** comprehends the laws and functions of the human body, in its healthy state.

* Derived from *phusis*—nature, &c. *logos* discourse.

2d. *Pathology*† describes the *remote, predisposing, exciting* and *proximate* causes of disease.

3d. *Therapeutics*‡ contain an account of the nature and operation of medicines, in the cure of disease. To these divisions we may add,

4th. The *Clinical Lectures*; which comprehend the method of visiting and examining sick people, and the knowledge to be derived from attending the bed of sickness. A register kept of the diseases and remedies of *Clinical patients*, forms an item in this part of the study.

I. *Chemistry*. The analyzing of substances, to discover their nature and composition.

II. *Materia Medica*. This study comprises the whole volume and extent of the *number, name, nature and use* of medicines, *mineral, vegetable and animal*.

III. *Pharmacy*. To know the aspect and admixture, and chemical qualities of the various medicines, the student must apply to the *Apothecary's art*; or study under a practising physician, who prepares his own medicines.

IV. *Botany*. The science of the vegetable kingdom; which is the foundation of one part of the *materia medica*. To know the *class, and family, and name* of plants, and their *medical virtues*, is of high importance.

V. *Natural History*, is another part of the science, intimately connected with the former, and affording so many facts and illustrations, that no eminent physician will neglect to acquire it. It is delightful to the intellect, and useful in the department of medicine.

VI. *Anatomy*, which is the science of organization, as *physiology* is the science of life; and is the foundation of *Surgery*, and the most

† *Pathos, disease, and logos*.

‡ *Therapeuo, to cure*.