

Introductory lecture, delivered at the opening of the session of the Medical College of Georgia : on the second Monday in November, 1844 / by Joseph A. Eve.

Contributors

Eve, Joseph A. 1805-1886.
Medical College of Georgia (1833-1873)
National Library of Medicine (U.S.)

Publication/Creation

Hamburg : Printed at the Journal Office, 1844.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/vu7mxbje>

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by the National Library of Medicine (U.S.), through the Medical Heritage Library. The original may be consulted at the National Library of Medicine (U.S.) where the originals may be consulted.

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

270 2.
INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

DELIVERED AT THE

OPENING OF THE SESSION,

OF THE

MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA.

ON THE

SECOND MONDAY IN NOVEMBER, 1844,

BY

JOSEPH A. EVE, M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF OBSTETRICS, AND DISEASES OF WOMEN AND INFANTS.

PUBLISHED BY THE CLASS.

HAMBURG:
PRINTED AT THE JOURNAL OFFICE.

.....
1844.

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

ENTHOPESTORY EDITION

72-13186

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

AUGUSTA, GA., NOVEMBER 14th, 1844.

DEAR SIR—At a meeting of the Students of the Medical College of Georgia, we, the undersigned, were appointed a Committee on behalf of the Class, to express to you the pleasure and gratification they experienced from the highly interesting and appropriate lecture delivered before them on Monday last; and to solicit a copy of it for publication. In performing this pleasing duty, the committee would respectfully request that the wishes of their fellow Students be granted; they further beg leave to add, on their part, the sincere desire they feel to witness its publication, and earnestly desire a copy for that purpose.

We are, Dear Sir,

Your's, most respectfully,

JNO. T. LAMAR,
ANDREW CREIGHTON,
JNO. A. HARLOW,
MILTON ANTONY,
SEABORN WORRILL,
W. L. COCHRAN, } *Committee.*

Jos. A. EVE, M. D. Proff. Med. College of Georgia.

AUGUSTA, GA., NOVEMBER 15th, 1844.

GENTLEMEN—

While feeling grateful for the honor the Class have done me, in requesting my introductory lecture for publication, I regret its numerous imperfections; for which however, I trust the almost incessant engrossment of my time and attention, by professional business during its preparation, may be some apology. But I am not at liberty to withhold it, and yield the more cheerfully to the wishes of the Class, being confident that the kind feelings which prompt them to desire its publication, will dispose them to overlook its faults.

With sentiments of the highest respect and most sincere regard for yourselves and those whom you represent,

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOSEPH A. EVE.

JNO. T. LAMAR,
ANDREW CREIGHTON,
JNO. A. HARLOW,
MILTON ANTONY,
SEABORN WORRILL,
W. L. COCHRAN, } *Committee.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

GENTLEMEN:

My colleagues having kindly assigned to me the pleasant duty of greeting you, upon your first introduction into this temple, dedicated to Medical Science, in their name I bid you welcome — thrice welcome! welcome to our labours, to our homes and to our hearts! Welcome you whose faces are rendered dear to us by pleasant associations, and you whom though hitherto strangers, we now receive as friends.

This moment commences or renews between us the interesting relations of pupil and preceptor; happy indeed shall we be, if our best exertions shall succeed in rendering them as profitable to you, as they have ever been agreeable to ourselves.

The advantages which this institution affords to students, and its facilities for imparting information are, we trust, too well known and appreciated to require any exposition at present. Of this the number and character of the assemblage, I have now the honor and pleasure of addressing, is at once a sure and flattering indication.

In selecting a subject, whereon to address you this morning, nothing occurs to me more appropriate or profitable than a consideration of the objects of the medical profession, its important bearings on society and the high character and qualifications requisite in its members.

Young gentlemen who devote themselves to medicine are accustomed to regard it as a highly honorable and lucrative profession, giving them an introduction to the highest circles in society, and opening to them a path to fortune and distinction. This is well—but at the same time they are too apt to overlook its higher claims to consideration. Ardent and enthusiastic, they seldom stop to enquire upon what superior benefits to mankind the dignity of medicine is founded, or to consider how high

must be the qualifications that shall entitle them to claim the honors of such a profession.

