

THE TOWN'S COLLEGE IN 1647

From Gordon of Rothemay's Plan of Edinburgh

w Potter-row port F Cowgate port. a St. Mary's port w THE COLLEGE x The High School y The Kirk o' Field 3 Potter-row. 5 Pleasance.
 17 Cowgate 25 Town Wall. 40 Berthwick's Close. 46 Niddrie Wynd 47 Dickson's Close. 48 Blackfriars' Wynd. 50 Gray's Close 51 St. Mary's Wynd.
 52 Horse Wynd 53 College Wynd 54 Robertson's Close. 55 High School Wynd

(Compare with view on page 30)

FOUNDATION OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND OF
THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE AT EDINBURGH

THE regulation of surgical practice at Edinburgh by the Guild of Surgeons and Barbers, and their increasing efforts to develop a knowledge of anatomy, have been already described. The regulation of medicine was another important step necessary before a Medical School could be constructed. The early Edinburgh physicians had mostly obtained a knowledge of medicine on the Continent, and during the 17th century several capable and distinguished physicians practised in Edinburgh. As early as 1617, when James I. re-visited Scotland, an attempt had been made to found a College of Physicians at Edinburgh, but it had been opposed by the Universities and the Bishops. A second attempt to push the matter was made in 1630, and a third attempt was made, in 1656, to obtain Cromwell's support of the proposal, which was to give powers of supervision for the whole of Scotland. By this time the surgeons had adopted the work of apothecaries as part of their practice, and the attempt was therefore naturally opposed by them, so that Cromwell was dissuaded from signing the proposed Charter. About 1670, the leading physicians of Edinburgh, moved by a desire to reform medicine, set themselves to lay out a Physic Garden and to obtain a Charter for the institution of a College of Physicians. The men chiefly concerned in this movement were Sir Robert Sibbald, Dr. Archibald Pitcairne, Sir Andrew Balfour, Sir Thomas Burnet and Sir Archibald Stevenson (father-in-law of Dr. Pitcairne).

The study of botany was then considered along with anatomy the most important preliminary to a scientific knowledge of medicine. The surgeons, as we have seen, had already made provision for anatomy, and thus it lay with the physicians to cultivate botany. Dr. Balfour had settled as a physician in Edinburgh in 1667, and in the small garden attached to his house had raised many plants never before seen in Scotland. His friend, Mr. Patrick Murray, of Livingstone, had also developed at his country seat a botanic garden containing over 1000 specimens of plants. Sibbald and Balfour determined to establish a regular Physic Garden, and Sibbald gives the following account of the way in which this project started:—

“ Dr. Balfour and I first resolved upon it, and obtained of John Brown, gardner of the North yardes in the Abby, an inclosure of some 40 foot of measure every way. We had, by this tyme, become acquaint with Master James Sutherland, a youth, who, by his owne industry, had attained great knowledge of the plants and of medals, and he undertook the charge of the culture of it. By what we procured from Leviston (*i.e.*, Patrick Murray, Laird of Livingstone) and other gardens, and brought in from the Country, we made a collection of eight or nyne hundred plants ther.

"We got several of the Physicians in town to concur in the designe, and to contribute so much a yeer for the charge of the culture and importation of foreigne plants.

"Some of the Chirurgeon Apothecaries, who then had much power in the town, opposed us, dreading that it might usher in a Colege of Physicians, bot, by the care and dexterity of Doctor Balfour, these were made friends to the designe, and assisted us in obtaining of the Counsell of Edinburgh ane lease to Mr. James Sutherland, for nynteen years, of the garden belonging to Trinity Hospitall, and adjacent to it. And Doctor Balfour and I, with some others, were appointed by the Town Counsell visitors of the garden."¹

These two early Physic Gardens were situated, the first north-east of Holyrood Abbey, on a spot occupied at present by a small stretch of turf ; the second is shown



