

Glasgow Mediciners and Chirurgeons.

MEDICAL CLUB.

IT would be easy for any one, at all imbued with the spirit of antiquarianism and who can moreover, decipher the hieroglyphics, now almost incomprehensible, in which the public records of this land were kept, upwards of two centuries ago, to gather, by merely casting his eye over the Minute-books of the Municipality of Glasgow, many curious memorabilia of the history and character of the Mediciners and Chirurgeons of the City. In all towns where people have united themselves in a social compact, there has always been found some individual standing out from the mass, who has attempted either to soothe or to cure the many "ills that flesh is heir to"—some far seeing Hippocrates to pour balm into the broken heart, or to bind up the wounded limb; in short, there has in all times been a temple reared to *Æsculapius*, in every civilised and even savage country, whither the devotee of *Hygeia* went for study, and thereafter returned to console his afflicted brethren. But, as among the true worshippers and followers of the ancient health-giving god, as well as of his daughter *Hygeia*, there were found, in those mythical days, many false pretenders,—so, also, in the more modern periods of the world's history, and particularly during the current of our City's progress, there have appeared, in connection with the healing art, but too many who unfortunately won for themselves the character of quacks and impostors. To such a length, indeed, had arrogant and shameless empiricism proceeded, and so baneful had its consequences become, that it was deemed absolutely necessary, about the close of the sixteenth century, by the

Government of the day, to interfere, in order to prevent or to control the growing evil. For this purpose King James VI. of Scotland granted a charter, while residing in the palace of Holyrood, in the year 1599, in favour of Mr Peter Low* and Mr Robert Hamilton, and their successors, as representatives of the Faculty of Physicians and Chirurgeons of the City of Glasgow, of which the following is an extract:—"To call, summon, and convene before them, all persons professing or using the said art of chirurgery," within the bounds of Lanark, Renfrew, Ayr, and Dumbarton, "to examine them in their literature, knowledge, and practice. If they be found worthy, to admit, allow, and approve them—give them testimonials according to their art and knowledge, that they shall be found worthy to exercise thereafter—receive their oath—authorise them as accords—and to discharge them to use any further than they have knowledge, passing their capacity, lest our subjects be abused; and that every one cited report testimonials of the ministers, or elders, or magistrates of the parish where they dwell, of their life and conversations; and in case they be contumacious, to be lawfully cited, every one to be unlawfulled in the sum of forty pounds *toties quoties*, half to the judge, and the

* We find the following strange entry, connected with this father of the Physicians and Surgeons, in the Council records of 26th May, 1610:—"The quhilk day, the provest, bailies, and counsall, understanding that James Braidwood, bailie, resavit fra Wil Craig sone and air of unqu Thomas Craig the soume of fourtie pundis money as by run dewties of the saidis Thomas yard, as to ane of the new kirk yardis, set in fen be his father to the town, addebbet and award to the town; and that the said James Braidwood debursit and gaif furth the said soume to Peter Low, pairtlic for his fee and pairtlic for the expensis maid be him in bowelling of the Laird of Houstoun late provest. Thairfoir the said James, be this present act, is dischargit of the said soume, resavit be him as said is; and siklyke ordainis ane warrant to be direct to Robert Hogisyard, under subscripoun of the Clerk to answer Marcoun Steward of the soume of 37lb 10s as

for wyne and other expensis furnist and maid be hir the tyme of said provest's bowelling." It likewise appears, from the same records, that in 1609 Mr Peter Low, chirurgeon, was paid "for his pensioun in anno 1608 addtett be the toun to him liii £ vi s viii d." In 1684 it is ordained that no chirurgeon shall, in future, be pensioned by the town. Dr Peter Low was married to a daughter of Mr David Weems, the first Protestant minister of the town, and this lady, after the Doctor's death, which took place in 1612, afterwards married Walter Stirling, Bailie and Dean of Guild of Glasgow, by whom she had several sons. The Stirlings of Glasgow, William, George, &c., are descended in a direct line from this lady. The tomb of Dr Peter Low is on the south wall of the Cathedral burying-ground, and has a strange but frequently quoted inscription.