When man, by his apostacy from God, became subject to infirmity, disease and death, there arose a necessity for some alleviating ministry ; and God in mercy extended to him the healing art which, shadowy and dim at first, was destined to grow brighter and more bright, until it should become the wonder of a later world !

The history of medicine is lost in the fable and vague tradition of the earliest time ; but the high estimation in which it was held, in very remote antiquity, is evinced by the great respect shewn to those who practiced it, who were venerated while they lived as the priests and often as the descendants of the gods and, after death, deified and worshipped as gods themselves.

If medicine was deemed so important at an age, when the diseases to which man was subject were few and simple—in the present day, when from the artificial habits of living, and the many health-destroying occupations, in civilized life, man has become obnoxious to innumerable, grave and complicated maladies, the demands made on medical science have become boundless, and when, from its highly improved state, it is competent to meet these demands, it must certainly be entitled to infinitely higher consideration.

Medicine has, in every age of the world, been a blessing to the human race, and physicians been considered as the guardians and benefactors of mankind ; but the guardianship they exercise and the benefits they confer on society, become more extensive in proportion, as, by departure from natural and healthful habits, the human organism becomes more deranged in its functions, and liable to diseases, unknown in the natural state. Whilst I would by no means contend for the superiority of the savage over the civilized state, it must nevertheless be acknowledged that, with the many superior blessings of the latter, there are some evils which, tho' not essential, are however incidental to it, and from which the former is exempt—evils which spring from the indolent, luxurious and intemperate habits of refined life—evils which it is the duty of the profession to strive in every way to prevent and correct.

The objects of medicine are to study thoroughly man's physical, moral, and intellectual constitution, the laws by which the whole is governed, the manner in which it is effected by external agents and influences, to remove from it every source of annoyance, to correct the injuries it sustains, and to direct the administration of all those natural or artificial means by which evil may be averted from it, and health and happiness secured. Its mission is Philanthropy, its grand business, as far as may be, to obviate the ills "that flesh is heir to," and meliorate man's condition on earth.

It is indeed a narrow conception of the vast domain of medicine, to confine it to the remedy of disease. With an eye single to the good of man, it watches over his interests at all times, under all circumstances, at every period and stage of his existence, and even before existence begins, it reaches forward and in the progenitor seeks to bless the future offspring.

In the hour of suffering, when all other helps fail, the fainting flesh seeks to be sustained by the succours of our noble ministry: it is when disease invades the system, disease that tames the proud and makes the strong man tremble—when the clay tenement begins to crumble and threatens to fall back into dust,—it is then that men are accustomed to look to our profession, as though it had delegated to it the power to annul the irreversible decrees of God and revoke the sentence passed on all who live. But medicine makes no such vain boast. These are the proud and impious pretensions of those with whom it has too often been our misfortune to be classed by the public, with whom however we would blush to acknowledge any affinity.

It is the presumptuous charlatan who arrogates to himself the prerogative of Omnipotence, and promises to save life under all conditions of disease. By impudently boasting his power to relieve them, he preys upon the ignorance and credulity of the people; but when the victims of his fraud and cupidity are hurried into the grave, the guilty perpetrator escapes under cover of his own intrinsic insignificance, while the fatal result is charged to the uncertainty of medical science.

Could we but have confidence in the catholicons and panaceas of

empirics, as set forth in their advertisements, "with the long list of vouchers for their cures," we might laugh at the King of Terrors. But these pretended defrauders of the tomb, with all their pompous boastings, are themselves but panders for death and caterers for the grave.

Scientific medicine claims no ability to resist the decrees of God — it professes not to change the course of nature, but only to act a part, subordinate to hers, by removing impediments and affording timely aid, to facilitate and promote her operations, by which many cases of disease, otherwise violent and threatening destruction, are shorn of their violence, curtailed in their duration, their danger averted and conducted to a safe and happy termination, which left to her unaided efforts would linger long or terminate fatally. Great are the achievements, glorious the triumphs of medicine, sufficient to command the respect and gratitude of the world—still it is not omnipotent, there are diseases for which it has no remedies, and which defy its utmost skill. Some acute attacks cause destructive lesion, at their very onset, rendering nugatory every attempt at restoration. Other diseases, though not in themselves incurable, must be suffered to remain, as their removal would be speedily followed by the development of some more fatal affection.

