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CHAPTER VI.


HAVING lived through bitter opposition, poverty and domestic contention, like a child that has been delivered painfully and survived dentition, the eruptive fevers and the dangers of puberty, the school had reached the maturity of its powers. With the Faculty of 1841 came the reign of peace, order, and good fortune. There were no changes for fifteen years. The confidence of the public and the profession was given in full measure to the friendly body of talented men, and as a result the School was prosperous to a degree surpassing any other medical school of its time."

Thus wrote Dr. Holland in his historical narrative of the rise and progress of the Jefferson Medical College from the time of its founding to the accession of the famous Faculty of 1841. The Dean had carefully studied the early record of the institution, had scrutinized its history with the trained eye of the thorough, practical student and medical instructor, and wrote with every confidence of accuracy when he gave expression to his deductions.

No less assuring were the words of the Trustees when they had finished their splendid work of organizing the new Faculty after the troubled times of April, 1841. In the "Address" published by them in that year was this announcement:

"The Board of Trustees of Jefferson Medical College announce to the medical profession the entire reorganization of the institution. This became necessary owing to the lamented death of the Professor of Chemistry—Dr. Green—and to the retirement from the school of Professors Revere and Pattison."
In forming the new corps of Professors, the board have been desirous of obtaining the services of gentlemen who are known throughout this country as practical teachers; and who have likewise a widespread reputation as writers on different subjects of their profession; whose very name, indeed, would be a source of confidence, and a presage of success. With this view they have banished all personal feelings, and in the appointment of Professors have endeavored to keep singly in view that which appeared to them to be the most conducive to the stability, dignity, and reputation of the school.

In the arrangement of subjects, it will be observed that some changes have been made by the board. Dr. Dunglison, the senior member of the Faculty, retains the chair to which he was originally appointed; Dr. Huston the same. Both these gentlemen were requested, under emergencies, to assume fresh duties during the last two sessions, from which they will be relieved by the new arrangement; and Dr. Pancoast takes the chair of Anatomy—a subject which he has prosecuted long, and taught successfully.

And when the Trustees had brought together all the best obtainable material for a new Faculty body to be laid upon the foundations built by McClellan, now strengthened and remodeled, the component elements of the completed corps of instructors were found to be as follows:

Robley Dunglison, M. D., Institutes of Medicine and Medical Jurisprudence.

Robert W. Huston, M. D., Materia Medica and General Therapeutics.

Joseph Pancoast, M. D., General, Descriptive and Surgical Anatomy.

John K. Mitchelli, M. D., Practice of Medicine.

Thomas D. Mütter, M. D., Institutes and Practice of Surgery.

Charles D. Meigs, M. D., Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children.

Franklin Bache, M. D., Chemistry.

When the Trustees had finished the work they were satisfied. When the medical profession throughout the country had been made to understand the work so well accomplished, and so quickly, they were amazed and gratified; and when the public had come to realize that the Jefferson Medical College was no longer the home of contention, they, too, gave hearty approval of all that had been done.

The McClellan foundation of former years had been broad enough
and strong enough, but the material for the structure known, as the Faculty had not been well chosen and put together; there were too many inharmonious elements, too many conflicting interests, too much friction in the operation of the machinery, too much selfishness on the part of some of its members. Besides this, there always had been too little interest in the affairs of the Medical School on the part of the Trustees as a body, for they were in no wise benefited by its success, nor injured by its failure.

The Faculty always had been the dominant power of the College, and the Trustees received no compensation, and few thanks, for their service, either from the Faculty or the public. But all these adverse conditions of earlier years, which were almost looked upon as a part of the life of the school, were swept away by the intelligent and decisive action of the Trustees in 1841. At that time the personnel of the Board was the same as in the preceding year, and substantially the same as in 1839, but the temper and disposition of its members were changed; either they must govern the affairs of the College, or it must fall to the ground. They did govern it, at least for the time being, and the Faculty of 1841 was one of the results of their work; and having completed their part of the arduous task, they say in their public announcement:

"With a Faculty thus organized, and bent on harmonious and effective action, the Board of Trustees entertain no doubts as to the signal success of the institution. They feel that it must command the confidence of the profession, be eminently satisfactory to the numerous alumni as assuring the permanence and continued prosperity of an institution which has been in uninterrupted progress for sixteen years; and tend still more to concentrate medical education in the city of Philadelphia, which has always been the great resort of the medical students of this country."