other half to be at the visitour's pleasure."* This charter was afterwards confirmed by an Act of the Scottish Parliament in 1672; and when, in the course of time, it was found that the stringent powers granted could not be enforced, and that, consequently, malpractices, producing the most baneful effects on the lieges, had reached a height that was disgraceful to a civilised community, the High Court of Justiciary, so late as March, 1812, issued an Act of Adjournal, by which the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons were again armed with power to enable them to control, in some measure, the progress of medical quackery.

Although the professors of the Hygeian art, connected with Glasgow, were formed into a Faculty so early as 1599, it was not till some time afterwards that they acquired any political power, which they at once obtained by joining themselves to the Corporation of Barbers, with whom they remained associated till 1722, when the bond of union was dissolved, the funds were divided, and the letter of Deaconry confirmed to the Barbers alone.†

In consequence of the pre-requisites and high education of those who could thus become members of this learned body, it is scarcely necessary to say that its numbers were, for a long period, very limited, and generally

* From the "Blue Blanket," printed in Edinburgh, 1780, we find that the "Chirurgeons" of Edinburgh had a "Seall of Cause" from the Magistrates, dated 1st July the year of God 1505. The following extract will show the state of medical knowledge at that time:—

"And also that every man that is to be made free among us be examint and provit in the points following: that is to say, that he know anatomia; and lykewise that he know all the veins of the samen, that he may make phlebotomia in due time; and also that he know in qwhilk member the sign [symptoms] hes domination for the tyme, for ever ilk man ought to know the natur and substance of every thing he wirks, or else he's negligent, and that he may have anes in the year ane condempit man after he be dead to maik anatomia of where throw he may have experience

ilk ane to instruct others, and we sall do sufferage for the saul." It is probable that the foregoing may be taken as a pretty true picture of the condition of medical knowledge (for science it can scarcely be called) in Scotland, when Drs Peter Low and Hamilton received their charter of healing from King James in 1599.

† In the Minutes of the City Council there is engrossed, on the 7th November, 1719, "an Act determining the difference betwixt the Surgeons and Barbers"; and, after a good deal of discussion, the Surgeons gave in a demission and renunciation of the letter of Deaconry in their favour, in conjunction with the Barbers, which renunciation is confirmed by an Act of 22d September, 1722, and the stock divided between the Surgeons and Barbers.

confined, moreover, to the higher walks of society. The fact is, the field for the medical man in Glasgow, towards the latter end of the eighteenth, and the commencement of the present century, was, comparatively speaking, a limited one. The population was not large, and wealth was not then so much diffused as it has since become; in short, the Faculty was rather a small body, but, at the same time, it was one calculated to expand when any necessity occurred for its extension. It was, however, when the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons could count only a small number of members, that there arose a Club of Mediciners in this City, which, during the period of its existence, may well be accounted one of the best of the social and intellectual brotherhoods that were ever linked together within the sound of old St Mungo's bell. While it was, as may be supposed, by no means easy to become a member of the Medical Faculty, it was still more difficult to obtain the *entrée* to the MEDICAL CLUB. The fact is, that while each brother of the Æsculapian fraternity required of necessity to be a member of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, it was requisite, at the same time, that, in the estimation of his brother Clubbists, he should be a high-minded, social and boon companion. The Medical Club was, in truth, composed of the leading members of the Faculty, and was at its height from the commencement of the century till about the year 1814.*

Unlike the more jovial fraternities of the City, who congregated every lawful night, the brotherhood of Mediciners met only once a-month—at first, in that most notable tavern of the period, Mrs Pollock's, in Prince's-street—and latterly, in the still more aristocratic hostelry, the "Prince of Wales," in Brunswick-street. The hour of meeting was sharp four, and the ten o'clock bells were generally allowed to ring out before any one thought of leaving such good company, if not previously summoned away by some unforeseen call for professional assistance. The Club, in fact,