There are numerous chronic diseases which, though slow and stealthy in their march, inevitably lead to disorganization and death. But even in the most hopeless cases, medicine can accomplish much, by relieving pain, protracting life, rendering smoother and gently sloping the pathway to the tomb. In such cases, it is the duty of the physician to spare his patient all those painful remedies, so often resorted to with the delusive hope of effecting a cure. But a higher duty, a more solemn responsibility now devolves upon him; under such circumstances, it becomes his duty as one who holds his commission from Heaven, with manly firmness to declare the true character of the disease, its inevitable termination, and ere yet, the mind fails in the body's wreck, to point his patient to that Physician who alone has power to save;—he must, when earthly hopes and prospects fade,

"Lure his dim eye to deathless hopes sublime,
Beyond the realms of nature and of time!"

This indeed is a painful office, from the performance of which the physician, if his nature be a kindly one, will involuntarily shrink ; but however severe the duty, he must yet perform it, as he must answer at that awful tribunal, before which, both physician and patient must soon appear. In that dread account which he must there render, it can be no light matter, that when an immortal being was trembling on the verge of eternity, he deceived him with flattering lips, till death, coming upon him like a thief, cut off his opportunities of preparation and hurried him into the presence of his God !

Our profession is here apt to be in fault : we are too much accustomed to regard the material part of man as alone worthy of our care, forgetting that he has a spiritual part which is immortal, or considering the interests of the latter entrusted entirely to another profession. The reason of this is not as was formerly supposed, because the profession of medicine disposes to infidelity — this charge has not only been long disproven, but the reverse of it satisfactorily established.

The medical profession, in point of fact, has for many years been remarkable for the high tone of morality and the elevated standard of religious character among its members.

This dereliction of duty arises from an aversion to impart painful intelligence, and an apprehension of its injurious influence upon the patient.

It is the physician's duty to keep steadily in view the spiritual as well as temporal good of his patient, and promote it in every way, within his power. But should he not have time or disposition himself, to render the services of religion to his patients, he ought certainly not to prevent others who have. When a sick man desires religious counsel or spiritual comfort, the physician's interdiction is a violation of the most sacred rights of suffering humanity—oppression more tyrannic than the Despot's chain—usurpation most unwarrantable and unholy—it is to rob the soul and defraud Heaven. Judgment and care are indeed requisite in such cases, but unnecessary apprehension is generally entertained, both by friends and physicians, as to religious intercourse with the sick. The glorious hopes, the cheering consolations, the bright promises, held

forth in Holy Writ, the melody of song, the harmony of voices attuned to praise, all tend to tranquilize the perturbed spirit; and by the close sympathy between mind and body, to compose the physical system and dispose it to be acted on, more favorably by restorative agents.

It would be difficult to determine whether society is indebted to the services of the profession, more in relation to disease or to health, in preserving the latter or subduing the former. It is under obligations to them for discovering the sources of disease, and devising the means of removing them, and for suggesting the rules and methods, by which health may be preserved and life prolonged. This department of medicine is styled Hygiene, and is divided into public and private hygiene—public when applied to national welfare, or the good of the human family collectively; and private in reference to the health and benefit of individuals. In either of these aspects, it is confessedly one of the most important departments of medicine, although it does not command the attention to which it is entitled, in any of the schools in the U. States or G. Britain. On the continent of Europe, and especially in the school of Medicine of Paris, it constitutes a distinct professorship. Time will not allow me to recount the blessings conferred on the human family, by the profession in establishing the laws and rules of hygiene; whereas, practical medicine avails individuals, and them only during the presence of disease: hygiene extends its benefits to the whole race collectively—at every period and stage of existence, from the beginning to the close of life. It even anticipates, in its cares, the happiness of future generations, by devising plans for the physical, moral and intellectual improvement of the present.

Men have been accustomed, in every age of the world, to call their own times degenerate, and to look upon their race as having declined in stature and strength from the superiority of preceding ages. This declension, in modern times, is doubtless owing not only to effeminacy and luxurious living, but to the higher estimate justly placed on moral and intellectual over physical pre-eminence; and to the fact that in modern warfare more depends on numbers, skill in tactics and address in the use of weapons, than on individual strength or personal prowess. But

the time may yet come, when, from the proper application of hygienic laws, man will attain not only to a higher degree of intellectual excellence than he enjoys at present, but to a better physical development than Sparta could exhibit in her proudest and palmiest days.

