Introductory Lecture,

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GENTLEMEN,—If there is one day in the year that deserves to be held especially sacred by our profession, and that combines more interesting recollections, more endearing associations, than another, it is that on which we all meet, at our various medical schools, to commence and to inaugurate our winter studies. All such meetings have a peculiar significance; and the philosopher may read in the various gatherings of a nation an important page in the history of progress and of civilization. The great exhibitions record improvements in skilled labour; and our large scientific meetings promote the advancement and indicate the status of useful knowledge; and at rare intervals we have the rising of a people to carry out some great national cause, or to avert some great national calamity; and recent rumours justify me in giving some scope to the imagination, and in endeavouring to picture to the mind what a huge national assemblage there would be in our beloved country if the foot of the rash invader were ever to be planted on her free and sacred soil; how Britain would rise in her might, and be as one arm, to repel and to crush. But when we return to the calm region of everyday life, we must, I think, admit that there are few gatherings more interesting, and few occasions more important, than the one that brings us here to-day. It is now universally admitted that our profession is carrying on a noble work; not only is disease combated and suffering allayed, but pestilence is traced to its lurking-places, and the laws of health are explained and enforced. The important body of men who are toiling to accomplish all this are diminishing in number; each year makes sad havoc in their ranks: constantly exposed to contagious diseases, death is often busy amongst them; going forth as they often do in the spirit of the missionary, they sometimes encounter the death of a martyr. It is an important and interesting day, when our country sends up fresh recruits to fill up the ranks of our profession, and to meet the increasing demands of our army, our navy, our merchants' service, and of those vast and numerous colonies upon which it is said the sun never sets. It is this fresh infusion of young life, and vigour, and enthusiasm that from year to year renews and sustains our profession, and we hold out the hand of friendly welcome and co-operation to those who, upon this day, offer up for the first time the sacrifice of their best energies to the noble profession they have chosen. What a bright and useful career may from this moment be opening out for many of you!—how gladly would some who now wander about with blighted hopes and ruined prospects, and haunted by the spirit of their prostituted powers, recall this day, and start once more with the morning of life and hope opening bright and fresh before them! It is not within the scope of human power to unveil the future, or to paint the career of any one of you, and, even were that possible, I doubt if one here present would venture to raise the curtain, and look into the dim unknown; but though we may not do this, yet my own experience tells me how much of the success and happiness of every student depends upon himself, and that if he could only combine some of the settled convictions and strong will of a mature age with the buoyant elastic energy of youth, a fine result might be expected. In order, therefore, to give you some insight into the career that lies before you, I shall endeavour briefly, and I fear feebly, yet faithfully, to depict my conception of the model student in the various stages of his life, leaving it to each of you to adapt

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the portions best suited to your peculiarities, and to appropriate such hints as may be profitable and suggestive.

