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1943-WR Steiner & Tette.

To the Hon. PRESIDENT,
 the VICE PRESIDENT, and
 The other OFFICERS, FELLOWS,
 and MEMBERS of the
 MEDICAL SOCIETY,
 in the State of Connecticut:

Gentlemen,

I have, with much Pleasure and Satisfaction, observed your Questions proposed at your Annual Conventions, in the City of Hartford, in October last; and am Happy in being informed, that there is so laudable an Institution as a Medical Society, in the State of Connecticut; and that you are endeavouring to Increase and Propagate Medical Knowledge in your Republic.

I have not the Honour of being a Member of your Society, nor a Citizen of your State: but inasmuch as Physicians in other Govern.

1943 - W.R. Steiner Ed. etc.

Governments are permitted
to Answer your Questions,
I take the Freedom of answer-
ing the first of the Two which
are still held up for Discussion,
viz. "What is the most eligible
Mode of increasing and
Propagating Medical Know-
ledge in the State of Connecticut?"

The Clouds of Darkness and
Ignorance, which hover over
the Minds of many, who pre-
tend to be Practitioners, in Physic,
in consequence of the ridiculous
Modes of Instruction in many
Parts of Our American Borders,
makes your Question a Matter
of very great Importance; and
a rational Answer, is a Subject
highly worthy of the Attention
of any Physician, who wishes
to promote the Health and
Happiness of his Fellow Mortals.

I have travelled in some of the
European Kingdoms, and in many
Parts of America: have been sundry
times through Connecticut; but
am not so well acquainted with
your Modes of Instruction, and
Methods of Practice, as I am with
the Modes and Methods in some
of the other American States, and
European Countries; and, am
therefore, not so capable, perhaps,
of pointing out such things as
may ^{be} agreeable to you, as those
more acquainted with your
internal Police. I shall, how-
ever, endeavour to Answer
your Question according to
the best of my Capacity.

I beg leave, Gentlemen, to mention,
First, The Qualifications necessary for
a Physician.
Secondly, To describe the various Modes
of Medical Instruction, ~~and~~
and ^{the methods used in} introducing Improvers
into

into the Practice of Physic in
this Country, and,

Thirdly, To Answer your Question

First, I am then in the first Place
to mention the Qualifications
necessary for a Physician.

These Qualifications are,

1. Good natural Abilities; as an
aptness to learn; a great memory;
a sound judgment; a piercing
Sight; a steady hand, and a
humane Temper and Disposition.
2. He should understand the Learned
Languages, that he may be
enabled to read Books writ-
ten in Latin, Greek, &c.
3. Arithmetic, which is very
useful in various Branches
of the Medical Art.

4. Geometry, which is of great
utility in the Demonstrations
of Botany, Anatomy, &c.

5. Mineralogy, or a genuine History
of ^{the} Natural Substances which
belong to the Mineral Kingdom.

6. Botany, or a Natural History
of Plants, their Classes, Subdi-
visions, various genera,
and Species.

7. Zoology, or a general History of the Birds,
Beasts, Fishes, Insects, &c.

8. Chymistry, which exhibits
how to Analyze, Mineral,
Vegetable, and Animal
Substances; or of separating
Bodies by Fire, whereby they
are resolved into different
Parts, or Principles, for Medi-
cinal, and other Purposes.

9. The Materia Medica, which
gives a Narration of the
Medicinal Properties, not
only

only of those natural Simples which belong to the Mineral, Vegetable, and Animal Kingdoms; but also, of some Articles produced by Art, such as Soap, Potash, &c.

10. Pharmacy, or the Art, or Science of choosing, preparing, weighing, measuring, Compounding, Distilling, Extracting, and Preserving, of Medicines, for Medicinal Purposes.

11. Anatomy, or the Art of dissecting, or taking to pieces, the several solid Parts of Animal Bodies, with a view of discovering their Structure and Uses.

12. Pathology, or an Explanation of the nature of Diseases, their Causes, and Symptoms.

13. Therapeutice, or the Rules that are to be observed, and the Medicines which are to be employed in the Cure of Diseases.

14. Surgery, or the Art of curing Wounds, Ulcers, Abscesses, Fractures, Luxations, &c. by the Application of the Hands, the Use of proper Instruments, and sundry External Remedies.