JOHN HOPE (1725-1786)
(From Kay's "Portraits")

as the Garden of Trinity Hospital in Gordon of Rothemay's plan of Edinburgh. Here, in 1676, James Sutherland was established as Professor of Botany, and in 1683 published his "Hortus Medicus Edinburgensis." He had a salary of twenty pounds from the city, and taught the science of herbs to students for small fees. In 1689, during the siege of the Castle, it was thought necessary to drain the North Loch, and the water for several days ran over the Physic Garden at Trinity Hospital, completely spoiling it. Sutherland, therefore, in 1695, extended his Garden at Holyrood, which seems to have become a very fine place. Sutherland died in 1705, and was succeeded by Dr. Charles Preston, and he in turn by his brother George Preston, in the Chair of Botany. The latter did much to improve the Garden, and built a green-house therein, for which

he received an allowance of ten pounds yearly from the Town Council. He also kept a shop on the north side of the High Street, opposite the head of Blackfriars Wynd, where he sold "all sorts of spices, sugars, tea, coffee, chacolet, etc."²

The Prestons were succeeded by Charles Alston as Professor of Medicine and Botany, and he in turn by John Hope in 1761. Finding that the Garden was unsuited for the development which had taken place, Hope obtained a grant from the Treasury and removed the Garden to a site on the west of Leith Walk, near

¹ "The Autobiography of Sir Robert Sibbald, Knt., M.D." printed 1833, pp. 21 and 22.

² Bower: "History of the University of Edinburgh," Vol. II, p. 121.

the present Gayfield Square. The old Garden at Trinity College disappeared about 1770.¹

Professor Hope was succeeded by Daniel Rutherford in 1786, who, although Professor of Botany and Medicine, was much more of a chemist, and was the discoverer of nitrogen gas. Subsequent professors were Robert Graham and John Hutton Balfour, known to his students as "Old Woody Fibre." The present Botanic Garden in Inverleith Row was formed in 1822-1824, and the adjoining Arboretum was opened in 1881.

To return to Sibbald, Pitcairne and the others, who, about 1670, were laying out the Physic Garden and considering the formation of a College of Physicians at Edinburgh, we find that the state of medicine at this time in other places was as follows. Sydenham was practising in London. Harvey's discovery had been published over forty years previously, and was still disputed, though Borelli, by his laborious mathematical investigations, had developed its principles into the Iatro-mechanical School of Thought. Boyle, Mayow, Willis, and kindred spirits of the Royal Society of London were studying various problems of life and disease. Malpighi and Leeuwenhoek were using the earliest microscopes to investigate the structure of the bodily fluids and tissues. Sylvius, at Leyden, was founding physiological chemistry and introducing the new idea of instruction in the wards of his hospital as a part of medical education.

Dr. Archibald Pitcairne (1652-1713) was perhaps the most celebrated Scottish physician of the time, and he more than anyone else may justly be regarded as the founder of the Edinburgh Medical School. Beginning the pursuit of Law, he went to study in Paris, and there took to medicine. From 1675 to 1680, he studied medicine in that city, and in the latter year became M.D. of Rheims. On the inducement of his friend, David Gregory, Professor of Mathematics at Edinburgh, he devoted himself with great assiduity to mathematics, becoming later, like Borelli in Italy, one of the founders of the Iatro-mechanical or Iatro-mathematical school of thought. The system developed from Harvey's demonstration of the circulation; for when the importance of this dynamic principle was grasped, in contradistinction to that of the leisurely ebb and flow of humours, its adherents attempted to prove that all the bodily activities, including even those of the nervous system and of digestion, were mere mechanical exercises. Although this idea could not persist for long, it formed for the century after Harvey a fruitful working hypothesis. Pitcairne threw himself into this controversy with zest, and his attitude is indicated by the title of an attack made on him by Sir Edward Eizat in "Apollo Mathematicus, or the Art of Curing Diseases by the Mathematics" (1695). Pitcairne was one of the original members of the Royal College of Physicians in 1681, and in 1685 he, Sir Robert Sibbald and Dr. James Halket were made the first three Professors of Medicine in the Town's College,

¹ Grant: "Old and New Edinburgh," Vol. I, p. 363.