We will suppose that our young friend has received a good preliminary education, the education of a gentleman, in which the functions of the body, the mind, and the heart have been actively exercised and developed—in which the sinews of thought have been strengthened, habits of attention and concentration acquired, respect for the feelings and opinions of those older and wiser inculcated, and veneration for the pure and holy instilled. And now he takes his first serious and important step in life, by commencing the study of the healing art. Recognising the practical character of the profession he has chosen, he selects a school connected with some large hospital, and now begin the details of his student life. He has three years—three short years—before he will be called upon to undertake the heavy responsibility of coping with disease: he is impressed at the very outset with the vast field of scientific knowledge that he must travel over and glean from, and he feels that every day of those three years must contribute its fair share to the general stock. He strengthens his faltering resolution by associating with those who are disposed to work; he seeks the friendly co-operation and advice of the different professors, associates with them in all their public duties both at the hospital and school, and submits cheerfully to an authority which is always exercised in a friendly spirit and with a view to promote his welfare and the general prosperity of the school. His first session is his great trial; everything seems at the commencement strange and unintelligible; the subjects of study numerous and complicated; some of the lectures dry and unsatisfactory; many of the terms employed difficult and confusing; and some of the practical and experimental departments rather repulsive: but through all this he works sternly and steadily on; he attends his lectures regularly, and endeavours to organize, to arrange, to think over, and to read over, in the evening, that which he has collected during the day; he spends the intervals between the lectures either in the dissecting room or the hospital; he familiarises his eye with the form, aspect, and structure of the body, both surgical and microscopic—his ear with technical terms and professional language, and his mind with the phenomena of diseased action: thus he almost imperceptibly takes in professional knowledge through each of the senses, he breathes a professional atmosphere, and thus grows and fructifies in his student life. Still, for a time, technical terms convey to his mind an imperfect meaning, facts seem dry and hard, confused and chaotic. They resemble mosaic work: each little fragment seems meaningless and insignificant, but as they aggregate together, they form a beautiful and harmonious picture. Let us now follow him a little into the detail of his work, and introduce you to a few items of that scientific banquet at which he is a constant and a willing guest. He listens with ever increasing attention and interest to the scientific lectures on chemistry, with their ample illustrations and their beautiful experiments; and as the laws of physics and of chemistry unfold themselves to his mind in all their exactness, and in their numerous applications to the fine arts and manufactures, to hygiene, to the detection of poisons, of disease, and of the active principles of drugs, and to expounding the laws of those physical forces by which we are surrounded, he feels as if he could linger on at the very threshold of his profession, and expend a life in amassing the profusion of scientific wealth that lies scattered before him. But other sciences claim a hearing, each independent, mutually illustrative, and combining to build up and to illuminate the science of medicine. Botany claims a share of his attention for that beautiful science. Again, the lecturer on materia medica endeavours, and doubtless with success, to initiate him into the various mysteries of that subject, and it is no fault of the lecturer if our student has been sometimes tempted to wish that the materials were somewhat reduced in their number, and simplified in their details; and in the innocence and simplicity of a tyro, perhaps, he thinks what a wonderful being a physician must be if he ever avails himself of the innumerable drugs with which the wisdom of his college has supplied him, only perhaps surpassed by the moral fortitude of those patients who become the receptacles.

Remembering how essential it is to understand the structure and functions of the human body, he devotes a large share of his attention to anatomy, and to the laws of life and organization. Our student is one amongst the many hundreds who, through a long course of years, have admired and profited by the clear, impressive, laconic lectures of our popular anatomical teacher, and who have first acquired a taste for that difficult study whilst listening to his graphic descriptions. In furtherance of the same object, with scalpel in hand, he travels

over and over that complicated piece of machinery, the human body, until it has become not so much a series of names impressed upon his memory, as a series of pictures photographed upon his brain. He also enters upon the study of minute structures, and the laws of growth and development, healthy and morbid, with the learned and indefatigable lecturer on physiology; and as these subjects unfold themselves into minuter and minuter sub-divisions and intricacies, so that the very border-land between the finite and the infinite seemed well nigh reached, and the strained intellect of our student has reached the very limits of its power, he is almost tempted to pause and to slacken in his efforts. Yet, as he listens on, that which seemed at first like a dissolving view that eluded his mental vision, gradually grouped itself into harmony and beauty, and he feels that under the guidance of such a master of his subject, he may safely venture to the utmost boundaries of minute and microscopical research.

And now, having laid a good foundation in these more elementary but most important studies, he enters upon those that have a more immediate and practical bearing upon his profession. He attends lectures upon medicine, surgery, and midwifery, given by gentlemen who daily illustrate in the wards of the hospital the principles and the practice they inculcate in this theatre—gentlemen who may fairly take rank with any teachers upon similar subjects in the kingdom—and perhaps he catches a stray idea or two upon a few favourite subjects, from the humble individual who has now the honour to address you. Our student now begins to find the immense advantage of having attached himself to a large hospital; he finds the value of verifying at the bed-side the instruction he receives, and he aims at a constant and a happy combination of the two methods of learning, making them mutually and reciprocally instructive. Surgery occupies much of his time, since here he has almost unrivalled opportunities of observing all its phases; accidents of every description pass in rapid succession before his view; he sees the dislocated joint and the fractured bone restored to form and to use; and modern science startles him with the boldness, the originality, and the success of her onward march; the congenitally deformed limb is remodelled to its original type, the diseased joint is often cured, and when past recovery, is removed with the preservation of a useful limb. Aneurism is cured without operation, and when stern necessity requires the employment of the knife, its terrors are well-nigh removed by that great boon to suffering humanity, chloroform.