15. Obstetricatio, or the Art of performing the Delivery of Women, &c.

All these Qualifications are necessary for an American Physician, and especially if he settles in a Country-Town-Ship, where he will be obliged to officiate as

as a Physician, Surgeon,
and Midwife; and, some-
times as an Apothecary;
for the Methods of Compound-
ing Medicines are so very
different, precarious and
uncertain amongst the
Apothecaries, that every
Judicious Practitioner,
inclines to compound his
own Medicines, rather
than exhibit those whose
Strength is unknown to
the Purchaser. Now, how
far short of the Qualifications
I have described, many of
our Practitioners come,
will appear under the
Subsequent Narration.

Having thus mentioned the
Qualifications necessary for
a Physician; I proceed to the
Second thing proposed, viz.
To describe the Various modes of
Medical Instruction, and the
Methods used in introducing
Imposters into the Practice of
Physic in this Country. He

He that desires to become
acquainted with any Art
or Science, ought to avoid
the Study of those Books,
and the Instruction of
those Masters that will
lead him into Error; for
if he takes a wrong Road
in the beginning of his
Journey, the further he
goes, the greater will be
his distance from the Right
way, and the more diffi-
cult will it be for him to
find it: and if he will
not be convinced of his
Error, by any Friend, who
may endeavour to show him
the Right Path, he will
entirely miss the mark
he was aiming at. Just
so it is with those who attempt
to become a good Physician
for if they set out wrong, and
have Error infused into
them, they miss of the
Prize they intended to
obtain.

I think it may not be improper to mention in this Place; that, by reason of the late Discoveries and Improvements in Chemistry, and other Branches of Medicine, the ancient Dispensatories, and other Medical Books, now in Use in this Country, are found to be very Erroneous: that they contain many things ~~which~~ which have impeded the progress of the Healing Art; and ^{for that reason} have ^{therefore been} justly ~~now~~ expunged, not only from the late European Pharmacopoeias, but the late Books written upon the Practice of Physic. Many Medicines that were once in high reputation in the Cure of Diseases, are now laid aside, and the methods of Practice, within the last twenty Years, have been greatly altered in the European Countries, as well as in some Places

America; this Alteration has ~~now~~ contributed much towards drawing the Practice of Physic into a smaller Compass, the making of the Cure of Diseases more easy and certain, and of Course, of raising the Medical Art to a higher Degree of Perfection. Now, wherever these Ancient Books are used by those who instruct Students in the noble Art of Medicine, both the Masters and the Pupils are led directly into Error; and when they have imbibed erroneous Opinions concerning the Administration, Operation and Effects of Medicines upon the Human Body, they ~~now~~ frequently augment, instead of alleviating the Distresses of their Fellow Mortals.

An Ignorant Physician is a dangerous Animal: he

He goes armed with the Weapons of Life and Death; and if he is so much in the dark, that he cannot distinguish the One from the other, or, in other Words, if he knows not the Nature of his Medicines, he will be as liable to usher Death and Destruction into the World, as the Preservation of Life, and Restoration of Health.

But, alas! it is to be regretted, that such swarms of Impostors are allowed to ruin about in the disguise of Regular bred Physicians, committing Slaughter and Depredation amongst their Ignorant Employers: And it is also to be regretted, that no regular System of Pharmacy, has ever been established in this Country for a Guide to the Apothecaries, in Preparing, and Compounding their Medicines: that they have been allowed to compound from Age to Age, as many
dif-

different ways as there are different Methods prescribed in the different Dispensatories now in Use: that many Medicines have been compounded and sold under One and the same Name that had different Degrees of Strength; and that from hence the most skillful Physicians have been greatly deceived, not only in the Administration of Proper Doses, but in the Operation and Effects of such Medicines amongst their Patients. This precarious mode of Practice, has, perhaps, destroyed the Lives of thousands of the Americans!

Some prudent Practitioners have long been sensible of this Inconvenience, and have therefore compounded their Medicines themselves; rather than expose their reputation, and the lives of their Patients by the

Administration of Medicines whose strengths were unknown; and, this has greatly diminished the Business of the Apothecaries; but who can blame them for compounding their Medicines so very different, when they have no Established Rule for a Guide; and there are such a variety of Methods prescribed in the Different Dispensatories now in Use.