ARCHIBALD PITCAIRNE (1652-1713)

or, as it now began to be called, the University of Edinburgh. The professors of medicine were unsalaried, and although they probably lectured from time to time (Pitcairne certainly did), they do not appear to have delivered any regular course. Dr. Halket seems to have been a well-known physician of his time, but has left no literary remains. The only reference to him that I have been able to find is the following account of a consultation between him, Robert Clerk, surgeon, and Mr. Hamilton, regarding the illness and death of Lady Clerk of Penicuik :—

"We had called for one of the chief Physicians in Town, one Doctor Hackete, and two of the chief chyrurgeons, my unckle Robert Clerk, and one Mr. Hamilton, a man much employed in Midwifery. They took all the pains about her they cou'd think of, but I am afraed they were too hasty in their operations, by which she lost a vast deal of blood. The placenta, it seems, was adhering to the uterus, and this they thought themselves obliged to bring away by force."¹

Pitcairne's eminence, as one of the protagonists of the Iatro-mathematical School, procured for him, in 1692, an invitation from the University of Leyden to assume the Chair of

Medicine at that celebrated University, which he accepted. There he lectured till 1693, when he returned to Edinburgh for family reasons. The fact that the infant school of Edinburgh furnished a Professor to the old-established chair in Leyden must have given a great uplift to the former, still more the fact that Pitcairne had among his pupils many men who afterwards rose to fame, notably Mead and Boerhaave. Pitcairne's writings included



ROBERT CLERK

Flourished about 1689. He was father of Dr. John Clerk later
President of the Royal College of Physicians
(Original in the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh)

¹ "Sir John Clerk's Memoirs, 1676-1755," Scottish Hist. Soc., Edinburgh, 1892, p. 40.

numerous polemical pamphlets, poems, and dissertations on medical subjects, as, for example, on the "Quantity of the Blood," the "Motion of the Stomach," and especially a dissertation upon the "Cure of Fevers." This was an important contribution to the medicine of that day, when fevers formed two-thirds of all diseases.

Pitcairne's appointment, in 1692, as Professor of Medicine at Leyden, was largely due to the prominence which he had obtained as a controversialist on the discovery of the circulation of the blood made by Harvey some fifty years previously. Before Malpighi and Leeuwenhoek had demonstrated the capillaries and blood corpuscles, Pitcairne, by a kind of mathematical reasoning similar to that adopted by Harvey, had indicated the nature of the minute vessels through which the fine particles of blood must pass, and, in particular, he had established the view that there existed no gross anastomosis between the arteries and the veins, for which many persons contended, even of those who adopted Harvey's principle of circulation in a general way.¹

Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722) had gone through a theological course in Edinburgh, and in 1660 proceeded to Leyden to study medicine. In his autobiography, he says:—

"I stayed at Leyden ane yeer and a half, and studied anatomic and chirurgie, under the learned Professor Van Horne. I studied the plants under Adolphus Vorstius, who had been then Botanick professor 37 yeers, and I studied the institutions and practice, under Sylvius, who was famous then. I saw twentye-three human bodies dissected by him in the Hospitall which I frequented with him. I saw some dissected publickly by Van Horne. I was fellow student with Steno, who became famous afterwards for his wrytings. He dissected in my chamber sometymes, and showed me there, the ductus salivalis superior, he had discovered. I frequented ane apothecaries shop, and saw the materia medica and the ordinary compositiones made. I studied Chimie, under a German called Witichius, and after he went away, under Margravius, brother to him who wrott the naturall history of Brasile. Sometyne I heard the lessons of Vander Linden, who was famous for critical learning.

"I composed ther (the last summer I stayed ther,) Theses de variis Tabis speciebus. Sylvius was praeses when I defended them publickly in the schools. . . . In September, 1661, I went from Leyden for Paris. . . .

"I stayed some nyne moneths at Paris, where I was well acquainted with the famous Guido Patin, who lent me bookes, and gave me for a tyme the use of his manuscript written for the direction of his two sons, Robert and Charles (who were then Doctors of the Faculty of Paris,) in their studies. I studied the plants under Junquet in the King's Garden, and heard the publick lessons of Monsieur de la Chambre the younger, and Monsieur Bazalis, and I frequently was present at ther publick disputes, and visited then the Hotel de Dieu, and the Hospital of the Charity.