In announcing to the medical profession the educational advantages of the College, and the especial fitness of its faculty, the Trustees say:

"All these gentlemen are actively engaged in the practice of their profession; and most of them are connected with the valuable institutions for clinical instruction in which Philadelphia abounds. Drs. Dunglison, Huston and Pancoast are medical officers of the Philadelphia Hospital, Blockley, at which, during the winter session, Dr. Dunglison gives clinical lec-
tures on medicine, and Dr. Pancoast on surgery. Dr. Meigs is physician to the lying-in department of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and Dr. Mütter is surgeon to the Philadelphia Dispensary, an extensive and valuable charity.”

In another paragraph in the “Annual Announcement” for 1841-42, in presenting the advantages of the College to students of medicine, this statement appears:

“The students of the College can participate in all the benefits to be derived from an attendance at the Philadelphia Hospital, the lectures being so arranged as to admit of their visiting these establishments on appropriate days. Professor Dunglison will lecture regularly on Clinical Medicine, and Professor Pancoast on Clinical Surgery at the Philadelphia Hospital throughout the course. The students can also avail themselves of the advantages to be derived from the Wills Hospital for diseases of the eye, and the Philadelphia Dispensary.

“These admirable institutions afford extensive facilities for witnessing medical and surgical practice. At periods, too, when not otherwise engaged, the student has the advantage of attending a General Dispensary, attached to the College, at which upwards of one thousand cases have been treated in the course of the year. The patients are examined and prescribed for by the physician in attendance; detailed histories of the cases are kept, and patients are entrusted to the students, under the direction of the professor. Opportunities likewise occur for obstetrical practice.

“Added to these facilities, the museum of the institution affords essential aid to the student, by its anatomical, pathological, and obstetrical preparations and drawings, as well as by the diversified specimens of genuine and spurious articles, and plates, drawings, etc., for illustrating the materia medica. These, with numerous and varied specimens, that have been added from the private collections of members of the faculty, render the Museum and cabinets more rich and effective for the purpose of medical instruction than they have ever been.”

Thus officered and equipped, the College entered upon the second epoch of its history. All that was objectionable had been put aside, and all that was desirable to its well being had been provided. Faculty dissensions were now a thing of the past, and had gone never again to appear in the life of the institution. The last fifteen years had witnessed many vicissitudes and many contests for individual advantage; the succeeding fifteen years were to witness only constant and material progress, without contention, without
change in the Faculty, and without a single unhappy event to mar its progress.

The transformation had come quickly, yet effectually. The medical world was agreeably surprised by it; the wondering public was astonished at the great transition, and for a time was slow to believe that such perfect order could be wrought from an apparently chaotic mass; and the press, the great conservator of public opinion and policy, lost a fruitful theme of discussion. Yet all persons, save a few, were gratified with the favorable turn in the affairs of the institution, for at heart the people of Philadelphia held the Jefferson Medical College in high regard among the schools of its kind. They favored it more because they admired the courage and determined spirit of its founders; because of the opposition against which it had struggled for fifteen years; and because there was room and need for more than a single regularly incorporated medical school in the city.

For a year or two after the changes of 1841 had gone into effect, the number of students was not materially increased, for McClellan's new school had drawn somewhat upon the strength of Jefferson's attendance. But the practical benefits of the reorganization were felt from the very beginning. For the session of 1840-41, the number of students in attendance was 163; and for the session of 1841-42 it was increased to 209. The next year the number was 229, in the next 341, and in the next, 1844-45, 409. In 1843 the graduates numbered 47; and in 1845 the number was 116.

