

senior students and medical practitioners. It contains a good deal of what might be called sound common-sense information, and does not rush into the recommendation of speculative lines of treatment that are beyond experience. Many prescriptions are given in the book, but there is a want of uniformity in these. Some are written in Latin, others in English. It is not always stated when the medicine is to be taken, so far as relation to food is concerned, nor do we think that the terminal ingredient in the prescription written thus, "Aquæ ad 1 oz.," is a good example for the student. The word *recipe* governs the accusative, and therefore "Aquam ad 1 oz." is the more correct. This, however, is a small defect, and in no way interferes with the general excellence of the book.

THOMAS OLIVER.

*The Early Days of the Royall Colledge of Phisitions, Edinburgh.*  
By ROBERT PEEL RITCHIE, M.D., F.R.C.P.Ed., F.R.S.E. Edinburgh: George P. Johnston. 1899.

DR. RITCHIE inherits the inclination, the perseverance, and the ability needful to enable him to investigate the early history of that body of which he is so distinguished a Fellow; and the "Inquiry as to who was the Architect of George Heriot's Hospital, by one of its Governors," has been fitly followed in the succeeding generation by an "Inquiry into the Early History of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and of its first Presidents, by a former President."

In undertaking this task, Dr. Ritchie has raised for himself *monumentum perennius ære*; for the early history of a body that has had so important an influence on the progress of Scottish medicine, and of those who founded it and guided its infant steps, cannot fail to have an enduring interest for all connected with it; and he has materially added to the interest of the work by introducing a characteristic likeness of himself, indicating the last resting-place of Sir Archibald Stevenson, the first president of the college, and one of its first knights. The likeness is unmistakable, and graphically represents the Ritchie that we know, engaged in one of his most congenial occupations—

"An honest man, close buttoned to the chin,  
Broadcloth without, and a warm heart within."

Dr. Ritchie's history is an extension of the oration which, as president, he delivered to the Harveian Society of Edinburgh on its 114th anniversary (1896). Dr. Ritchie commences by giving a succinct account of the medical institutions of England, Scotland, and Ireland, as they existed in Harvey's days. He next details the various endeavours made to found a "Colledge of Physitians" in Scotland in 1617, 1630, 1657, and again in 1681. The three earlier attempts were frustrated by the opposition of the Town Council of Edinburgh, who, as patrons of the University of Edinburgh, feared lest the proposed college might have an adverse influence upon that still struggling institution, specially fearing a possible interference with the development of its medical faculty, which as yet had no existence. The Church also opposed the establishment of a College of Physicians, from a foolish dread of injury to the three older universities of which its archbishops and bishops were the chancellors. The opposition of the

two existing medical and surgical corporations of Edinburgh and Glasgow is more intelligible, especially when we remember that it is alleged that "the conceit of the physicians of those days was said to be such that they sought to control and govern all the untitled members of the profession." The physicians of those days certainly, and probably with right, arrogated to themselves the higher knowledge, so that though they would not condescend to touch a knife or a lancet themselves, yet no surgeon, whether titled or untitled, was permitted to operate, or even to let blood, without the presence and the sanction of a physician. Indeed, the idea that the functions and internal organs of the body were under the sole control of the physician existed up to quite recent times, and, within the memory of an old professional friend, led to what might have proved a serious *contretemps*, for a physician passing through a surgical ward, and finding a patient with a foul tongue, forthwith prescribed a black draught, quite unaware that the poor man was labouring under a fractured femur. At last, in 1681, the fourth attempt to found a College of Physicians in Edinburgh was brought to a successful issue, mainly through the influence of Sir Charles Scarborough, physician to His Majesty King Charles II. and to James, Duke of Albany and York, who came to Edinburgh in 1679 as commissioner for his brother the king. Scarborough accompanied the Duke to Edinburgh; he was an attached friend of Harvey's, and received from him the bequest of his "velvet gowne," in token, not only of his esteem, but also as a proof that Harvey looked upon him as the man best qualified to succeed him. Sir Robert Sibbald, Sir Andrew Balfour, Sir Thomas Burnet, and Sir Archibald Stevensone were personal friends of Scarborough, and by their united influence King Charles was induced to grant a patent of incorporation to the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, and to this charter the Great Seal was affixed on St. Andrew's Day, 1681. The college, as originally incorporated, consisted of twenty-one Fellows, and at once set about promoting the advancement of medical science, as well as the welfare of their fellow-men. With these intentions they started four important efforts or undertakings. The first was the preparation and publication of a pharmacopœia, by which it was hoped to secure greater uniformity in the drugs employed, and greater accuracy in dispensing. In consequence of an opposition, somewhat difficult to understand, this pharmacopœia was not published till 1721, sixteen years after its preparation was commenced. The second effort was a dispensary for the sick poor. This resolution received the support of all the best of the original members of the college, and at its third meeting two of the Fellows were set apart to "serve the poore of the city and suburbs." This effort ultimately culminated in the erection of the Royal Infirmary, in which the college took a most important share. Even after the erection of the Infirmary, the dispensary was not given up, but for many years continued to discharge its beneficent functions, the forerunner of the many medical charities that now minister to the sick poor of Edinburgh.

The third great effort at professional advancement was the institution of a methodical and uniform professional examination for the licence to practise in the city and suburbs of Edinburgh, over which the college

had full control; but the licence was also granted to all country practitioners who desired to possess such a high testimonial as this imprimatur of the college, granted only after strict examination. This examination consisted of three parts—first, an examination on the theory of medicine; second, an examination on two of the aphorisms of Hippocrates; and, thirdly, a practical examination on two “caices” from the dispensary. By the institution of a clinical examination the college proved itself to be far in advance of its compeers, and at once set up a high standard of professional examination, upon which even the examinations of the present day are modelled. The fourth effort of those early days was the institution of meetings for the discussion of medical subjects, conferences which had an important influence on the progress of medical science, and which were the prototype of the medical societies of the present day. The college also took a practical interest in the sanitary improvement of the city, and pressed upon the Town Council many important suggestions to that end.

Indeed, the early history of the college, of which only a short and necessarily imperfect summary has been given, is full of interest, and clearly shows that, though the larger number of the Fellows were actuated by a sincere desire for the advancement of medical science and the great good of their fellow-men, there were some amongst them whose motives were scarcely so unselfish, and their disputations prove that none were immaculate, but that they were all “men of like passions with ourselves.”

The biographies of the early knights are extremely interesting, and the details have been explicated with all that painstaking attention to accuracy in which Dr. Ritchie is a past master. The only part of this division of his work that seems to call for regret is, that Dr. Ritchie has not succeeded—he has not even attempted to connect the present eminent professor of botany with his namesake Sir Andrew Balfour—the morning star of science in Scotland, as he has been called—who, along with Sir Robert Sibbald and Patrick Murray of Livingstone, founded the first Botanick or Physick Garden in Edinburgh.

This work has been carefully edited, it is well printed and illustrated, and, apart altogether from the intrinsic value of the information it contains, it is a handsome volume which any one may be proud to have upon his bookshelves.

GEORGE W. BALFOUR.

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*Imperative Surgery, for the General Practitioner, the Specialist, and the recent Graduate.* By HOWARD LILIENTHAL, M.D. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1900.

THIS work professes to deal with the diagnosis and treatment of conditions which demand immediate operative measures, and it presupposes the absence of a surgeon, and the impossibility or expediency of removing the patient, or of waiting for expert assistance. The impression conveyed is the treatment of what are usually called surgical emergencies, but the operative procedures described cover a wider range, and include such operations as gastrostomy and cholecystotomy, which can scarcely be regarded as imperative. There are many indications, however, that the