

so that finally his master, seeing that law was evidently not his bent, released him from his engagement, and advised him to seek some other employment more suited to his turn of mind.

Hutton accordingly, after a year's drudgery at law, made choice of medicine as the profession most nearly allied to chemistry, and most likely to allow him to indulge his predilection for science. For three years he prosecuted his medical studies at Edinburgh, and thereafter, as was then the custom, repaired to the Continent to complete his professional training. He remained nearly two years in Paris, pursuing there with ardour the studies of chemistry and anatomy. Returning to Scotland by way of the Low Countries, he took the degree of Doctor of Medicine at Leyden in September 1749.

But the career of a physician seems to have grown less attractive to him as the time came on for his definitely settling in life. He may have been to some extent influenced by the success of certain chemical researches which he had years before begun with a friend of kindred tastes—researches which had led to some valuable discoveries in connection with the nature and production of sal ammoniac, and which appeared to offer a reasonable prospect of commercial success. In the end he abandoned all thought of practising medicine, and resolved to apply himself to farming. He was a man never disposed to do things by halves. Having made up his mind in favour of agriculture as his vocation, he determined to take advantage of the best practical instruction in the subject then available. Accordingly