A great variety of Medicines are differently compounded; but as a Proof of My Assertions at this Time, I shall ^{only} exhibit the different prescriptions for Compounding but One Medicine, viz. the Liquid Sandanum, which may be seen in the following Dispensatories, as,

1. The London Dispensatory.

R. Gum Opii purif. pulv. — ℥^{ss}.
 Spirit. Vin. tenu. — ℥j.
 Digere per Dies Decem, et cola.

2. The Edinburgh Dispensatory.

R. Opium, — ℥ij.
 Aq. Cin. Spt. — ℥jss.
 Digere per Dies Quatuor, et cola.

3. Quinsley's Dispensatory.

R. Gum Opii crud. — ℥ij.
 Croc. Anglican. — ℥j.
 Aq. Aromat. vel Cin. — ℥^{ss}.
 Spt. Vin. Gallie. — ℥^{ss}.
 Digere leni calore, et cola.

4. James's Dispensatory.

R. Gum Opii crud. — ℥ij.
 Croc. Anglican. — ℥j.
 Aq. Aromat. vel Cin. — ℥^{ss}.
 Digere leni calore, et cola.

5. Brookes's Dispensatory.

R. Gum Opii, — ℥ij.
 Aq. Aromat. — ℥^{ss}.
 Digere leni calore, &c.

Thus, we may see by preceeding
 Pre-

prescriptions for Compounding the Liquid Laudanum, how greatly that Medicine varies in regard to its strength, and ^{now} liable a Physician is to be deluded in the Exhibition of Proper Doses; and in its Effects upon the human Body; and the same may be said ^{of many} of the other Compounds.

I am apprehensive, that the Establishment of a Regular System of Pharmacy in America, would be of great Utility to the Apothecaries: that it would increase their Business, and deminish the trouble and care of those Physicians who Compound their own Medicines.

In Europe there are certain Rules Established by Law, for the Choosing, Preparing, Weighing, Measuring, Compounding, Distilling, Extracting, and Preserving of Medicines, and if the Apothecaries do not
St-

Strictly observe those Rules, they are liable to punishment: they are, however, permitted to Compound any other way, if so ordered by some learned Physician, for such Practitioners are allowed to order such Compositions for a Patient, as is thought most beneficial; and the same Rules and Regulations ought to be observed in this part of the World.

Another Vanity has prevailed in this Country, which has been the foundation of much discord amongst the Practitioners of Physic: it arose from their being differently instructed in the Mysteries of the Medical Art. It has been customary for great Numbers of the Physicians to keep but one Dispensatory. hence, one has had an Ancient One of the London College; another has had one of that of Edenburgh; another
has

has had Quincy's, &c. and as all of them give different Accounts of the Medical Properties of both the simple and Compound Remedies; and as one Physician has been instructed according to one Dispensatory, and another according to another, &c. different Ideas have been imbibed concerning the Natures of Medicines; and, from hence also, when Practitioners who have been thus Educated have met, to consult upon any difficult, or dangerous Case, they could not agree about the prescription, Administration, and Effects of Medicines; and from this difference of Sentiment, much contention has ensued, as is obvious to every One who has been acquainted with the Practice of Physic in ^{this} part of the globe. But we must not, however, impute the grounds of this discord altogether to the Dispensatories, for there are

other Books which tend to produce the same evil Consequences, as well as the different Instructions given by ^{the} different Teachers of the Medical Art. But he who does not understand an Art, or Science, is by no means fit to teach it to others; and therefore an Ignorant Physician is wholly unfit to become a Teacher, because he may lead his Pupils astray. But it is time for me to hasten from this Digression, and proceed to the thing I proposed, viz. to describe the various Modes of Medical Instruction, &c.

I find that these Modes are different in the different Parts of the United States. In the Cities of Philadelphia, and New York, they have Colleges of Physicians, where Eminent Professors read Lectures upon the various Branches of Learning. Hospitals are also erected in those

Cities, where a variety of dangerous Cases may be inspected; and by these Advantages Students in Physic are Educated in a Regular way and Manner.