And now it may be that his first keen relish for the profession he has chosen commences; as he sees the various triumphs of surgery brought to bear, with success, upon the continuous stream of suffering humanity that is ever flowing through the wards of the hospital, he begins to estimate the resources and powers of our science at their true value, and he becomes more and more anxious to take a personal and responsible part in bringing them into active operation. With this object in view, he constantly strives to educate his powers, mental and physical, and to apply them with skill and effect to the healing art. By constant practice amid such abundant materials, he acquires dexterity in manipulations, quickness of perception, calmness and precision in judgment; the hand, the eye, the ear, the mind are all by degrees carefully taught and disciplined to perform their due share in spelling out disease, in learning its physiognomy and its various physical signs, and in working out the practical details of treatment; and as the triumphs of surgery become more and more impressed upon his mind, with its tangible unmistakable facts, he drinks in deep draughts of faith and confidence in the powers and resources at his command; he feels that here at least the principles to which he trusts are immutable and true; that quackery and false pretence and ignorant charlatanism, whilst they try to talk big about "impurities of the blood," "nervous debilities," and the like trash, stand paralyzed and abashed before the plain, clear, honest, eloquent facts that teem and swarm in our surgical wards. Thus he is suitably prepared to enter upon the study of medicine, to tread with cautious steps the bridge which divides the seen from the unseen; he learns how delicate is the offshading of the one into the other; how uniform and fixed are the laws that govern both. He begins to study the diagnosis of internal diseases, and in this he is ably assisted by eminent physicians.

And now the student life of our hero is drawing to a close; but in order to give finish and completeness to his medical education, he devotes a few months to attendance upon some of the special hospitals: amongst these the Hospital for Diseases of the Eye makes a strong claim upon him. Here he reaps a rich and abundant harvest. In the course of two or three months every variety of eye disease passes in frequent review

before him, until they become a series of familiar pictures. Many of these diseases lie on the surface, and can be seen at a glance; others more deeply seated, and attacking the vascular and nervous tissues at the fundus, and the fluids or humours within the eye, are now unfolded to us, and lighted up before us in a series of exquisite pictures, through the agency of that beautifully scientific yet simple little instrument, the ophthalmoscope—an instrument that has revolutionized all our ideas upon the internal diseases of the eye, and given to them a scientific precision that has converted the eye into a transparent organ, in which the various tissues can be seen, in which the effects of disease peculiar to each can be traced, and the power of various medicines upon them can be gauged. Neither is he less surprised and delighted with the triumphs of the mechanical resources of art, when brought to bear upon the eye and its appendages; in no department has there been more ingenuity exercised, more dexterity displayed, or more brilliant results achieved. Every year records fresh triumphs, important improvements, and striking discoveries. Not merely is cataract removed with a skill that gives a splendid average of success, but that beautiful and delicate operation, by which an artificial pupil is formed, is now reduced to such exactness that its size, its form, and its position can be regulated, and even the mobility of the original pupil preserved; and diseases which but a few short years ago resulted in hopeless blindness, are now brought under the curative influence of our art. In proof of this I offer two illustrations. The first of these is the treatment of pannus, or vascular opacity of the cornea, the result of purulent or Egyptian ophthalmia, and the cause of blindness to so many of our soldiers in the East; the present plan, in these cases, is to inoculate the eye with purulent matter, and the result in my own practice, as much as in that of others, has been in several instances the recovery of useful sight. The second example I would give is that of acute glaucoma, a disease intensely painful in its progress, destructive in its results, and entirely unamenable to treatment of the ordinary kind; yet this formidable disease is now almost as easily and as certainly brought under our control as the milder forms of ophthalmia, through the instrumentality of a comparatively slight and safe operation, an operation that is as eminently philosophical in its conception as it is brilliant in its results, and one that may fairly take rank amongst the great discoveries of this century, and one that must immortalize the distinguished German oculist, Gräfe. But, egotist that I am, I feel that I am wandering from my original plan, and must pause, else could I fondly linger on in expatiating upon this favourite subject, upon a subject to which I have devoted the best energies of my mind, and which is in unison with some of the warmest feelings of my heart, and in some of the improvements of which I am sometimes vain enough to hope my name may be associated. All these interesting branches of science our student eagerly imbibes, and that which may have cost years of anxious thought and labour, and taxed the best energies of many an original mind, becomes an easy and rapid possession, when once clearly explained and demonstrated.