"From Paris I went to Angiers with letters of recommendation from Guido Patin to Bailif Sentor, the Dean of Faculty. I stayed a moneth ther, and was examined by his son, by Ferrand Joiselin and Boisenute, and gott my patent of Doctor ther."²

¹ Pitcairne: "A Dissertation upon the Circulation of the Blood through the Minutest Vessels of the Body." Works, Translated, London, 1715.

² "The Autobiography of Sir Robert Sibbald, Knt., M.D.," 1833, pp. 16 and 17.

Such was a medical course in the 17th century. Sibbald had a large and influential practice in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, was appointed by Charles II. Geographer Royal for Scotland, and left considerable literary remains, dealing especially with the natural history and archæology of Scotland.

Sir Robert Sibbald gives an account of the help afforded by Prince James, Duke of York, and his physician, Sir Charles Scarborough, in obtaining a patent for the erection of the College of Physicians at Edinburgh. After much opposition from the surgeons and the Town Council of Edinburgh, as well as the Universities and the Bishops, and after many conferences, the patent finally received the King's signature and the Great Seal upon the 29th November, 1681, and the College of Physicians was then established. In the following year, Drs. Sibbald, Stevenson and Balfour were knighted by the Duke of York.

In 1686, Sir Robert Sibbald was persuaded by the Earl of Perth to embrace the Roman Catholic faith, but having been hunted out of his house by the Edinburgh mob, and having thereafter made a visit to London, where, as he says, "I perceived, also the whole people of England was under a violent restraint then, and I foresaw they would overturn the Government," he resolved to return to the Church in which he was born, and, as he quaintly remarks: "After my returne, it pleased God the popish interest decayed dayly, and good men thought I by my returne had



SIR ROBERT SIBBALD (1641-1722).



A TRAVELLING MOUNTEBANK OF THE 17TH CENTURY
Illustrating a class of men who invaded Scotland in the 17th and 18th Centuries (*see page 191*)
(*From the original picture by Jan Steen of Leyden, 1626-1679*)

done it more damage than my joining had profited them."¹ The Revolution occurred two years later.

Other important physicians in Edinburgh at this time who were associated with Pitcairne and Sibbald in founding the College of Physicians were Sir Thomas Burnet, author of a highly popular compendium of medicine, the "Thesaurus Medicinæ" (1673), and Sir Archibald Stevenson.

The necessity for a supply of good doctors in Edinburgh, as in other parts of Scotland, and the further necessity for a controlling influence, such as that exerted by the College of Physicians, is demonstrated by the frequency with which strolling mountebanks appeared, even in the capital city. In 1672, Joannes Michael Philo, physician, and "sworn operator to his majesty," petitioned the Privy Council for permission to erect a public stage in Edinburgh for the practice of his profession, which was allowed, though he was forbidden "to have any ropedancing." He was reported later to have "thereon cured thretteen blind persons, several lame, and cut several cancers, and done many other notable cures, as is notourly known, and that out of mere charity." The Privy Council, after he had been three months in Edinburgh, gave him a warrant "to go and do likewise in all the other burghs of the kingdom," for six months, and recommended him to the help and countenance of the Magistrates of the burghs.²

Again, in 1677, there is notice of a travelling doctor styling himself Joannes Baptista Marentini, who with the permission of the Edinburgh Town Council, erected a stage in the city for practising his skill in physic and otherwise. Marentini had a servant, Monsieur Devoe, about whom James Baynes petitioned the Privy Council because he, while "servant to the mountebank who was lately in this place, hath, by sinistrous and indirect means, secured and enticed the petitioner's daughter and only child to desert her parents, and to live with him upon pretence of a clandestine marriage." The Council issued a warrant to have the offender imprisoned in the Tolbooth, but he appears afterwards to have settled down in Edinburgh as a dancing-master.³

Again, in 1684, Cornelius a-Tilbourne, a German mountebank, applied to the Privy Council for license to erect a stage in Edinburgh. The College of Physicians was now in existence, and opposed the application, which, nevertheless, was granted. He had previously made a successful experiment upon himself in London by taking poisons administered by the physicians there, after he had drunk an antidote, and the King had granted him a medal and chain. In Edinburgh he expressly excluded mercury, aqua fortis and other corrosives from the trial, but carried out the experiment on his servant.