* Drs Freer, Jeffray, Richard Millar, Charles Nimmo, &c., were among the early and most regular members.
Wilsone, W. Dunlop, Towers, MacArthur, Anderson, James Monteath, Couper, Cowan,

was one of the most social that ever met in this social City; and into which there was a determination, expressed by all the members, that no cantankerous individual should be permitted to enter. As a curious illustration of this, it may be stated that, on a well-known and able practitioner—but who, at the same time, had shown his rather captious and troublesome temper at many of the meetings of Faculty—making application, through a friend, to be admitted into the social brotherhood, it was found that even his proposer had deserted him at the last moment! By the laws of the Club, one black ball was sufficient to exclude any applicant; and the gentleman who had reluctantly promised to propose his professional brother, and who had made a speech, too, in his favour, fearing that what he had said might allow this anti-social character to slip in, and thereby injure the harmony of the fraternity, bravely resolved to sacrifice his friend at the shrine of duty, painful though that duty was, and therefore, when his turn came round, he popped a black ball into the ballot-box. But judge of the surprise of all present, when, on opening the said repository of Club feeling, it was discovered that all the balls were of the same hostile complexion!

Considering the martial spirit which prevailed throughout the country, and particularly in Glasgow, during the few years which immediately preceded and followed the short peace of Amiens, it will not appear strange to state, that while several members of the Medical Club were professionally connected with the various volunteer regiments of the City, at least two or three held commissions in the famous “Armed Association,” or corps of “Ancients,” whose obesity was perhaps the most prominent feature of this *belly-gerent* body—an obesity of which Mr George Lobon, of grocer notoriety, and Mr John Wilson,* of the Grammar-school, were remarkable types. Although this redoubtable body, like all other sons of Mars of that warlike period, wore a uniform—and a uniform, too, for which each was indebted to his own tailor,—still it must be allowed

* Better known, by the Grammar-school boys of the day, by his nickname of *Gully Wilson*.

that, from the great variety of lank and paunchy forms which it enveloped, it by no means made a *uniform* body of men.* Hence the wonder will not appear great, when it is mentioned, that on dressing the line of the "Armed Association," the drill sergeant, himself a noted Irish marine crimp and wag, should have exclaimed, on one occasion, "Very well, the front rank; but, holy Moses! what a *rear*!" Bating this peculiar defect in the eyes of a martinet, the corps individually showed abundance of patriotism, and that quality, in those days of threatened invasion, covered a multitude of petty sins. In spite of age, sociality, and fatness, each armed associate was attentive to his drill, and turned out in his short broad-tailed blue coat, with purple velvet facings, on a summer's morning, as lightly and as early as any one of his more youthful volunteer competitors. After many preliminary marchings, facings, and wheelings, the corps was deemed worthy, as well it might, of assuming a position on the public Green, and of being subjected to the ordeal of a public inspection by one whose military antecedents entitled him to some respect.† On the occasion to which we allude, the inspecting field-officer, selected "to look at" the Association, was its own Adjutant—the ever-to-be-remembered Adjutant Deans. This well-known personage was by no means unaccustomed to the smell of gunpowder in his youth, and when that smell, too, was associated with a shower of destructive bullets. He had likewise led a forlorn hope in his day, during one of our Continental campaigns; and for his success and prowess on that occasion, he had been rewarded with a sword, and had consequently laid down the halbert, which he had long so worthily wielded. Adjutant Deans might be truly said to have been "*il figlio del regimento*," for he had gone through all the gradations of rank, till at length he ascended to that of Adjutant of the recruiting dis-

* How could it be otherwise, when it is recollected that the persons composing the corps varied from 9 to 22 stones in weight—from 5 feet 2 to 6 feet 3 in height, and from 40 to 60 years of age.