In Country Places remote from those Colleges, the Modes of Instruction are vastly different. For wherever a Physician has raised his fame by Merit, or by Quackery, among the Ignorant multitude of his Employers; some of them are commonly inclined to send their Sons to him, to be instructed a Year or two in the Medical Art; but if any of their other Children are sent to learn to be Carpenters, Taylors, or Shoemakers; about Seven Years must be spent in learning the Mysteries of those Mechanical Arts.

Some

Some young men are sent to learn to be Physicians, who have had some Learning, and others are sent directly from the Plough, who can scarcely read, or even write their own Names, and thus the Doctor becomes furnished with Pupils. His Library consists, perhaps, of Chefelden's Anatomy, an old Dispensatory, and Brooke's Practice of Physic; for I have been credibly informed, that a very celebrated Practitioner, and eminent Doctor-Maker, keeps no other Books; though some of the other Doctor-Makers keep better Libraries, whilst others again may have those which are not so good.

Let us distinguish the Master from the Pupil, by calling the former Dr. Triumphant, and the latter Dr. Imposter, whilst we observe how the Learning goes on, &c.

The

The Pupil must of course
Study theory before he enters
upon Practice, and Dr. Triumphant
presents Chefelden's Anatomy,
which must be read through,
and this being done, the old
Dispensatory comes the next in
succession, and afterwards
Brookes's Practice. ~~xxxx~~ About
a year is spent in these dry
Studies. If the Pupil has not had
learning before, the Study
becomes very disagreeable; He
does not understand the Techni-
cal terms, and, perhaps,
has no body to Instruct him;
for whether Dr. Triumphant
is, or is not a man of Skill,
he is very much hurried in
his Business, being obliged
to visit his Patients both Night
and Day, and therefore
cannot Instruct the Student.

When about a year is thus
spent, the Pupil is permitted
to ride upon Practice with
his Master. Not a single
Lecture has been delivered
upon Botany, the Materia

Med.

Medica, Chymistry, Pharmacy,
Pathology, Therapeutice,
Anatomy, Surgery or any
other Art, or Science, ^{and} the Pupil
is almost as Ignorant as he
was, when he first entered
upon his Medical Studies.

The Pupil is informed, whilst
he rides with the Master, that
Emetic Tartar will vomit; that
Jalap will Purge; that Opium
will ease Pain, &c. and is
often allowed to ride alone upon
Practice in Triumphant's absence.

Sometimes a year is spent
in riding with the Master;
but if he is to receive a certain
Sum of money for Instructing
and Boarding the Pupil, he
may perhaps, dismiss him
sooner, under the pretence
of his being duly qualified,
although, it is, in reality
with

with a design of accumulating some gain to himself, by saving the Board, &c.

When the Pupil is dismissed, he receives a Recommendation from his Master: assumes the Title of Doctor, and launches out into the Ignorant World as a Practitioner in Physic, Surgery, ~~and~~ Midwifery, &c. and now I think he may be legally styled, Doctor Imposter. Now is the time for playing the Hypocrite; for his Friends and Relations are employed to recommend him to the Public, as a man of wonderful Skill! great Humanity, and unbounded Benevolence: and, he soon finds Employment. If any Patient is murdered by his Maladministration: he then reports, that the Disease was so violent, that it was impossible to

to conquer it by the most powerful medicines; and, if by Chance he cures a Patient ill of ~~with~~ any dangerous Disorder, his fame rises immediately: he is highly extolled, and soon becomes very popular. He often rides out under the pretence of visiting the Sick, when perhaps, no body is ill; and goes from ^{home} one way, and remembers to return by another. He rides very fast, and appears to be always in a hurry. He rails most bitterly against every Practitioner but himself, and Doctor Triumphant, whom he represents as a man of very extensive Abilities. At all Opportunities he crowds himself into the Company of the Patients of other Physicians, decrying the Remedies they have prescribed; telling what wonderful Cures he has wrought. How humane and charitable he has been to the necessitous; as he has often given his Advice to

to the Poor gratis, &c. He by the way offers his service, uttering a few high flown expressions; indulging himself in a variety of Nods and significant Gestures, and emphatical Hems! and hahs! till he has excited the admiration of the Poor feeble Patients! who being desirous of Relief, employ the Imposter, and dismiss the regular bred Practitioners from their Service. If he finds at any time that he is not in a likely way to perform a Cure; and by a secret check of Conscience, becomes doubtful of his own Abilities, he sends for Dr. Triumphant, to Assist him. If they Cure the Patient, both of them are extolled as very eminent Physicians: but when the Imposter performs a Cure alone, he has all the Praise to himself, and soon becomes so well established in his Profession, that he is esteemed fit to Commence Doctor Meeker, and in a few months is furnished by his Ignorant employers, with a Number of Pupils.