¹ "The Autobiography of Sir Robert Sibbald, Knt., M.D.," printed 1833, pp. 35-41.

² Chambers: "Domestic Annals of Scotland," Vol. II, Edinburgh, 1859, p. 347; ³ pp. 383 and 384.

The Edinburgh poisons were apparently more effective than those of London, and the servant died.¹

During the time of Sir Robert Sibbald's presidency of the College of Physicians the Pharmacopœia was completed. The first Pharmacopœia to appear in Britain had been that of London in 1618, but its formulæ were not binding upon the apothecaries of Scotland. From 1699, when the Edinburgh Pharmacopœia first appeared, its successive editions were in general use throughout Scotland until the British Pharmacopœia of the General Medical Council was issued in 1864. Another important activity of this College consisted in the provision of a Dispensary for attendance and supply of medicines to the sick poor, and a Repository for furnishing medicines to the sick poor was set up in 1708. The design of founding an Infirmary in Edinburgh, where clinical instruction could be furnished, was next mooted by the College about 1725, and the College thereafter

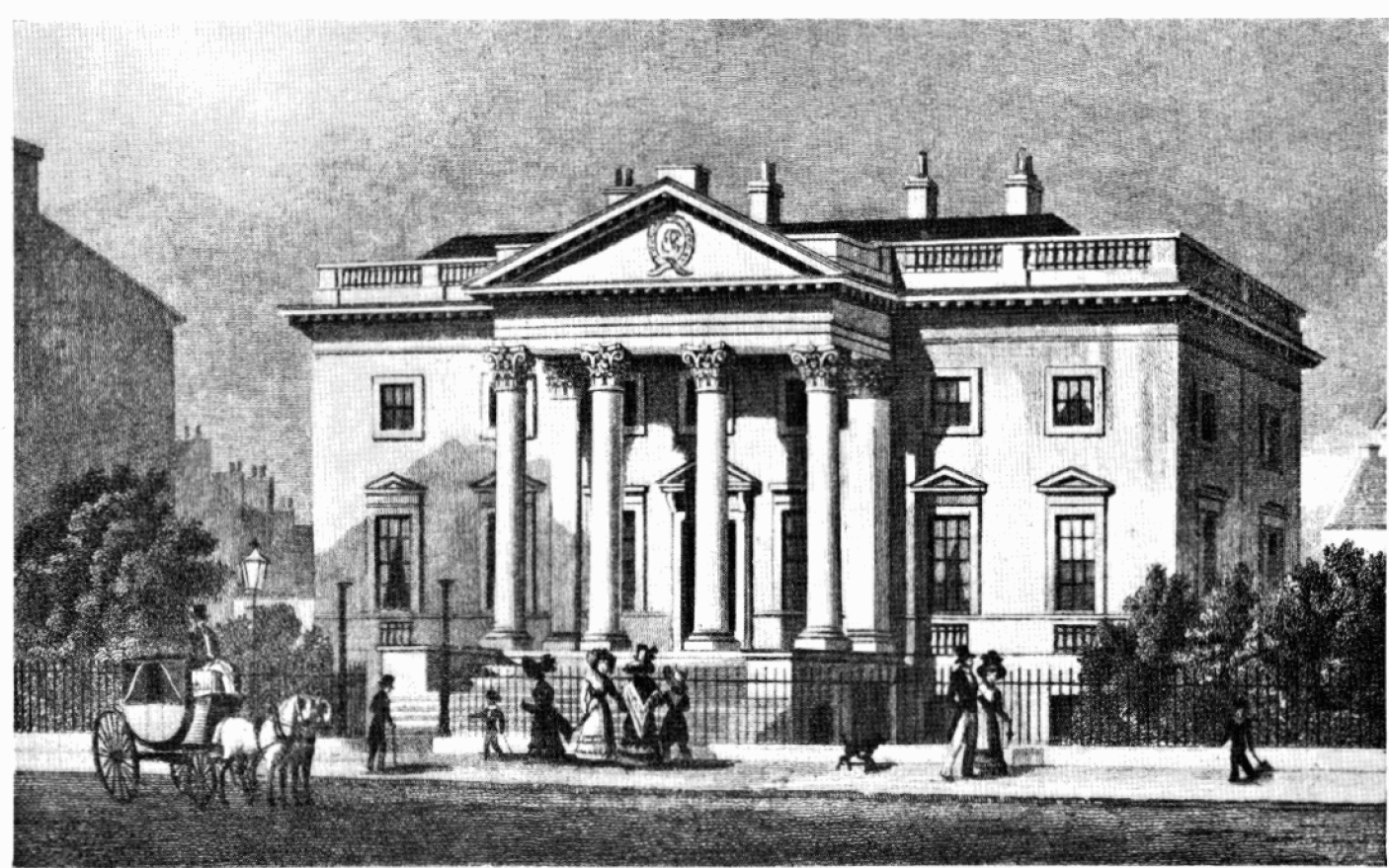
took effective steps to carry out this project. At an early stage of its existence, on 5th February, 1683, the College had agreed to the formula for a licentiate's diploma, and in order to prevent irregular practice in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, the College insisted that all persons desiring to practise as physicians in Edinburgh and its vicinity should first be recognised by them. In 1683 also, the formation of a Library occupied the attention of the Fellows, and this Library has steadily grown, till at the present time (1927) it includes some 100,000 volumes.