† In 1803, the corps was at first drilled frequently in the large ground-floor of a mansion

in Stockwell-street, then belonging to Mr Cunningham Corbet, which about that time was purchased by the late Mr John Strang, and is still owned by his son, who never ceases to associate that locality with the marchings and counter-marchings of the "*Anciens*."

trict of Glasgow—a district which, during the war, contributed so many gallant defenders of the country to the armies of Egypt, the Peninsula, and Flanders. To an indomitable courage in the field, the worthy Adjutant united an indomitable love of approbation at the dinner-table; and when it is added that his education had been neglected in his youth, like that of but too many of his fellow-soldiers, and that, in the absence of all lore, his imagination had been left free to expand and riot, without any curb from the then undiscovered bump of conscientiousness, it will not seem strange that the stories which he repeated of his adventures in Germany, should have almost surpassed the never-to-be-forgotten imaginings of his great prototype, the Baron Munchausen,—or that any one was much startled when he gravely gloried in having frequently dined with the “Diet of Ratisbon!” and, moreover, “found him a devilish pleasant fellow!” Like all soldiers of the ancient regime, he rarely omitted an oath in every sentence he uttered; and even on the field, where etiquette should have demanded more caution, he not unfrequently garnished his approval or his displeasure with some of the then fashionable, but now nameless epithets of the day. In military matters, it may be truly said that he was quite honest; and while his whole life was one continued effort to serve his king and country—latterly, by exerting himself to obtain as many recruits as possible—he at the same time never forgot the high drill character of his early position in the army, although he might sometimes thereby suffer from expressing this peculiarity of his nature in a manner to hurt the sensitive feelings of his volunteer companions and friends.

At the inspection to which we allude, and which occurred on one of the spring mornings of the year 1804, the corps of Ancients had mustered in considerable force in the public Green. They were all in their best dress, and each seemed bent on securing the approbation of their expectant inspecting officer. The corps, as was wont, had formed in columns of companies, and were all ready to wheel into line on the order being given to do so. The leading member of the Medical Club, who commanded the right company, stood, sword in hand, ready, with his staid and gaunt

visage, to lead the van, while the other captains of companies appeared equally ready to follow his example. The inspecting officer, mounted on a Pegasus, whose sire or dam must have been totally guiltless of any relationship with an Arabian ancestor, ambled up, without even an aid-de-camp, to the right of the regiment, and after having taken a cursory look of the corps in column, immediately wheeled it into line. The dressing of this *belly-gerent* body, as has already been hinted, was, on this as on all other occasions, an affair of some little difficulty; but through the exertions of the officers and the grumbling of the Irish crimp, who was most active on this occasion, the faces, if not the paunches, of the whole corps soon gave evidence of being in a straight line. Having requested one of the youngest and most active of the regiment to place himself in front and act as fugleman, the inspecting officer instantly began to put the corps through the manual and platoon exercise, which certainly was not done without many heavy sighs and grotesque grinning on the part of those in the ranks, and without what was perhaps more necessary, repeated calls on the part of the Adjutant to look at the fugleman, who handled his fusée as if it had been a feather, and kicked up his heels like a clown in a circus! This part of the inspection over, which was pronounced to be well done, the Adjutant announced that the most important trial of the corps' efficiency was about to be entered on—that of giving proof of their steadiness and quickness in firing. Having prefaced, with a few pertinent remarks, the great advantages which every corps possessed in being perfect in this part of their drill, he issued, in a voice of thunder, the solemn words—"Prime and load *with* powder." At the dread sound, which threatened to dislocate the shoulders of many who that morning carried the deadly tube, a general apparent fumbling was observed connected with each cartouch-box. The cartridge was nipped by the teeth of each Ancient, the pan of the firelock was opened and shut, the musket was ordered, the ramrod was taken out and shaken into the barrel with all "*deliberality*" and true time, as then given by the open upraised fist of the fugleman. The gun was shouldered, replete with what was to tell