And now our student has completed that portion of his professional education that precedes his final examinations, and his entrance upon practice. He feels a strong and well-grounded confidence that he can pass these ordeals satisfactorily. No artificial and cramming process is required to compensate for a legitimate and steady process of study. He avoids the grinder, whose aim is just to pack into the mind sufficient for the examining boards in the shortest possible time, and carefully to exclude every ray of knowledge that is not wanted for that special purpose. His information is not the result of mere rote learning; it has grown into his mind slowly, but surely; it is written there, in indelible language, by facts, observation, and experience, and will not fail him at the moment of trial, or suffer him to commit any grave and serious error. He learns with satisfaction that the examinations are becoming more and more of a practical character, and are adapted to test fairly the information of an intelligent and working student. It is with such credentials, and under such auspices, that our student presents himself before the examining boards, and receives their diplomas. And now the law throws her sheltering mantle around him, and protects him from the antagonism and rivalry of unqualified pretenders.

And here let us pause, and reconsider for a brief moment how all this has been accomplished. I have endeavoured to show the machinery that has been at his disposal, the sources from whence he has chiefly drawn his knowledge, and the plan of study that he has pursued. But oh! my young friends, rest assured that he has not accomplished this without many a hard

struggle. At the commencement of his career, idle pleasures and vicious habits offered their allurements, and presented themselves in enticing and dangerous contrast with dry and difficult study. The fight of duty against inclination was a tough one; but once having gained a victory, that which was at first an effort became gradually a habit. Without denying himself rational enjoyment at suitable times, he learnt to distinguish between the healthy and the morbid, between that which leaves the mind attuned for intellectual pursuits and that which creates a craving for excitement, a feebleness of will, and a distaste for mental application. Ample are the sources of enjoyment to be derived from the healthy exercise of the faculties, bodily and mental, from works of art, from music and painting, from rational and intellectual society, and from the perusal of well-chosen books. From these various sources our student has sought healthy relaxation and refreshment for the mind after his more serious labours, giving suitable employment for each faculty in its turn, cultivating a taste for the sublime and beautiful, as well as for the scientific and intellectual, and feeling that herein lay his great safeguard against degrading vice; that as the palate that has been accustomed to agreeable and wholesome food loathes and repudiates that which is nauseous and noxious, so a mind refined and elevated by religious sentiments, intellectual pursuits, and healthy enjoyments, shrinks with instinctive abhorrence from the contact of vice, however artfully concealed, and from gross and sensual pleasures, however speciously presented. He recognises full well, from sad examples around him, the evil effects of yielding to pernicious habits. He has known such a man, the friend of his early youth, and he still lives in his memory as a beacon and a warning. That friend commenced his career full of promise and talent, and many a fond heart beat high with hope as he made his first plunge into the stormy ocean of life. At first all looked bright and sunny, but ere long the sky became overcast, one demoralizing habit fastened itself upon him, enfeebled his energies, undermined his mental powers, enchained his will, until he degenerated from the dignity of the master into the degradation of the slave, and, sinking deeper and deeper, he drifted down life's stream a wreck in mind and body, and a mournful contrast to the once bright and happy being in whom so many fond expectations centred.

And now let us take a brief and rapid glance at our student in his new and still more important character of Medical Practitioner. He realizes more and more that life is an earnest, anxious, laborious thing. He says with the poet,—

"Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait."