SEAL OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF EDINBURGH

The meetings of the Fellows of the College of Physicians were at first held in the private houses of the officials, but on 17th April, 1698, the College resolved to buy a house of its own, and, in 1704, it acquired the house and grounds of Sir James Mackenzie in Fountain Close, between the High Street and Cowgate. Seven years later, the College acquired the neighbouring land belonging to Baillie Jeffrey, and laid out a garden and shrubbery, extending down to the then fashionable Cowgate. This was the envy of the neighbouring peers, to whom in several cases the privilege of walking in the garden was permitted as a favour. About the same time, the College converted certain ruinous buildings bordering on the Cowgate into a bath-house, which was open to the inhabitants generally at a charge of twelve shillings Scots, and one penny to the servant, for each ablution, or at an annual charge of one guinea. The bath, however, was let in 1714, and shortly after abandoned.

¹ p. 458, Chambers: "Domestic Annals of Scotland," Vol. II, Edinburgh, 1859.



HALL OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS IN GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH, FROM 1775 TO 1843

In 1722, a new Hall was erected in the garden, but the building appears to have been unsatisfactory, for, in 1766, it became necessary to apply to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary to deposit the Library in a spare apartment of that building, and to hold the meetings of the College in the Managers' Board-room. These requests were granted, and the privilege was continued to the College for fifteen years. In 1781, the premises in Fountain Close were sold, and the Library and meetings of the College were transferred to a new Hall near the east end of George Street. The foundation stone of this Hall had been laid on 27th November, 1775, by the President, Dr. William Cullen. In 1843, the George Street Hall, which had been a very fine building, was sold to the Commercial Bank for £20,000, and from this transaction, the prosperity of the College dates. The present Hall was occupied in 1846.¹

The first important step in the foundation of a Medical School at Edinburgh had been the early development of anatomical instruction in the hands of the surgeons from the beginning of the 16th century. The physicians of Edinburgh, in the 17th century, had developed the teaching of botany in the Physic Gardens. The next department of knowledge with a bearing upon medicine which received attention was chemistry, in which a professorship was founded in 1713. Van Helmont, who may be regarded as the last of the alchemists, had died in 1644, and Glauber, who is usually looked upon as the first of the chemists, had died in 1688. Sylvius, at Leyden, about the middle of the 17th century, had been one of the first to see the importance of the relationship between chemistry and medicine, and he and his pupils, De Graaf, Stensen, etc., had investigated the secretions of the glands. Boerhaave's "Elementa Chemicæ," published in 1732, was one of the first text-books on this subject, so that the Town Council of Edinburgh were very early in the field of chemistry with their professorial appointment. Dr. James Crawford was elected professor of physic and chemistry to the University of Edinburgh on 9th December, 1713, after a testimonial as to his fitness for the post had been furnished by the College of Physicians to Principal Carstares. Crawford had followed the usual custom in studying under Boerhaave, at Leyden, and two rooms in the University were allotted to him for teaching, although he received no salary.²