a tale of either good or bad firing. Each captain had stepped out from his place to give the word to his platoon or company, and on the right was the gallant and gaunt Dr Freer of the Medical Club, solemn and staid to a fault when at the head of his band of Ancient warriors. The Adjutant gave the fearful summons to proceed, and Captain Freer, with all the solemnity and dignity becoming a College Professor and the present trying occasion, commenced, as it was his duty to do, by boldly enunciating the ominous words, "Platoon!—make ready—present—fire!" The order was at once most conscientiously obeyed, by each member of his company cocking his firelock, raising it to his eye, presenting it at a right angle to his body, and drawing with hurried finger the fatal trigger—but, lo! what was the astonishment of the learned Doctor, to find that out of his whole brave platoon only *one* musket went off! or, what was the amusement of the group of gaping gossips, who were carefully watching these martial proceedings, to hear the sarcastic greeting of the facetious Adjutant when he exclaimed, "By God! Captain Freer, that is the closest firing I ever heard in all my life!" The Doctor, on hearing the single shot and the exclamation of the inspecting officer, slowly stepped back to his place at the head of his platoon, and with an imperturbability of countenance which ever characterised him in the most trying situations, muttered, loud enough to be heard, his usual exclamation, "I'm glad of it!"

Whether it was from the fear or love of gunpowder that the company of this valiant corps of veterans, commanded by Dr Freer, had thus evoked the equivocal approbation of their inspector, it is certain that not many months elapsed before the Glasgow Ancients were relieved by General Wemyss from their loyal labours. On an ever-memorable day, in the autumn of 1804, when General the Earl of Moira reviewed the whole troops in the West of Scotland on the Glasgow Green, the blue coats and purple facings of the thick-and-thin Association Volunteers were last paraded, not in the long line which extended from one end of the public park to the other, but in front of, and to restrain the mass of

gaping onlookers who had congregated from all quarters to witness that great military spectacle.*

But, as the French say, "*revenons à nos moutons*," which we will freely translate by saying "let us return to the Medical Club." It will be remembered, from what we have already stated, that this Club commenced its sittings very early in the century, and continued to meet for at least fifteen long years—a period of time which did not fail, in spite of the members being sons of Æsculapius, to make serious havoc among the ranks of its founders. Unlike other fraternities, the Medical Club was not recruited, as it might have been, from the circle of the younger members of the profession; and hence, like all other mundane matters, it came at length to rather a sudden close. During the whole course of its existence, however, it was chiefly remarkable for the social happiness of its meetings, and for cementing friendships which were never once broken by professional rivalry. Had there been one man among the number who could have sat for the picture of *Dr Wormwood*, by the sketchy limner, whose caustic pencil, during the first decade of the present century, created so much noise in Glasgow, it is certain that the Club would have been sooner entombed; but as each brother, though the votary of art and science, was altogether destitute of the spleen of Swift, the vanity of Pope, the illiberality of Johnson, or the selfishness of *Wormwood*, the result was that the only passion indulged in by the members was that of contributing to each other's enjoyment.†

* The force on the Green amounted to at least 7000 men and eight guns, and consisted of one regiment of Dragoons, a squadron of Glasgow Light Horse, and eighteen corps of Infantry, six of which were certainly not numerically strong. The sight was altogether a grand one, and the conduct of the troops, both in marching and firing, was such as to call forth the highest approbation of the gallant Commander-in-chief.

† In the satirical work, published, under the title of "Northern Sketches or Characters

of Glasgow," about the year 1810 or 1811—which created a buzz when it appeared, and of which, from having been bought up, a copy is now rarely met with—there were several portraits of the medical practitioners in Glasgow, which, at the time, were considered by many as rather *too faithful* likenesses. It may be here remarked, however, that none of them belonged to the Medical Club. Of *Dr Wormwood's full length*, there were few who did not at once recognise the clever but selfish original; while, of *Dr Alamode's Kitten*, some