He looks peeringly and anxiously into the dim future, into the vast teeming world, and feels that in spite of prejudice, rivalry, and competition, he has to win the innermost citadel of humanity, that he has to gain men's confidence, to be intrusted with their closest secrets, to take into his keeping their dearest interests. How shall he, the young, the untried, the inexperienced, gain all this? No fortress ever seemed half so impregnable. It is a trying period during these early struggles, but he commences the siege in the right spirit; no underground work, no attempt to raise himself by lowering the professional standard, no attempt to gain credit at the expense of another practitioner, no wretched exhibition of cant, no simulating and acting unreal and fictitious parts; any amount of failure rather than stoop to such miserable expedients. An impoverished estate, rather than degradation and dishonour. He strives to maintain an independent position, not so much by the superfluity of his means as by the paucity of his wants. He esteems but lightly the mere shows and shams, the upholstery and flunkeyism of vulgar wealth. He knows that modern society, with its crowded saloons, its reeking, huge, formal parties, its competitive displays and profusions, is one huge mistake, and utterly supersedes and destroys the object for which it was instituted; and that riches are only to be valued as they minister to refinement, to a cultivated taste, to the promotion of science, the diffusion of benevolence, the agreeable interchange of thought between educated minds, and the carrying out those high and holy objects which elevate humanity. His pursuits and resources being of an intellectual character, he is not eager after wealth, but can calmly wait, and, by patiently employing the various professional talents with which his previous studies have furnished him, establish his position and gain the confidence of patients.

And now once more the scene shifts; the trying doubts about obtaining practice are at an end, and the toilsome, anxious,

professional life begins. A poet might well exhaust the highest soarings of genius in writing the epic of the doctor's life; thoughts and images of quiet, passive endurance, of moral courage, of unruffled coolness, of anxious watchings, of harassing results, of baffled hopes, of untiring self-sacrifice, may crowd with embarrassing profusion upon his brain, and glow in his verses; and yet I venture to assert that the most daring flights of imagination are weak and vapid when contrasted with the stern realities of such a life. Picture to yourselves, for a brief moment, our medical man in the full tide of his professional career: what a stormy, anxious unrest it is; what exorbitant exactions are made upon his resources, what exaggerated expectations are formed of his powers, what unthinking demands are made upon his time and upon his vital energies! By day and by night, for rich and for poor, with or without recompense, he must obey the summons of suffering humanity. How many anxious, complicated, unfortunate cases he meets—cases where great confidence is placed, where great interests are at stake, where the feelings are strongly enlisted—cases where life may be just quivering in the balance, and one slight error of judgment may snap the slender thread, and every eye is turned in anxious trusting faith and eager hope upon him; and he must sustain their drooping hopes by a fictitious calmness, and assume a confidence that his judgment belies, until his over-taxed mind and over-wrought feelings are well-nigh exhausted with the effort.

Again, he must be ever ready to encounter accidents, disease, and death in all their most appalling forms; when friends are paralyzed with fear, and when contagion carries panic to the stoutest hearts, he must be there, calm and unmoved. Life may be ebbing fast through the bleeding artery, the blanched mother may be fluttering out her own life at the moment when she has given birth to another, the victim of cholera may present all the most hideous features of death whilst yet writhing in vital agony, delirium and tetanus may compress the energies of a life in a few brief, racking, fatal hours, and still he must be there, to gaze on sufferings he cannot relieve, and to feel that science is impotent and humbled in the presence of busy death.

