

Address delivered in the Masonic hall at the commencement of the first course of lectures of the Medical Institute of the State of Georgia / by Paul F. Eve.

Contributors

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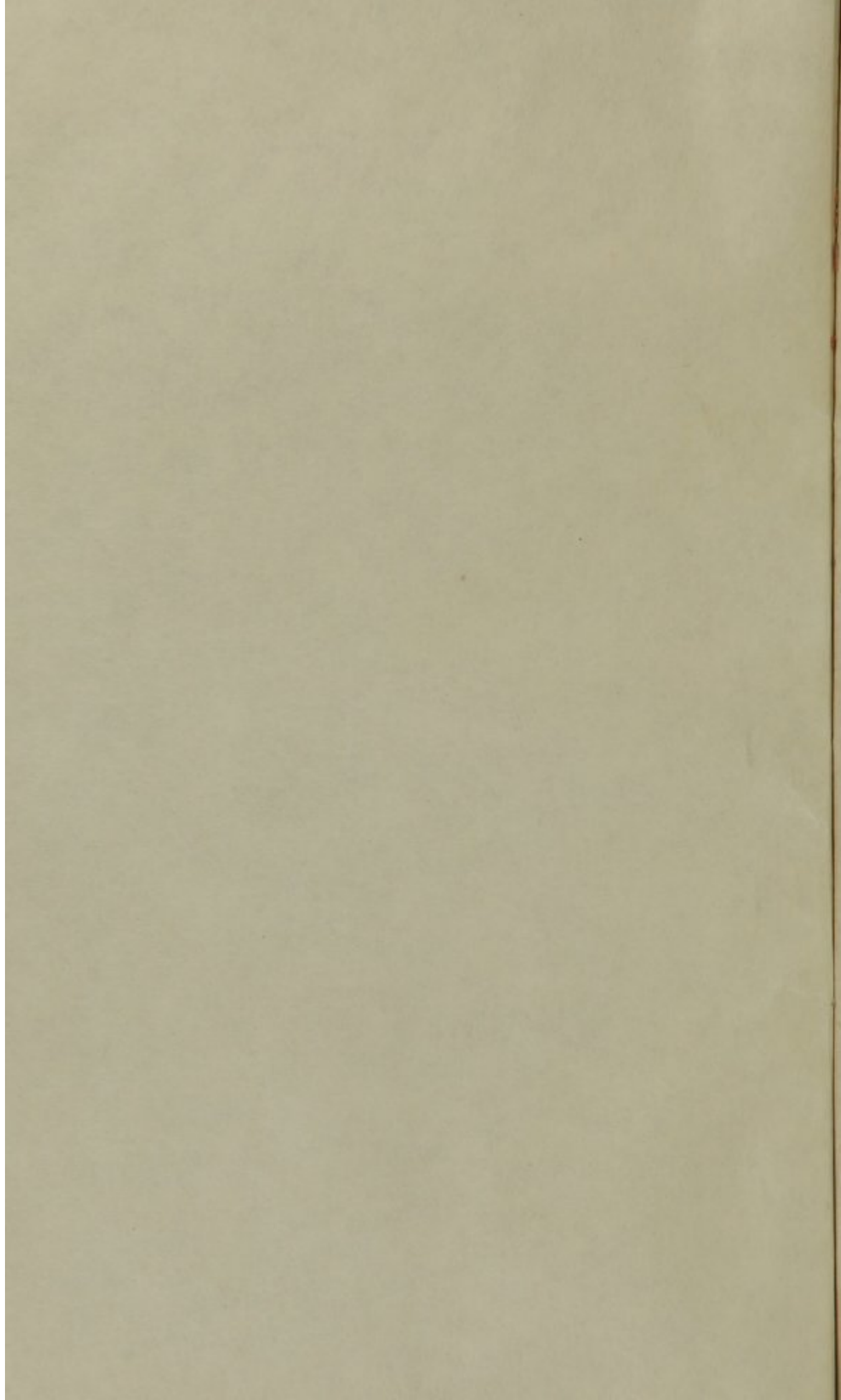
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Eve. (P. F.)

ADDRESS

Delivered in the Masonic Hall,

AT THE

Commencement of the First Course of Lectures

OF

THE MEDICAL INSTITUTE

OF THE

STATE OF GEORGIA.

BY PAUL F. EVE, M. D.

PROFESSOR OF SURGERY.



AUGUSTA:

Printed at The North-American Gazette Office.

B. Brantly, printer.

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ADDRESS, &c.

FELLOW-CITIZENS :

The Trustees of the Medical Institute of the State of Georgia, having organized a Medical College in the City of Augusta, it was thought proper, that at the commencement of the first course of Lectures, some one should deliver an address suitable to the occasion ; and in presenting myself before you as the humble organ of my colleagues in this great enterprise, I respectfully claim your attention, while I proceed to exhibit their object and their resources, with the consequent benefits which would result from its success to this community.