The constitutional delicacy and fragile forms of the softer sex, are particularly entrusted to the physician's care and kindness: he is, by Providence and by society too, constituted their friend and counsellor in distress, their help in trouble, their hope in danger, in pain and anguish a minister of relief; in him they repose their confidence, to him they look in every exigency, and on him depend to advise, assist and sustain them in trial's darkest hour.

It is most lamentably true that in the refined circles, in our cities at least, many females do not enjoy perfect health, even when their complexions and general appearance seem to indicate it—they often labour under some chronic malady, or are martyrs to some painful affection that embitters the pleasures of life, or brings them to a premature grave; which evils result mainly from the unnatural and health-destroying habits to which fashion subjects them.

It devolves on our profession to assert and maintain their rights. Wherever the divine principles of christianity have prevailed, woman's social, if not civil, equality is acknowledged, and she is regarded as the rational companion of man and not his slave. But still she is subject to the humiliating vassalage of fashion—that unrelenting tyrant immolates on her altars hecatombs of victims—this demon riots on human sacrifices, the most precious, interesting and lovely of our species. The fearful increase of pulmonary consumption and spinal affections amongst us, attests this appalling fact. It is for our profession to disarm the fell destroyer, and emancipate from her iron grasp those whom she devotes to protracted tortures, agonies and death.

Infants, too, without number, fall sacrifices to the edicts of the same remorseless despot—like tender flowers they are nipped in the bud, or doomed to all the wretchedness of shattered constitutions and ruined health. We are horror-stricken at the severity of the Indian management of infants, and appalled at Lacedemonian cruelty towards them, but

the mismanagement of our modern civilization, and its mistaken tenderness, are far more fatal in their effects.

The assistance of the physician is often indispensably necessary to the administration of law, both civil and criminal; his knowledge is frequently required for the detection of the guilty, or the defence of the innocent. By the expression of his opinion, not only is the right of property often determined, but reputation, character, even life and death, often rest upon it.

It is truly a fearful responsibility, involving the most important consequences; a requisition in which ignorance may be attended with the most disastrous results, and is most likely to meet exposure and disgrace.

Many questions the most difficult and perplexed are to be resolved by the physician, and by him alone. With respect to one of the most embarrassing, an elegant author, after describing the perplexities of the physician, observes, "and yet on the correctness of his opinion frequently depend the claim to fair fame, virtue and honor;—the succession to property, and the rights of legitimacy;—the judicious treatment of disease;—and in criminal cases, the condemnation or acquittal of one arraigned for a capital offence, or the preservation or destruction of the unborn innocent. How deeply anxious then should we be to possess ourselves of such information on the subject, as may enable us to free the innocent from aspersion, or to detect the vicious, and when called upon to assist the right administration of the law, we may be competent to give an opinion, which, while it promotes and satisfies the great ends of justice, shall also be consistent with the milder blessings of humanity and mercy."

There is no calling in life, so constantly engaged in doing good, so generously laboring to benefit society, at the sacrifice of interest and comfort, as ours. The physician's life is at all times one of privation, toil, exposure and danger—to him no place is sacred, no time free—the Sabbath is not a Sabbath to him—even when pestilential diseases desolate the land, and trembling with excitement, or pale with fear, all, except those whom benevolence constrains or poverty compels to remain, fly to purer airs and healthier regions, the physician stands to his post,

regardless of toil and peril, not counting even life itself dear in ministering to the victims of disease, in relieving suffering and doing good. One noble martyr in the holy cause of humanity, now rises vividly to my mind—one whom I loved in life and delight to honor in death—the guide and counsellor of my youth, the friend and associate of my riper years—the illustrious founder of this College—a passing tribute to whose memory may be indulged on the present occasion; as to him under Providence this institution is indebted for its existence, and we for the pleasure of meeting together to-day.