This has been the mode of Education, and method of introducing Imposters into the Practice of Physic in too many Places under the Sun; and of making them so very Popular in the World, that they have over run Regular bred Physicians, to the disgrace of the Human Species, and destruction of their Health and Prosperity!

Many have been allowed to Practice Physic, who have had no Learning, or at least have never been instructed by any Physician. This is evident by the great number of Quacks, who have raised their fame by imposing upon the Ignorant World with Nost-rums, which have been recommended as a Specific, for almost all kinds of Disorders; but on trial, have fell greatly short of the Encormiums that were given of them.

When an Imposer has once relieved a Patient by a Nostrum, he may be permitted to Administer other Remedies also, and so introduce himself into Practice by the Assistance of his Friends. In short the Practice has become so general, that many of the Gossips are allowed to Practise, and interrupt that of the Regular bred Physicians.

Some People who are of a stingy Disposition, employ Imposers in the Medical Art, because they commonly practise cheaper than the Regular bred Physicians; and this is one thing that tends to introduce those devouring Caterpillars into Practice. But it has been observed, however, that if these People stand in need of the Assistance of a Lawyer, Carpenter, Blacksmith or Taylor, they will be very careful in choosing a good Workman. O foolish People, and unwise! Who hath bewitched

you, or induced you not to chuse a good Workman, when your Lives are in imminent danger? Why do ye swallow the poisonous Doses prescribed by those Quacks and Imposers who know not the virtues of Medicines, the strength of your Constitutions, nor the Nature of your Diseases? Why do ye set a higher Value upon your Money, than ye do upon your Lives? ~~How~~ How can you be sure that such poisonous Remedies will not put an immediate end to your Existence? And is not the Employment of such Imposers almost as Criminal as Murder, and Suicide?

Lex naturæ prohibet facere injuriam.
The Law of Nature forbids us to do injury.

Great Exertions have been made in divers Countries and Cities to Suppress Quackery. I was once in a large Country, when the Legislature enacted,

that a Committee should be appointed to examine all the Physicians, Surgeons, and Midwives, in the Government, who had not been graduated at a College, or University; or served as a Surgeon, on Board of a Man of War, or in the Army; and to Licence all they found duly Qualified; and if any Man or Woman, attempted after a certain Day, to Practise in any of the preceding Professions without a Licence, He or She should pay for the first Offence, a fine of Fifty Pounds; and for the Second Offence, double that Sum, &c. If I mistake not.

I was also in a City, where a Law was passed, forbidding any Person to Practise, there, who had not been graduated as a Doctor of Physic in some of the Universities within the Limits of the United ^{States}, or had

passed an Examination, and been Licensed in the same City. That if any attempted to practise without such Qualifications, five pounds was to be paid for the first Offence, ten for the Second, &c. And, I am persuaded, that the Legislatures would do well, if they made Laws in Every Government, for the Suppression of a Vice, so very dangerous to the Lives of the Human Species.

It is a very extensive and laborious task, to learn to be a good Physician; for the requisite Arts and Sciences are so comprehensive, that much time must be spent before a Student can be properly Qualified. and although, many have spent but a year or two in Medical Studies, before they have entered into Practice; yet I am confident, that Seven Years is not time enough for

for completing a work of such
vast Magnitude and Import-
tance. But some men of great
natural Abilities, who have not
had much Opportunity for
acquiring Medical Knowledge
whilst under the Care of their
Masters, have afterwards,
by procuring good Libraries,
and attending diligently
to their Studies and Practice,
become Skillful Practitioners
whilst others again, who
have had such an Education,
have, perhaps, by their Ignor-
ance and neglect, destroyed
the Lives of their fellow
mortals!

Some Practitioners have had
better Libraries than that kept by
Dr. Triumphant; and they have
spent more time in instructing
their Pupils: but when all this has
been done, many things have
been wanting, such as Anatomical
Demonstrations, Chymical Experi-
ments, &c.