In no country, perhaps, has individual enterprise been carried to greater extent than in our own. And when we look around and compare the advantages of our mode of legislation with that of other nations, we cannot but rejoice that we have been thrown into existence in such an age, and under such a government. Here, emphatically, the humblest individual will receive the reward of his own labour and ingenuity, and state patronage or court favor are as unlooked for, as they are unknown in our operations. He who here can attain the proud satisfaction of having done his country some service, or he who has even benefitted the community of which he is a member, rarely passes unnoticed and unhonored. It would therefore be unjust, were I on this occasion to neglect a tribute of respect to the author* of our present undertaking. With him, not only originated the idea of establishing a medical school in this place, but he has been its most active promoter, and in proportion to its success, ought his reputation be raised.

It has been said, the existence of an Institution of this kind was premature and uncalled for by this State. It is true, there is a Medical College in the full tide of successful experiment in a neighboring city : but when we calculate that by the establishment of a similar school among ourselves, there might be an annual saving to this State of more than thirty thousand dollars, which have heretofore been expended by Students of medicine from Georgia, at New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Lexington and Charleston—when we reflect that talented young men, who might be ornaments to their profession, and useful members of society, from limited circumstances are unable to prosecute their studies abroad—and when we consider the improvement that must necessarily result from our own preparations, and from our more immediate application to one particular branch of the healing art ; we trust, that

* Professor, Milton Antony.

in exerting ourselves to affect *these objects*, we will meet with your encouraging approbation and your increasing support.— Have we no peculiarities of climate and of habits? Are all our complaints fully investigated and perfectly understood? Have we here no fatal diseases? And are there not men entrusted to our care, upon whose existence may depend the destinies of the Republic? Are there not families whose means of subsistence and happiness are placed in our hands? Are not the health and lives of our most endearing friends and relatives, confided to our knowledge of the healing art? And shall it be said we are *premature* in organizing a school, whose object is to make us better acquainted and better qualified for exercising our profession? So great were the abuses in medicine a few years ago, that the State Legislature was compelled to appoint a board of Physicians to examine and grant licenses to those only, whom they considered qualified to practice the healing art. We have consequently the highest authority for declaring that medical instruction and improvement are required at home; and an Institution, whose operations would be economical to the country, which would charitably provide for the poor, and which would render us the industrious cultivators of medicine, is we therefore conceive, peculiarly and directly *called for* by this community.

Mullification?

We believe too the times are propitious to the enterprise; and who, besides, does not cling with greater attachment at this political crisis, to his Southern feelings and his Georgia principles? Who so dead to patriotism, that would not be first for his own, his native land? The spirit of the present age is onwards to perfection in the arts and sciences. Breathing the inspirations of the genius of improvement, and yielding to the impulse of the times, we are determined to be no longer idle spectators of passing events, but to be up and doing for ourselves. Cherishing the laudable ambition to be good and useful, we have entered upon an engagement, which in developing the resources of our State and calling into action our native talent, will we honestly believe, promote her interest, advance her prosperity, and ameliorate the condition of her people.

The city of Augusta, containing a population equal to any other in the State, from its central situation to a considerable portion of country, from the facilities of its communication with surrounding parts, from its increasing commerce and trade, and from its healthiness, has appeared to us best adapted for the location of the medical school of Georgia; and upon application, the Legislature has been pleased to confirm this opinion, by incorporating the Institution, first as a medical Academy, and afterwards extending its charter to the liberal basis of the most respectable Medical Colleges of the United States. It now consists of twenty-four Trustees and six Professors, empowered to frame laws and regulations to carry it into full operation; and accordingly, we have assembled this

day to open the first course of Lectures on the six principal branches of medicine. A suitable building has been provided, and the necessary apparatus and preparations have been received from Europe and the North, which we hope will enable us to give a satisfactory course this winter. In order to afford ample time and opportunity for study and daily examinations, and to embrace the advantages of clinical Lectures in the hospital, the term has been extended from the usual period of four to six months: the session commences the third Monday in October, and terminates the third Wednesday in April. At the last annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, a committee was appointed to petition the next Legislature, either for direct aid by endowing the Institution, or by granting us those means by which this ornament† of our city was erected. Should it please that body to accede to our proposition, a Medical Library, an Anatomical Museum and Chemical Apparatus, together with a handsome building and a hospital are in contemplation to be added to our city.

The benefits which would result to this State, and more immediately to this community, from the success of so important an enterprise, must be evident to every reflecting mind. The existence of our earthly happiness and the first law of nature, self-preservation, are even involved in the subject; for it is an undeniable fact, that in proportion to the advancement of medicine in every country, there has been a corresponding diminution in the mass of human sufferings, and in the mortality of diseases. If we only consider the improvements that have been made in this respect in our own country, since the establishment of its medical schools, they alone will be sufficient to elicit your interest if not to enlist your feelings in our behalf. The prosperity of our large cities and their diminished number of deaths, when compared to their increased population, is attributable to their well regulated medical police and sanitary boards, which are the offsprings of our liberal Institutions of medicine.