After thirty years of most arduous labour in the cause of science and humanity, he was endeavoring to withdraw from the general practice of his profession, that he might enjoy that rest which his increasing years required, and to which his past services so richly entitled him; but when the fatal epidemic which so terribly scourged our city, in 1839, commenced its ravages, that Heavenly philanthropy which had distinguished him through life, urged him to put forth all his powers for the relief of his suffering fellow-citizens. Feeling deeply the universal distress, he hesitated not a moment to return to the field, on which he was turning his back, and then regardless of danger, unmindful of toil, unsparing of himself, he labored day and night to avert the shafts of death that flew so fast and thick around him, and to relieve the suffering that called aloud for assistance on every side. So great was his exposure, so excessive his exertions, he soon fell a martyr to his profession, an illustrious example of a self-sacrificing Benevolence. Would that I had words or utterance, or power of speech which might do justice to his memory: Would that I could draw an appropriate portrait of his character, personal and professional, and hold it up for you to admire and to imitate. He possessed all those excellent qualities that ennoble and exalt human nature: his benevolence knew no bounds;—long will the poor of this city cherish his memory with love and gratitude; long, long, will the widow and the orphan remember his kindness and charity. To his friends he was affectionate, confiding and faithful—to his enemies patient, placable, magnanimous and ready to forgive; qualities which

often gave him the sublime satisfaction of seeing his bitterest opponents converted into warmest friends. He was affable and kind to all, courteous and conciliating in his manners, and ever evinced that genuine native politeness that springs from the good feelings of a kindly heart. An ardent admirer of nature's works, he had looked up through them to Nature's God! For many years he had been a professor of the religion of Christ; his piety was heart-felt and practical; his living operative faith proved itself by works, not only sustaining him in the trials of life, but affording him comfort, support and triumph in the hour of death. For

"He went not like the quarry slave, at night
 "Scourg'd to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
 "By an unfaltering trust, approached the grave,
 "Like one who wraps the drap'ry of his couch
 "About him and lies down to pleasant dreams "

In the full strength and maturity of his faculties—at that period of life, when the storms of passion have subsided and left reason and judgment predominant—when his extensive learning had become corrected and enlarged by the most ample experience—when he was in the highest degree prepared for usefulness, and when employing his superior abilities most efficiently for the good of mankind, he was, by an all-wise Providence, removed from earth to receive a higher and richer reward, for his labours than earth could give.

As a physician, Professor Antony possessed talents of the first order—he combined the most acute and quick perception with the most profound judgment, and associated with both a retentive memory, which enabled him in the greatest degree to profit by his observation and experience. The eminence he enjoyed in his profession was evinced not only by the extent of his practice at home, but by the avidity with which physicians at a distance constantly sought his advice and counsel in difficult and important cases.

He was not content merely to keep pace with the improvements continually made in medicine, and to adopt the suggestions of others; but endowed with a mind of uncommon energy, activity and originality, he

thought for himself on all subjects, and by his own labors contributed to the improvement of his profession. He was a zealous advocate for science in medicine and the uncompromising enemy of empiricism and ignorant pretension — he was ever prepared to furnish a reason for all he did, and was never satisfied in any result, unless he could trace every link in the chain of causation, however obscure and complicated, by which it was produced. He was free from that pride and tenacity of opinion too common in members of our profession — always attentive to the arguments of others, and open to conviction from whatever source it might come — it was to him a pleasure to yield, when convinced by the arguments of another — never austere or reserved — he was ever willing to explain his reasons and communicate his opinions.

Whilst few physicians excel in one department, he was eminent in all, in the general practice of medicine and in surgery; but as an obstetrician he enjoyed his greatest celebrity; — this was the branch he principally cultivated, and in this he had few equals and no superiors. Actuated by a laudable ambition to elevate the character of the profession, in his own State and at the South, he laboured most assiduously for years to establish a Medical College, and at length succeeded, by his high reputation and extensive influence, in founding this institution, which we trust is destined to stand for ages as a noble monument of his talents, his labours and his well earned fame !

When we contemplate the various usefulness of the medical profession, and its important relations to society, it is unquestionably true, that correspondingly high moral and intellectual qualifications, are requisite in its members; it certainly depends altogether upon their character and capacity, whether their connexion with it be honorable or disgraceful; for whilst no one can enjoy a more enviable position in society than the able and accomplished physician, no one can be more utterly despicable than the ignorant, unprincipled pretender in medicine.