To the leading members of the Medical Club, it may be justly said that Glasgow owed much; not so much for alleviating or curing the many "ills that flesh is heir to," as for preserving the features of some of the fairest of her citizens from the dreadful effects of that destroyer of beauty, to which our City, like many others, had been so long subjected, and which, but for their judgment and decision, might have continued much longer not only to decimate but to deform our infant population. When Jenner made the great discovery which has immortalised him, and when that great man was busy warring against the prejudices so greedily adopted and advocated by his medical opponents in the English metropolis, it is only fair to state that, both in the eastern and western metropolis of Scotland, vaccination was almost at once hailed and practised by the leading men of the Medical Faculty. To many of the members of the Medical Club, Glasgow, in fact, owes a deep debt of gratitude, for at once, and without hesitation, diffusing the blessings of this great discovery, and not halting, as many of their brethren did in other quarters of the kingdom, till the medical conflict which raged so long and so fiercely had been ended.* It was to the immediate and daily use of the vaccine lancet, that the benefits arising therefrom to life

declared that it was rather a flattering likeness. As both the painter and his subjects are gone far beyond the world's praise or contumely, we, at the risk of indulging in even a past personality, but chiefly as exhibiting a contrast to each and all of the members of the Medical Club, extract the following medical anecdote, from that now almost forgotten work:—It is related, not of Dr Wormwood, but of one to whom he bears no little resemblance, that a wealthy citizen, who had the misfortune to require his visits, was in the custom of having the gold always ready in his hand to electrify the Doctor when he felt his pulse. One day it happened, on the Doctor's making his stated call, that the servant informed him "All is over!" "Over!" re-echoed the Doctor, as the remembrance of the customary fee flashed on his

mind. "Impossible! he cannot be dead yet. No, no! Let *me* see him—some trance or heavy sleep, perhaps!" The Doctor was introduced into the sable apartment; he took the hand of the pale corpse, applied the finger to that artery which once ebbed with life, gave a sorrowful shake of his head, while, with a trifling *ledgerdemain*, he relieved, from the grasp of death, *two guineas*, which, in truth, had been destined for him. "Ay, ay, good folks," said the Doctor, "*he is* dead; there is a *destiny* in all things!" and full of shrewd sagacity, turned upon his heel!

* Dr William Nimmo was the first medical man who made use of the vaccine virus in Glasgow. This was in 1800. The person on whom the experiment was tried was Mr Thos. Nimmo, a relative of the Doctor's.

and beauty were in a very few years acknowledged, by almost every class and degree of Glasgow citizens, and at length finally conquered the presumption of the arrogant, the envy of the narrow-minded, and the superstition of the ignorant and bigoted.*

Like many other professional fraternities, the Club conversation rarely ever turned on matters connected with the particular medical opinions or practice of the members. At their monthly meetings, the scalpel and the pharmacopœia were alike kept out of view. On these occasions, in fact, it was their practice to "throw physic to the dogs;" and, like other less grave individuals, to wile away a few hours amid social mirth and jollity, without once adverting to the fact, that "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." The tales and anecdotes, which so happily eked out their evening sittings, were not those of "physicians," but of men of the world. Those members, in particular, who had served in the regular army of the king, as at least three or four of them had done, never failed to tell their tales of war and wassail—of hair-breadth escapes and mighty perils, when called to scour, on horseback, the English coast between Dungeness and Beachy Head, looking out and watching for the stealthy coming of the great flotilla, which then threatened England from the opposite side of the Straits of Dover. Dr Freer, to whom we have already made pleasing allusion, and who was, in fact, one of the chief loadstars of the brotherhood, was ever seen in this society in all his glory.

* The blessings arising from Dr Jenner's discovery to Glasgow, may be gathered from the following statistical facts. There, the whole deaths in 1785, out of a population of 43,000, were 1,280, or about 1 in 32.6; but of these deaths no fewer than 365 were caused by small-pox, or 26 per cent. of the whole; whereas the deaths in 1852, out of a population of 370,000, were 10,675, or 1 to 34.66, of which there were only 584 caused by small-pox, or about 5½ per cent. of the whole. However marvellous the change may be which has taken place in the deaths from

small-pox in Glasgow since 1785, still the figure at present is far larger than it ought to be, or really would be, if the Roman Catholic population were more disposed to avail themselves of this certain safeguard against infant death and infant disfigurement, and as we know they are particularly in Paris. The Corporation of Glasgow, speaking the gratitude of the whole community to the discoverer of the cow-pox, conferred the freedom of that City on Dr Jenner on the 1st September, 1808.