Although

Although the Physicians in America
commonly Practise Physic, Surgery,
and Midwifery; and especially
in Country Townships; yet they
are considered in Europe, as distinct
and separate Arts; and in some
Places, he that Practises ~~the~~ One of
them, is not allowed to officiate
in either of the other; and even
the female Midwives are obliged
to live seven Years with some
Experienced Practitioner, before
they are permitted to Practise
themselves. But in this Country
they commonly rush into
Practice without the necessary
Qualifications. These Regulations
tend to make the Practisers more
perfect in their several Professions,
which is very commendable; for,
Quemque oportet esse peritum
artis suae. i. e. Every one ought
to be skillful in his own trade: and
if the same examples were more
followed in this part of the World,
it would raise the Medical Art
to a higher Degree of Perfection.

Having thus Described the various

Models

Methods of Medical Instruction, and Methods used in introducing Imposters into the Practice of Physic in this Country; I now proceed Gentlemen to the Third thing proposed, that is, to Answer your Question; viz.

“What is the most eligible mode of increasing and Propagating Medical Knowledge in the State of Connecticut?”

I beg leave to Recommend as the most eligible mode in My Opinion,

I. That every Physician, Surgeon, Midwife, and Apothecary in the State, be furnished with Books compiled from the latest and best Authorities, upon every Art and Science necessary for, the Qualification of Medical Professors; and that the Study of those Books which tend to lead Students into Error, be entirely laid aside.

II.

II. That all Practitioners and Students attend diligently to their Studies, and Communicate Medical Knowledge to one another according to their several Abilities.

III. That a College of Physicians be Instituted, or a Medical Academy Established, and furnished with a good Library, a Chemical, Anatomical, and Surgical Apparatus; and also with Learned Professors to read Lectures upon Natural and Experimental Philosophy; and every other Branch of the Medical Art.

IV. That a Botanical Garden be planted, and cultivated near the Academy or College, and furnished with all kinds of trees, plants, and herbs, foreign and domestic, that will grow in America; *

V. That sufficient Funds be raised for the Support of those Professors; and that Pupils receive their Instruction gratis.

* for the accommodation of those who may study Botany, and benefit of the Public in general.

VI.

VI. That those who may incline to become Physicians, Surgeons, Midwives, or Apothecaries attend Medical Lectures until they are well skilled in Theory; and live afterwards a suitable time with some skillful Practitioner.

VII. That none be allowed to Practise, unless they are properly qualified.

VIII. That a Regular System of Pharmacy for a guide to the Apothecaries in Choosing, Preparing, Weighing, Measuring, Compounding, Distilling, Extracting, and Preserving of their Medicines be Published, and the Observance thereof Established by Law.

IX. That every Practitioner shall keep a Journal of his Practice; and especially of the most dangerous Cases he may have to encounter; as well, as of the Operation and Effects of Medicines amongst his Patients; ^{and that} if he makes any remarkable Discovery, he shall communicate an Account of the same to the Public for the benefit of mankind in general.

Thus Gentlemen, have I answered your Question according to the best of my Capacity, and how far your Sentiments may correspond with mine, is at present unknown. I do not pretend to dictate, for you have a Right to Govern your own Affairs, as you in your Wisdom may see fit. The attending of judicious Lectures upon every Branch of Medicine, is of very great utility to Students, as I know by my own Experience, which is the best School-Master: and, as but ^{few} Practitioners are able to furnish themselves with a suitable Apparatus; and as it is impossible for them to deliver a regular Course of Lectures when they are crowded with other Employments, I thought fit to Recommend to your Consideration, the Institution of a College of Physicians, or the Establishment of a Medical Academy in your State, that young Gentlemen may be Educated in a regular manner for the future, and the Country not so much incumbered with Imposers hereafter, as it has been heretofore.

I thank you for the Communi-
cation of the Question I have
attempted to Answer, and
hope that your endeavours
to increase and propagate
Medical knowledge in your
State will be crowned with
Success; and after wishing
your Health and Prosperity,
subscribe myself,

Gentlemen,
your most
Obedient
humble
Servant.

Dec. 19th. 1795.