No profession or occupation requires greater acuteness of perception, or a more vigorous judgment than medicine — the Divine has his great Text Book as the rule of faith and guide in practice — the jurist

has his statute books, digests and precedents, by which to be directed and governed; and on all difficult questions, he has time for reference to authorities or for conference and counsel. But in medicine much more depends on the judgment and perception of the practitioner himself who is ever liable, at a moment's warning, without time for deliberation or opportunity for consultation, to be summoned to the most embarrassing cases—life depending on his decisions and his sole reliance his own unaided resources. Besides superior judgment and perception, a good memory is requisite in a physician, not only on account of the illimitable extent of medical science, and the vast accumulation of facts and principles to be remembered, but to enable him to profit by his own experience. Faculties of the highest order will here find employment enough and often be taxed beyond their utmost capability.

But the most brilliant talents, the most transcendent genius, the most gigantic intellect, will not capacitate a man for this godlike vocation, if unaccompanied by moral qualifications: without these the brightness of the former is but the meteor's lurid light, or the bewildering glare of the ignis fatuus—their power the whirlwind's strength to blast and to destroy.

Although Religion is essential to perfection of character, I will not contend that a physician may not be eminently useful, without a religious profession; but I do fearlessly assert that he is totally unfit for the practice of medicine, without the profession of many of the christian virtues.

Benevolence and charity are indispensable requisites in a physician, without which, however splendid his abilities or extensive his learning, he is not qualified to discharge the high functions of his office, and to sustain its important relations to society. The poor are particularly entrusted to his care—his mission is more especially to them;—when disease and poverty meet, hard indeed is it for human nature to bear the double burden. A physician without charity is like the body without the inspiring soul—the form without the spirit. Charity is his brightest ornament, his most indispensable virtue, and has the surest pledge of Heaven's highest favor, as beautifully expressed in the language of the

Psalmist, "Blessed is he who considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." Almost all physicians who have succeeded in their profession have attained success, by kindness and attention to the poor; but too often alas! they merely use them as

"Young ambitious' ladder,
 "Where to the climber upward turns his face:
 "But when he once attains the utmost round,
 "He then unto the ladder turns his back,
 "Looks into the clouds, scorning the base degrees
 "By which he did ascend."

But it is not humanity to the abject poor that is alone required in a physician; but the exercise of liberality, generosity and magnanimity in general—the emoluments of his calling should be regarded by him as secondary to the more sublime motive of doing good. A penurious exaction of his dues from all, however restricted their circumstances, is derogatory to the dignity of the profession; it is degrading our glorious calling to a trade.

The liberal minded, sympathizing physician is regarded by the people as their firmest and most faithful friend, as one who bears a part in their troubles and feels the affection and tenderness of a parent for them; while the avaricious practitioner is looked upon as an enemy, whom dire necessity alone compels them to admit within their dwelling—as a heartless wretch who would beggar the widow and snatch the bread from the orphan's mouth.

A physician should be a pattern of temperance; not only because it is essential that his judgment should be calm, his eye clear, and his hand steady; but because it is expected that he will act an important part in advancing the great Temperance Reformation, the honour, the admiration and the blessing of the present age.

A spotless purity of morals, an unsullied sanctity of character, the nicest sense of propriety and the highest regard for truth and honor;—in a word, every virtue and excellence are indispensable, in one who sustains such delicate and sacred relations to society.

Medicine has, during the past and present age, made such vast improvements, and rendered tributary so many departments of science, that he who would content himself with moderate acquirements had far

better, by abandoning the profession at once, spare himself the mortification of being surpassed by his more ambitious competitors, and degraded to a humiliating equality with the base empiric.

It will not suffice that to a good literary education, you add an intimate acquaintance with the sciences strictly medical. Medicine has been enriched, by contributions from every department of human knowledge; especially from the natural sciences, which therefore have strong claims to the attention of the physician; they command his respect, not only on account of the valuable information to be directly derived from them, but because they serve to refine and purify his taste, and conduce to habits of closer investigation and more accurate study.