The Faculty as now constituted was not only an effective corps of medical instructors, but more than that; they were in a sense business men, and through their efforts, under the Deanship of Dr. Huston, they advertised the College and its lecture courses throughout the country, and drew students from almost every state. In the announcement for 1846-47 they say that "much as it has gratified them on former occasions to announce the prosperity of the College, at no preceding period have they been enabled to offer such solid testimony that the opportunities afforded by it for obtaining sound professional instruction had been duly appreciated by their medical
brethren. The increase in the number of students who have flocked to the school within the last few years has been unprecedented.

The catalogue for the session of 1845-46 contained the names of 469 students. This was the largest class in any institution of the kind in the United States. At the annual commencement in 1846, 170 graduates were awarded the degree of M. D. This was surely a most excellent record of progress, and the felicitations of the occasion were shared alike by the Faculty and all the friends of the College throughout the country. The insti-

tution had now attained a standard of exceptional prominence, which fact, with the known popularity and individual strength of its Faculty, drew to it an attendance that taxed its capacity and necessitated considerable enlargements to the buildings.

Indeed, so remarkable was the success of the last few years that both the Faculty and the Trustees were agreeably surprised at the results accomplished in such short time. Their pride in the school was commendable, and their interest in its present and future welfare impelled them to in-
dulge in a few interesting reflections and comparisons. On this subject the annual announcement for 1846 says:

"At all periods Philadelphia has been esteemed the great center of medical education in the United States; but it has been imagined by some persons that the multiplication of medical schools elsewhere might interfere with the attendance on the schools here. Such has not been the result. On the contrary, never has there been so large a congregation of medical students in Philadelphia as during the past winter. From the various medical schools of the United States multitudes proceed to this city to attend a second or third course, and to obtain the summi honores of their profession; and the change has consequently occurred—that a larger proportion of those who graduate here have followed the course of instruction for one session only, than was formerly the case. This accounts, also, for the larger proportion of graduates to the whole number of students than in other schools."

According to a list published in the "Medical Examiner" for May, 1846, the ratio of graduates to the class in the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania was, in 1845, one in 2.1, and in 1846, one in 2.7; in the Jefferson Medical College in 1845, one in 3.5, and in 1846, one in 2.7. In the University of New York the ratio in 1845, was one in 3.2; in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, one in 5.2; and in Harvard, one in 8.2.

During the winter of 1845-46 more than one thousand medical students followed the courses of lectures in Philadelphia, and from all quarters of the earth they came—one even from remote Burmah. Nova Scotia, the West Indies, Ireland, and France, were represented. In addition, the faculty greeted with pleasure the presence of many medical officers of the army and navy, and twenty-nine graduates of other incorporated institutions, who had chosen this College in which to obtain more thorough instruction in medicine and surgery.

There were representatives, too, from many of the best medical schools in the country; from the New England schools; from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York, and from the University of New York; from the medical schools of Albany and Geneva, in New York state; from
the University of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Medical College; from Baltimore; from Columbia College, Washington, D. C.; from the University of Virginia; from Richmond, Charleston, Augusta, New Orleans, St. Louis, Lexington, Louisville, Cincinnati, Willoughby, and from others not enumerated. All came “to drink at the founts of knowledge” of the Jefferson Medical College. The great south, in particular, sent hundreds of her best young medical aspirants to Philadelphia, and by far the greater proportion of them chose Jefferson as their alma mater. It was the most popular school for southerners for many years, and when in the course of the next fifteen years the civil war broke out, the list of students was much reduced by the withdrawal of those who shared the fortunes and vicissitudes of the confederate service.

For the session of 1847-48 the classes were provided with enlarged accommodations, made necessary by the constantly increasing attendance, and the determination on the part of the Faculty to give more practical, more thorough, and more finished medical education than any institution in the country. This was the aim and the ambition of the professors; the attendance and the revenues warranted it, and nothing less than the very best in every respect would satisfy them. The Faculty of 1841 had set up a high standard of excellence for their school; that standard had now been reached, and it was their determination to maintain it.

