

*The Hyderabad Medical School, its Past History and Present Condition.* By GEORGE SMITH, M.D., Residency Surgeon and Superintendent.

It is about two years since the former Report of the Hyderabad Medical School appeared, and in this interval its Superintendent has prepared seven more students for a searching and successful examination of their qualifications for the practice of medicine and surgery. With the exception of one East Indian, who is now an Assistant in the school, all the pupils just passed are Mahommedans, and we have thus six practitioners added to the small band of well-educat-

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ed and thoroughly well qualified medical men, whom Dr. Maclean and Dr. Smith had previously sent forth into the city of Hyderabad and the several towns of the Deccan. It is to be hoped that these men will succeed in supplanting the ignorant hukeems, who have hitherto pretended to treat disease in its manifold and fatal forms in these localities, and, by the substitution of a rational treatment for the rank empiricism of their predecessors, prove themselves true blessings to the communities among whom they will practise.

Reviewing in our third number Dr. Smith's first report, we adverted to the circumstances which rendered the establishment of the Hyderabad Medical School a measure of equal humanity and expediency, and referred to the difficulties which attended its institution and opposed its success. The general system and mode of instruction pursued in the school, were also considered, and, as these have not undergone any alteration, they do not call for any further remark. We would observe, however, that the test of qualification for the diploma of the school is as severe as ever. It is as high as that of the Royal Colleges at home, and the fact of these young men having passed through the ordeal so creditably must, to use the words of Dr. Forsyth, "under all the difficult and discouraging circumstances, be accepted as a great success, and as strongly attesting the energy and persevering industry of the Superintendent, as well as the soundness of the system pursued."

It is noteworthy that the senior student of the batch was upwards of seven years under instruction, and the junior was as many as five years and four months. We are far from regretting this long term of pupilage. It is our conviction that hitherto our schools, colleges, and universities have erred in the opposite direction, and it is a hopeful sign that they have both seen, and seem disposed to rectify, their error. Besides, now-a-days, when the boundaries of Physiology and Pathology, as well as those of the collateral sciences of Chemistry and Botany, have expanded so widely, the period of study requires a proportionate extension. To expect a young man in four years to master thoroughly all the branches of study included in the curriculum of a full Medical and Surgical education, is simply absurd. A cup will not hold more than its containing capacity admits, and unless the brains of our students are better than those of their fathers, it is unreasonable to expect them to do double what their fathers did in the same time. And it augurs well

for the elevation of the medical profession in social status, that its members must hereafter as a class be men of higher attainments in general education than they have hitherto been. Nothing could be devised better suited to effect this end than a high preliminary education, a longer period of general as well as professional study, and consequent postponement to a more advanced age of the acquisition of the higher degrees in medicine. But, however desirable and even necessary this protraction of the term of pupilage may be at home, it has been, and is, still more so in such an institution as the Hyderabad Medical School. There the pursuit of knowledge has always been prosecuted under great difficulties, and not the least of these has been the lack of text books. This want has necessarily entailed great labour on the pupils, who consequently had to prepare, with much care as well as toil, full notes of the lectures, and make these serve as text-books. "Each student," says Dr. Smith, "possesses complete, or nearly complete, sets of the courses of lectures in manuscript, with copies of many of the diagrams used in illustration, more or less correctly drawn, as he happens to possess a more or less correct eye for form. These manuscript and illustrated volumes constitute valuable proofs of the untiring industry and zeal of the lads."

Taking a retrospect of the school's progress during the incumbency as its Superintendent, Dr. Smith writes:—"The Medical School may now be said to have completed the second stage of its development. The ground it has gained during my tenure of office may be succinctly stated as consisting. 1stly. In the instruction of the pupils being now carried on without the assistance of an interpreter. 2ndly. In the plan of instruction initiated by my able predecessor having been finally reduced to system. 3rdly. In the commencement of a museum and library, and in the collection of a fair and useful set of demonstrative apparatus. 4thly. In the issue, under the authority of the Minister, of rules for the division of the Government Hukeems into classes, with a fixed scale of pay and allowances, and in the arrangements of the talook dispensaries having been reduced to method. 5thly. In the establishment of a Medical Journal begun in 1855, which journal has been carried on successfully, and now gives promise of a long and useful career. 6thly. In this, that a knowledge of the English language is now made imperative, every student being required to attend the Minister's Madrissa for the pur-

pose of acquiring that most essential requisite of a professional education. 7thly. In the preparation of a set of text-books, the first of which on the "Principles of Medicine," is now in the printer's hands. The materials of the remaining five books are in existence, but require management and revision before they can be sent to press."

In perfect accordance with that untiring desire for advancement which has always characterised Dr. Smith, not content with merely looking back over the way already traversed, he casts a glance into the future, and says:—"Much remains still for my successor to accomplish. A few of the points to which his attention will in all probability be directed, may be shortly indicated. 1stly. It appears to me most desirable now, that a monthly medical meeting of the city Hukcema, who hold the certificates of this school, be organized and kept up vigorously. This monthly re-union will bring the young men together, break down professional jealousies, encourage study and observation, and furnish materials for the Medical Journal. 2ndly. Another most necessary object, as far as the pupils are concerned, is the erection of a hospital for chemical teaching. 3rdly. Dispensaries are much required in the city, and the man who succeeds in starting a good midwifery hospital there, will hereafter rank as the Howard of Hyderabad. 4thly. The buildings in which are placed the dispensaries of the several talooks are not generally speaking, constructed for the purpose: the substitution for these of plain useful buildings, upon a fixed plan, is most desirable, and may be accomplished gradually. 5thly. Vaccination has made little or no progress in the talooks, nor has any formal visitation of the talook dispensaries been made since their institution.

"These and other points will probably claim my successor's attention, and will, with the labour of superintending the rest of the text-books, constitute a field of active exertion which the most zealous will have no reason to regard as too limited. May he enter upon his labours with courage, and prosecute them with energy and hope."

We look upon the appointment of Dr. Fleming to the Superintendency of the School as a pledge that the great work, still to be accomplished, will be laboured at with equal zeal and success. But it is a hopeful sign of the interest and importance attached to the institution by Government, that its new Principal will have the aid of an efficient Assis-

tant. Both Dr. Maclean and Dr. Smith broke down under the wear and tear of body and mind attendant on their responsible position, the onerous duties of which they both performed with either no assistance at all, or such as was merely nominal.

It will give a partial idea of the disappointment and discouragements under which the late head of this school has laboured, to state that only *one* in 54 or 12 out of 66 pupils, "have passed through all the courses and obtained their final certificates. Of the remaining fifty-four, forty-nine have left school at various stages of their progress, and five alone remain on the school-list. If one student out of five, whom the Superintendent has had the labour of instructing, perseveres to the end and secures his certificate, the proportion though small, is as favourable as past experience will warrant any one in entertaining."

On the late occasion of giving their diplomas to the passed pupils, the Resident at the Nizam's Court, Col. Cuthbert Davidson, paid a graceful and well-earned tribute to the zeal, ability, and general as well as professional worth of Dr. Smith. The Examining Committee in their Report have also done full justice to the out-going Superintendent, and the Secretary to the Government of India has doled out to him the usual "peppercorn of praise." It is to be hoped that some more solid and substantial evidence of appreciation than a few stereotyped phrases of approval and of thanks will yet be accorded to so earnest a worker and so successful a teacher.