Some knowledge of the mathematics is indispensable to the comprehension of many subjects embraced in medicine; but besides this important consideration, the study of the mathematics has the happiest influence, in disciplining the mind, restraining the imagination and invigorating the reasoning faculty, by the wholesome exercise of studying demonstrable truths. It is highly important that physicians should accustom themselves to mathematic precision, whenever the subject admits of it, leaving nothing to inference, much less to conjecture, that can be positively determined; for there will always be unavoidably enough left, not susceptible of demonstration, to afford exercise for the judgment.

A person might as well attempt to learn a language, without a knowledge of the alphabet, as to understand Anatomy and Physiology, without an acquaintance with the principles of Natural Philosophy; the usefulness of which indeed is not confined to these branches of medical science, since they may be said to lie at the foundation of all the other sciences.

Time would fail were I to speak of every subject that has a bearing on medicine; it would be to travel round the whole circle of the sciences, and pass under review the whole cyclopædia of useful knowledge.

But were it sufficient to embrace, in the compass of your studies, the medical sciences and strictly collateral branches; think you that to master them, would be the task of a two, or even a four years' apprenticeship? Do not so deceive yourselves; in the last mentioned period,

by dint of diligent application, a knowledge of their rudiments may be acquired; but to learn them thoroughly, a life-time would not be too long. If the Father of Medicine, when it was in its infancy, deplored the shortness of life and the length of art, what should we do now? now—when medicine, which in his day was but as a grain of mustard-seed, “has grown and waxed a great tree, so that the birds of the air lodge in the branches thereof.”

No—Gentlemen, dream not that limited attainments will secure for you respect and competence—as well might you expect the mine to afford its wealth undug, ocean to surrender his pearls unexplored, or the stubborn earth to yield her increase unbroken by the plough. Success can only be purchased by laborious study; to attain to eminence, you must be indefatigably industrious; the prize is placed upon a mount of steep and rough ascent, and he that would win must climb! You have indeed selected an honorable profession, but not a soft and voluptuous life. Your duties will be arduous and responsible, and to be faithful in the discharge of them, you must turn away from the blandishments of pleasure, resist the fascinations of society, renounce inglorious ease and self-indulgence, and devote yourself to study—to study now, which hereafter must be your pastime and recreation from severer duties, from painful vigils in the abodes of poverty and wretchedness, the long and lonely ride through cold and night, and storm; and engagements more distressing still.

But notwithstanding all that you must encounter in the practice of medicine, if you enter upon it with proper principles and motives, it is capable of yielding a more exalted enjoyment than any other vocation in life. Yes, my friends, there is much happiness in reserve for you; if you will practice your profession, directed and animated by true benevolence and pure philanthropy.

Besides that source of happiness which religion opens in the human heart, there are reserved for your maturer years, substantial joys that far exceed the simple delights of childhood, or the wild transports of youthful days. For what are these compared to the manly joy of climbing to the proudest heights of science, and looking calmly down upon the strifes

and tumults that convulse the world below ! or the more divine luxury of doing good, by relieving the sufferings and soothing the sorrows of your fellow creatures, and being loved and respected as the friends and benefactors of your race ! But to realize those nobler pleasures, you must be those

“ Who scorn delight and love laborious days.”

We are conscious, Gentlemen, that in becoming instructors in medicine, we enter upon an arduous task and assume high and solemn responsibilities—responsibilities that almost make us tremble, when we contemplate them !

Should we fail to impart to you proper instruction—your failures, your inefficiency, your errors, will be charged against us. But should we discharge fully and faithfully our duties to you, which, with the help of Him from whom all our ability must come, we are determined to do, and you fail to give attention and receive instruction, the accountability will rest with you.

But, Gentlemen, although we deem it our duty, thus upon our first interview, to impress upon your minds the high consideration to which the profession you have selected is entitled, we entertain no apprehension that it will not be properly appreciated by you.

No—when we consider the intelligent and enlightened audience we shall have the pleasure of addressing, an audience whose hearts are warmed and expanded by the genial influence of a Southern Sun, whose bosoms swell with every generous sentiment, every noble emotion; our distrust is not that you will not give earnest heed, but lest we may not do justice to a profession, so superlatively important, so truly worthy the genius of the philosopher, the loftiest aspirations of the philanthropist, and the most arduous and self-sacrificing labours of the devoted disciples of our Heavenly Redeemer, our Great Exemplar who, during his sojourn on earth, “ went about doing good.”