If the accomplishment of this end necessitated the purchase of more land and the erection of additional buildings, the Faculty stood ready to make the needed expenditures, for in all that they did they were by no means actuated by selfish motives. They were not the owners of the property; the title was vested in the Trustees, but the revenues derived from the fees paid by students, after the maintenance expenses had been discharged, were divided among the Professors. This was their compensation, and their source of livelihood, but they were perfectly willing to draw on their individual bank accounts for the purpose of adding more land, and enlarging the buildings, to the end that the efficiency of the College they repre-
sented might be increased, and that it might continue to be the very best school of medicine in the United States.

For the session of 1846-47 there were 493 students in attendance, and in 1847 the number of graduates was 181. In the next year there were 480 students, and at the close of the session 178 diplomas were awarded. As before, the students came from all parts of the country, and when the graduates went out into the active, practical work of the profession, each one of them carried the name and fame of his alma mater to other aspirants for the coveted degree of M. D. This was the best advertisement the school could have, and it benefited more by accomplished results than by the dissemination of advertisements.

At this time, and afterward, for several sessions, it was the custom of the Faculty to devote six hours daily to lectures and continue them through four days each week. They employed the system acknowledged in all professions, that six hours daily ought to be devoted to reading, and that "to lecture" might be regarded as synonymous with "to read"; and consequently, that the student who listened to six lectures in the day might be looked upon as having given that time to close study. The Faculty reasoned that the well informed lecturer could better adapt his elucidations to the comprehension of students than could be done by their reading even the best books; that thereby the Professor had the opportunity to perceive whether he was properly understood, and that if he was not he might modify or repeat his instructions. This was a departure from an old established custom in medical colleges, but the Faculty then at the head of Jefferson was noted for new ideas and methods of instruction, as well as of management. With them this was an era of advancement, and whatever tended to elevate the standard of medical education and benefit the graduates from their school was adopted as part of their system.

It was to schools conducted under this system that Dr. Henry Holland, one of the ablest physicians of London, referred in his evidence given before the "Committee of Registration of the British House of Commons,"
when, in answer to a question put to him by T. B. Macaulay: "Does not the American Medical School stand high?" he replied, "I should rank it next to the English on the whole."

For the session of 1849-50 there were 516 students in attendance in the College, and in 1850 the number of graduates was 211. In the next year the attendance numbered 504, and the graduates 227. Of those in attendance during the session of 1850-51, 165 had come from other medical schools to put themselves under the more thorough instruction afforded by the practical course at Jefferson. They came in part because every instructor was known as a master of the subject he assumed to teach; because each Professor was known both as a lecturer and writer, whose works were standard, and in use in almost every medical institution in the country; and they came to Jefferson from other schools to avail themselves of the clinical courses which were not elsewhere obtainable than in the Jefferson Medical College—the courses under the immediate supervision of Professor Pancoast, and of his Demonstrator, Dr. Ellerslie Wallace. In other schools these students had read Pancoast's edition of "Wistar's Anatomy," and had consulted Pancoast's edition of "Quain's Anatomical Plates," and they were anxious for instruction from the great teacher himself.