It was here that he was wont to cast off his peculiar natural reserve, and to tell his strangest adventures, not only when serving in the American war as a surgeon in the army, but of his college pranks when studying his profession in Holland, from his favourite text-book—the work of the learned *Gaubius*; and for the repeated praises of whom, which the Doctor continued to give to the last day of his life, in the medical prelections at the Glasgow University, he won for himself the self-same sobriquet.* It was here, too, that he never failed to troll out, with a life and energy altogether at antipodes with the idea which his tall gaunt figure and still gaunter countenance would have suggested, the heart stirring verses of *Tullochgorum*. On such occasions, the Club was in perfect ecstacy; and around the happy-faced group, who so often surrounded the comfortable board of the chief apartment in the Prince of Wales tavern, it may be boldly affirmed that there was not a foot which did not beat its merry time, or a *tail* that did not wag its merrier shake of approbation.

Of this singular but excellent man, who was formal in all things to a fault, and whose words were few and uniform, many anecdotes have been told connected with his professional peculiarities. And perhaps we may be pardoned for winding up this rather rude sketch of the Medical Club, with the following little incident which occurred in the Royal Infirmary, during one of the thousand-and-one visits which, as Professor of Medicine in the University, he was daily called on to pay to that noble Institution, of which he and many others of the Medical Club were original projec-

* Dr Freer, in his lectures, which, once written, he never altered, occasionally alluded to his experiences in America, introducing the subject with, "When I was at the Battle of Bunkershill;" which lectures, during the closing years of his professorship, always occasioned roars of laughter in the class-room, particularly when read verbatim, as they were then, by a young student of medicine. Dr Freer served as Ensign and Surgeon during the American war, it being the fashion in his time that the Surgeon

also should hold an Ensign's commission. He was a good Latin scholar, an excellent physician, and very successful, especially in the treatment of fever. Watt, who treated fever in the Infirmary by blood-letting, Millar by wine, and Graham by mercury, were very unsuccessful; but Freer followed no fixed system, but treated each symptom as it arose, and lost far fewer patients than the others. He was an exceedingly honest, upright man, and, although stiff and formal in manner, was particularly fond of a joke.

tors and directors. On the occasion to which we allude, the tall figure and grave face of the learned Doctor had reached the bedside of a young woman who, on the previous day, had been ordered a large blister on her breast. He had just solemnly emitted, in broad and sonorous Latin, amid the crowd of students which surrounded and followed him from pallet to pallet, the last patient's prescription, and he was now ready to hear the result of what he had directed to be done on the previous day. Having cleared his throat of the Latinised recipe which he had just given, the Doctor gently laid hold of the female patient's pulse, as he was ever wont to do, and after measuring its beats with those of the large gold repeater which he carried in his left hand, he began to put his never-varying primary queries, "How are you to day? are you any better? or are you any worse? or are you much in the same way?" To which the poor woman replied, "I cannot well say, sir." "I'm glad of it," said the Doctor. "Did the blister do?" continued the physician. "Oh yes, sir, it rose very much indeed." "I'm glad of it," said the Doctor. "Oh yes," continued the patient, evidently suffering very much from her exertion, "it gave me very much pain and great uneasiness." "I'm glad of it!" exclaimed the Doctor, and passed on, leaving the gaping students to digest the laughable but just terms in which he characterised the successful effect of his prescription.

In conclusion, let us add, that although a marble monumental slab has long spoken to the visitor of the cemetery, which surrounds the venerable Cathedral of Glasgow, of the many virtues and characteristics of this long-departed mediciner, we regret to say that there is not one of his Club companions now left to read the epitaph which covers his ashes!