But it is not alone in combating disease that our medical man plays a conspicuous and useful part. He aims at unfolding the causes of disease, both in the abstract and in detail, profoundly convinced that we are living under the control of great, wise, uniform, and impartial laws; that health and enjoyment are the ideas involved in the Divine government, and are the ordinary results of understanding and obeying these laws; and that disease and suffering are the exceptional, the unnatural condition, and the result of their ignorant or wilful violation. He seeks to diffuse these ideas around him; he regulates the sanitary condition of each family, by explaining the scientific value and importance of the various elements that contribute to health; how light, pure air, warm clothing, cleanliness, wholesome food, and exercise must each contribute their proportion, and he shows how disease may spring out of a neglect of any one of these health-giving elements. That which is true of a family applies with yet greater force to a district. With his voice and influence he is ever erecting a barrier against the exercise of unwholesome trades amid dense populations; against intra-mural burials; against permitting crowded poverty, in stricken, loathsome localities, to become the sources and centres of contagion, over which the destroying angel broods and arms himself ere he spreads his baneful influence over the land; and dipping yet deeper, he strives to unmask some of the festering sores of modern civilization. Recognising and explaining the frightful evils of intemperance and prostitution, he points to the glaring gin palace and the more secret brothel as the great manufactories of disease, cankering humanity in its very bud, and dwarfing and deforming its very form and features; as a fruitful source of blood-poisoning and hereditary disease, making the husband the transmitter of disease to the pure and innocent wife of his bosom and child of his love, and giving cruel point and force to the filial reproach in the language of our poet:—

"See what thy guilty love hath done,
Repaid thee with too like a son."

And he points to our refuges, our Lock hospitals, our work-houses, and our lunatic asylums, as so many warnings and protests against violated law, and as the great drains and moral cesspools of humanity. Thus it is that he endeavours to co-operate with those great, universal, and Divine laws under which we live, not merely in subduing disease, but in preventing it. He becomes a great moral disinfectant, and by seeking to purify the source, sweetens the streams of life. All the higher

faculties of his mind, and all the holier feelings of his heart, are brought into active exercise; whilst seeking to improve the condition and elevate the tone of society, he feeds and strengthens his own moral being. He seeks to be in harmony with the Divine mind, by learning and expounding His great and immutable laws, and His benevolent designs; and by labour and self-sacrifice he moves with the age, and strives to act up to a high Gospel standard, a Gospel of faith in the great and good, of peace on earth and goodwill towards men; a Gospel that says, "Forasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my little ones, ye did it unto me." He feels with the poet—

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime;
And, departing, leave behind us
'Footprints on the sands of time'—
Footprints that perchance another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again."

He finds his reward, too, in many a brilliant triumph over disease, in the honoured position he occupies in society, in the confidence he inspires, and the respect he commands; and as the evening of life approaches, and the energies of mind and body wax feebler, he gradually withdraws into a quieter sphere of action, and calmly contemplates the approach of that period when, full of years and honours, he shall receive his summons to quit the scene of his active and useful life. His career has resembled some mountain stream, at first trickling gently down, then rushing on, now leaping over impediments, anon coursing down precipitous rocks, eddying for a brief moment into little calm recesses and bright still waters, and then, ever on, bringing down the rich alluvia from the heights to fertilize the plains beneath, ever nourishing and beautifying in its course, and when most troubled and tumultuous, sending off bright rainbows to play over its boiling waters; and after all its tossings and its windings, and when it has run its course and done its work, merging into the still quiet lake, that reflects in its deep bosom its own green banks, and the glorious canopy of the star-spangled heavens.

And when all is, at length, drawing to a close, the face of the aged veteran, furrowed and seamed in many a well-fought battle-field with suffering and disease, glows with faith and joy as the visions of a bright future pass before his mind: visions in which the beauty and order of eternal nature are in harmony with man; in which the penalty of neglected law is universally recognised; in which empiricisms and mean shams have passed away; in which enlightened and uniform principles guide the professional body; in which every recognised source and cause of disease, mental, moral, and physical, are removed; in which the great and benevolent intentions of the all-wise Creator are accomplished, and religion becomes the handmaid and pioneer of science; in which humanity attains its highest capabilities, realizes its greatest results, and accomplishes its Divine mission; and then, mingling with the bright vision, there sounds in his ear the melody of the universal hymn of an emancipated world, swelling forth with praise and honour to a profession that makes truth its chief aim, and the fulfilment of the Divine will its final object.

ON HÆMORRHAGE FROM THE BOWEL IN CHILDREN AS A SIGN OF POLYPUS OF THE RECTUM.

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THE formation of a correct diagnosis must always precede the scientific treatment of disease, and as a consequence every symptom which leads the practitioner to suspect the existence of any special affection becomes of greater or less importance in proportion to the frequency of its occurrence in association with it.