In the Surgical Department of the Jefferson Clinic there were treated during the year ended April 2, 1851, 905 cases, and in the Medical Department 1074 cases. The value of these clinics was shown by the number of medical practitioners who were constantly in attendance, taking postgraduate courses, perfecting themselves in the science of surgery under Pancoast and Mütter. These courses also afforded the student an extensive field for witnessing and participating in practical work. Again, in other schools the student of medicine had read "Dunglison's Human Physiology," and "Dunglison's Therapeutics and Materia Medica," and it was only natural that he should desire instruction from Dunglison himself, who held the chair of Institutes of Medicine in Jefferson.
In other schools of medicine, Wood and Bache’s “Dispensatory of the United States” was an indispensable work of reference, and the lecture course of Jefferson included instruction from Professor Bache. Among the text works in other schools were “Liston’s and Mütter’s Operations of Surgery,” and “Pancoast’s Operative Surgery,” and Mütter himself taught the Institutes and Practice of Surgery in Jefferson for many years. Elsewhere, in general use, were “Meigs’s Obstetrics,” Meigs’s edition of “Colombat de l’Isere on the Diseases of Women,” “Meigs on Females, Their Diseases and Remedies,” and also “J. F. Meigs on the Diseases of Children;” and in Jefferson, at the time of which we write, Charles D. Meigs held the chair of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children.

It is not surprising, therefore, when opportunity was offered to obtain medical instruction from such noted authors, who were likewise famous teachers, that students in other institutions should seek at least one course of lectures in the Jefferson Medical College before entering upon their professional career. A diploma from Jefferson was now much desired, and was a safe passport in medical circles throughout the country. No institution for medical instruction stood higher, and none sent out into general practice a more capable set of graduates.

The Faculty as constituted in 1841 was continued without change until 1856. During the same period there was little change in the personnel of the Board of Trustees, and between these bodies there existed entire friendliness. Before the reorganization was effected no school year had passed without some manifestation of jealousy or ill feeling among members of the Faculty; after the reorganization, the old spirit of contention disappeared entirely, and the ranks of the Faculty were first broken only by the resignation of Professor Mütter.

Dr. Mütter did not leave the College, however, but was elected Professor Emeritus, that his influence might be continued for the benefit of the school. His place in the chair of Institutes and Practice of Surgery was taken by Dr. Samuel D. Gross, a graduate of Jefferson Medical College,
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class of '28, recently Professor in the University of Louisville, and a surgeon, writer and lecturer of distinguished prominence. Dr. Mütter's further connection with Faculty work in Jefferson was continued less than one year, when he died. The extensive Mütter Museum and its liberal endowment under the administration of the College of Physicians serve to preserve his name in the hearts and minds of the thousands of physicians and surgeons who once were under his instruction.

In 1857 Professor Huston resigned the chair of Materia Medica and General Therapeutics. He, also, was made Professor Emeritus, while the more arduous, active duties of the chair devolved upon his successor, Thomas D. Mitchell, former instructor in the Medical School of Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky. In the next year the college lost by death its distinguished and widely known incumbent of the chair of Practice of Medicine, John Kearsley Mitchell. He was succeeded by Dr. Samuel H. Dickson, recently of the University of South Carolina. Dr. Meigs resigned the chair of Obstetrics during the session of 1861-62, and in 1864 the chair of Chemistry was made vacant by the death of Dr. Franklin Bache. Of the old famous Faculty of 1841-56, there now remained only Dunglison, of the chair of Institutes of Medicine, and Pancoast, Professor of General, Descriptive, and Surgical Anatomy.

In Jefferson Medical College annals the Faculty of 1841-56 has been referred to more frequently and more fully than any other similar body of instructors in its history. It was indeed a notable corps of medical teachers, both individually and collectively. Each was known in the medical world, whether in the capacity of practicing physician, teacher, lecturer, or writer. Each man had been measured, and tested, and, when the material for the Faculty was brought together, the Trustees felt that the future of the College was no longer in doubt, and that success and continued prosperity would reward their earnest efforts, reflect credit upon themselves, and honor on the institution they represented.

The faculty of 1841 was made the subject of a lecture before the
Alumni Association of the Jefferson Medical College, delivered March 11, 1880. Dr. John H. Brinton was the orator of the occasion. He was graduated from Jefferson in the class of '52, and during the session of 1867-68 became an instructor in the College. His name still appears as a member of the Faculty. As a student in the College when the Faculty of 1841 was in the zenith of its fame, each year adding new honors to its already honorable record, Dr. Brinton had an excellent opportunity to estimate the true worth of each Professor who formed a part of that body.