On 12th August, 1724, the Town Council, on the recommendation of the Royal College of Physicians, "considering the great benefit and advantage that would accrue to this city and kingdom, by having all the parts of medicine taught in this place," decided to appoint Mr. William Porterfield, doctor of medicine in Edinburgh, to teach the institutes and practice of medicine. Porterfield had graduated at Rheims in 1717, and had received a licence to practice from the Royal College of Physicians in 1721. He is now best known by an excellent treatise on the eye, which he published in 1759. The Town Council appear to

¹ "Historical Sketch and Laws of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh," pp. 39 *et seq.*

² Bower: "History of the University of Edinburgh," Vol. II, Edinburgh, 1817, p. 126.

have considered that Porterfield's lectures on institutes and practice of medicine would be sufficient to cover the whole of medicine, and Bower is inclined to think that he never delivered a course of lectures.¹

On 11th November, 1724, the same year that Porterfield was appointed, a memorial was presented to the Town Council by Drs. Rutherford, Sinclair, Plummer and Innes, showing that they had "purchased a house for a chemical laboratory, adjoining to the college garden," and craving that they might be allowed the use of the garden for supplying chemical medicines and instructing students of medicine. On 9th February, 1726, it was reported to the Town Council that Rutherford, Sinclair, Plummer and Innes had, under the Council's protection, undertaken the professing and teaching of medicine in the city; and the Council, considering that these men had given the clearest proof of their capacity and ability to teach, appointed Sinclair and Rutherford to be professors of the theory and practice of medicine, and Plummer and Innes professors of medicine and chemistry.² This is the date from which the Medical Faculty of Edinburgh University actually begins.

The University had, prior to this time, exercised the right of conferring medical degrees, and had remitted the examination of candidates to two members of the College of Physicians, whose certificate, when presented to the University, was sustained and the degree conferred.³ Dr. Sinclair appears to have lectured upon the theory of medicine (physiology) by explaining the "*Institutiones Medicæ*" of Boerhaave, while Dr. Rutherford dealt with the practice of medicine. Dr. Rutherford has a special claim to remembrance as having been the first professor who delivered clinical lectures in the Infirmary, commencing these immediately after the disturbance caused by the Rebellion had passed off in 1746, when his class was attended by a great many students. His lectures appear to have been greatly appreciated, and a pupil, the celebrated Dr. William Buchan, said of him: "Rutherford is slow but absolutely sure."⁴ John Rutherford was the maternal grandfather of Sir Walter Scott, and his son, Dr. Daniel Rutherford, at a later date, acted as professor of botany, and was celebrated as the discoverer of nitrogen gas.

Dr. Andrew Plummer had commenced study at the University of Edinburgh, and afterwards repaired to Leyden, where he studied medicine under Boerhaave, and took the degree of M.D. in 1722. He was specially interested in chemistry, and a great part of his course consisted in showing "a variety of useful and amusing processes," but a considerable portion of the course also consisted in teaching pharmacy. His name is preserved in a pill of antimony and mercury still known as "Plummer's Pill," and he was the first person to analyse the water of Moffat Spa, and to recommend patients to betake themselves to that health resort.⁵ Little is known of Dr. Innes.

¹ pp. 201-203, ² pp. 204-208, ³ p. 210: Bower: "History of the University of Edinburgh," Vol. II, Edinburgh, 1817.