The connexion between hæmorrhage from the bowel in children and the existence of a polypus of the rectum is so constant, that it is a subject of some astonishment that it is not more generally recognised; and as polypus of the rectum is generally regarded as a rare affection, and as at least twenty examples have fallen under my care within the last two years, I have been tempted to bring the subject before the profession.

In the majority of the cases which I have observed, the disease has existed for many months; they have all occurred in children under ten years, and in most the disease has been regarded and treated for piles. In some cases the discharge of blood from the bowel is constant, and the patient will be brought with its clothes stained, and its buttocks smeared with a bloody mucus. In these instances the polypus will generally be found to be within, if not protruding from, the sphincter. In other examples, occasional discharges of blood will be observed, although not to any very great extent, and this discharge will generally accompany and follow the act of defecation. In others, again, the hæmorrhage will take place independently of any such process. There will generally be some straining after stool, but I have never observed any prolapse of the rectum; and although this disease is troublesome to the child, and of course debilitating, by the repeated, if not constant hæmorrhage, when once recognised it is easily treated, and rapidly cured. The following cases from my note-book will best illustrate the subject:—

CASE 1.—John P.—, aged four years and a half, was brought to me on June 29th, 1857, having passed blood from the bowels at intervals for seven months. He had been under treatment by a medical practitioner for piles, but had not received any benefit. Upon a digital examination, a polypus, of the size of a nut, was detected upon the anterior wall of the rectum. This was easily removed by forceps, and a recovery ensued.

CASE 2.—Ellen B.—, aged five years and a half, was brought to me at Guy's Hospital on August 3rd, 1857, having experienced for seven weeks a constant discharge of blood from the anus, with the occasional protrusion of a cherry-like growth. Upon examination, a polypus was detected about one inch up the bowel, which could easily be forced down externally. It was removed by forceps, and recovery followed.

CASE 3.—Mary S.—, aged eight, was sent to me on July 26th, 1858, having been under treatment for eighteen months for piles, without receiving any benefit. During this period at variable intervals she had had bleeding from the anus, accompanied with straining, but no pain. Upon examining the rectum, a polypus was discovered, of the size of a large cherry; it was situated about two inches up the bowel, and in the attempt to hook it down with the finger it separated at its pedicle, and passed externally. No bleeding took place, but a rapid cure.

CASE 4.—T. R.—, aged ten, was brought to me at Guy's Hospital on the 12th of July, 1858, having had bleeding from the rectum after stool for three months. An examination detected a polypus, as large as a nut, growing from the posterior wall of the rectum; this was removed, and a recovery followed.

CASE 5.—William S.—, aged ten, was sent to me on the 21st of October, 1858. He had been ill for fifteen months, having experienced bleeding from the bowel at times, both during defecation and in the intervals; and although he had been under treatment during the whole of that period for piles, he had never received any benefit. A polypus was detected on examination, which was removed, and the child recovered.

CASE 6.—Thomas L.—, aged seven, was sent to me on the 2nd of February, 1859, having had bleeding from the rectum, at variable periods, for sixteen months, and an occasional protrusion of a growth from the anus. He had also been under treatment for piles. A polypus was detected, and upon its removal recovery took place.

Other cases might be quoted, all telling the same tale. The recollection that such a disease is not so uncommon, and that it is always associated with hæmorrhage from the bowel, should at once lead the surgeon to examine the part with his finger, when the growth will probably be easily detected. It is generally situated about one to two inches up the bowel, and will be found to vary from the size of a pea to that of a large nut. In some cases more than one will be present; they are always very moveable, and easily slip away from the finger upon anything like pressure; and, at times, some little difficulty is experienced in fixing them for removal. Such a practice is the only correct treatment, being invariably followed by a successful result. It may be done by means of forceps or ligature; and in many cases I have broken the polypus off its attachment by hooking my finger round its pedicle. No bad result has ever followed. The pedicle is always very slender, although it may be an inch or more in length.

The structure of the polypus is very simple, microscopically presenting the ordinary characters of the fibro-cellular growths. After removal, no subsequent treatment is required, and recovery may confidently be expected; the rectum, however, should