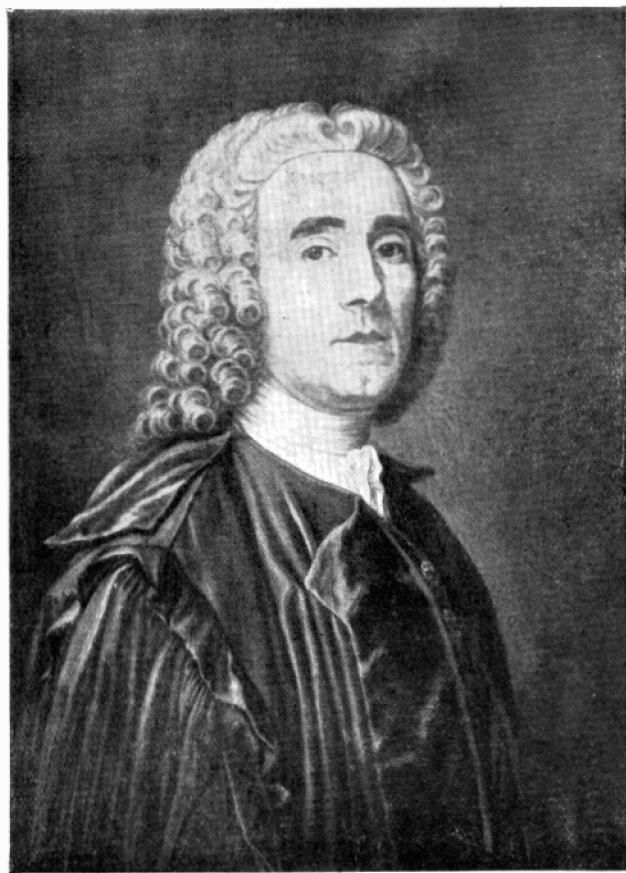
⁴ pp. 213-215, ⁵ pp. 215-216: Bower: "History of the University of Edinburgh," Vol. II, Edinburgh, 1817.



JOHN RUTHERFORD (1695-1779)

(Grandfather of Sir Walter Scott)

Original picture by Allan Ramsay, in the possession of Miss Russell



ANDREW PLUMMER (Died 1756)

Original picture in the possession of Major C. H. Scott Plummer

Another very important step in the development of the Medical School was taken on 9th February, 1726, when the Town Council considered a petition received from Mr. Joseph Gibson, a practitioner in Leith,¹ supported by a declaration under the hands of four doctors of medicine, that he should be appointed a professor of midwifery. The practise of this art in Scotland at that time was entirely in the hands of female practitioners, and the somewhat opprobrious term of "man midwife" was generally applied in Britain to physicians who specialised in this branch of practice. This appointment was the first of its kind in the kingdom, and Professor Gibson taught classes both of midwives and of medical students. He was succeeded in 1739 as professor of midwifery in the Town's College by Mr. Robert Smith, who held the professorship for seventeen years, till 1756, when Dr. Thomas Young was appointed professor and first delivered a systematic course of lectures upon the subject.² Dr. Young's important step, taken on his appointment in 1756, of fitting up a ward in the attic storey of the recently-erected Royal Infirmary for the reception of lying-in women, and his clinical instruction there, have been already mentioned.

The requirements for the degree of M.D. at Edinburgh, when the Medical Faculty was founded in 1726, were as follows: The student was required to have studied medicine during at least three years at Edinburgh or some other University, and must have attended during this time lectures on anatomy and surgery, chemistry, botany, materia medica and pharmacy, theory and practice of medicine and clinical lectures in the hospital. He was then required to compose a dissertation in Latin upon some medical subject, and to submit it to one of the medical professors two months before the day of graduation. The dissertation was next submitted to the whole Faculty, a question was proposed to the candidate, and he was afterwards examined by two professors as to the proficiency he had made in his medical studies. If his answers were satisfactory, his test was finished. If not, one of the aphorisms of Hippocrates was assigned to him by one of the professors, and a medical question by another. He had to illustrate the former by a commentary, and to answer the latter with proper arguments before the Medical Faculty. Two histories of diseases accompanied with questions were also given to him in writing, and he had to give his opinion on them before the Faculty. If he now gave satisfaction, he had to print his thesis and defend it publicly, this, however, being apparently a matter of form. Thereafter, he received the degree of doctor of medicine. All these proceedings were conducted in the Latin tongue.³

¹ Bower: "History of the University of Edinburgh" vol. II, p. 254.

² Op. cit., Vol. III, p. 5.

³ Bower: "History of the University of Edinburgh," Vol. II, pp. 216-220.