Though mankind be the same in every age, and though medicine be exercised on certain fixed principles, still the varieties of manners and customs and the differences of climate and latitude, impose such modifications on diseases, and do even generate new diseases, that they require a local investigation and a peculiar treatment. Hence the urgent necessity for the Georgia Medical Institute, and in soliciting your patronage in its favour, we might justly appeal to the strongest of human passions, to *self-preservation* and *self-interest*.

Having thus, fellow-citizens, explained to you in a few words our object and our present condition in attempting to establish a Medical College in this place, permit me to observe,

† The Masonic Hall in which this Address was delivered, was erected from the proceeds of a Lottery granted by the State.

that in entering upon the arduous task which we have taken upon ourselves, we have reflected, deeply reflected, on the responsibility of our situation. Some of us are indeed too young in years, and too inexperienced in our profession, to promise much as teachers of medicine. Others might have been selected, whose talents and observations would have better qualified them for the offices which we fill; but we have pursued no exclusive course: the door of admission has been opened to all, and if we have apparently thrust ourselves upon the public, though humble be our origin and meek our pretensions, we hope we can say our opportunities have not been altogether contemptible,† and that our previous conduct promises industry and perseverance in the undertaking. We are free to confess our inabilities, but whether success attend our efforts, or the bitter cup of disappointment be our portion, we are resolved to do our duty, happen what will. Feeling the necessities for improvement, anxious to keep pace with the daily advancement of our profession, and to afford a better opportunity of investigating the diseases peculiar to our climate, we are willing and ready to sacrifice our time, our labor, and if required, our mortified feelings in so good a cause. Were there no other profits to be derived from the experiment than in our individual preparations and studies, this would even be a satisfaction, and we might glean some consolation from the rectitude of our conduct and the honesty of our intentions. But we are cheered by the reflection, that similar Institutions have heretofore made their own men, by exciting that emulation which tends to our mutual advantage and to the promotion of our science. Confiding our enterprise in the hands of the disposer of all events, and whom we have this day invoked for its success, I leave this subject and beg your indulgence in making a few remarks on the present state of the medical profession.

The origin of medicine is involved in too much obscurity and uncertainty, and its history previous to the past half century, contains too many wild conjectures and unreasonable speculations, to offer much interest or profit in its consideration. It will be sufficient for our purpose to know, that it must have been co-eval with the existence of human misery, and that it arose from the exercise of that heaven-born principle, which teaches us in feeling for the sufferings of others to attempt their relief—from the exercise of one of the noblest motives implanted within us—from the exercise of sympathetic benevolence.

Though among the last of the sciences to be reduced to true philosophical principles, within the last fifty years, it has attained that degree of perfection which ought to convince the most skeptical of its importance and utility to the human race; and the respectability of its cultivators in every country, is at least an inducement to believe it an enlightened, a liberal and

† The three youngest Professors have visited the Medical Institutions of Europe.

an honorable profession. Still there are those of the present day, who relying upon their own exemption from accidents and diseases, and confiding in their own self-sufficiency, not only attempt to ridicule the practice of medicine, but to decry all operations in surgery as cruel and barbarous. The skeptic, however, to the healing art in this enlightened age, can be compared to the atheist, who denying the existence of a God, daily invokes his name, and calls upon him in the hour of despair. So he who sports with the feelings and professions of the practitioner of medicine and surgery in the full vigour of health and youth, will not be the last when laid on the bed of affliction, to apply for the drug which can give relief, or to submit to the operation which can prolong life.

After three long years of toil and privation, the faithful student of medicine enters upon the duties of his profession. Commencing his studies either from inclination, accident or necessity, he leaves the endearments of home, and with all the ardour of youth and the fond expectations of becoming useful, we find him in some distant city, communing with the cold mortality of the sepulchral hall, or breathing the noxious gases of the chemical laboratory. In his researches and enquiries after truth, no obstacle can check his enthusiasm, no effort too great, no labor too immense for his never-tiring patience and uninterrupted perseverance. At one time, we behold him descending to the most humiliating offices in administering to the sick of hospitals. at another, "performing one of the most philosophical operations within the circle of human knowledge."|| Not content with the advantages which his own country affords, and feeling it a duty to make every possible preparation for the deep and awful responsibility which he assumes in becoming the guardian of the health and lives of his fellow-citizens, we next see him crossing the billows of the Atlantic, to visit the medical schools and hospitals of Europe, where, from extensive observation and enlarged experience, he will be better able to judge correctly of the true principles of medicine. He has surely endured enough in the acquisition of his profession, to entitle him on his return to the encouraging smiles of friends, and a hearty welcome to the confidence and favour of the public. But how frequently is it otherwise. Enlightened on almost all subjects, mankind appear to regard medicine as a mystery, and he who practices it as one whose sympathies are benumbed, and whose feelings are chilled to human emotions. Notwithstanding the improvements that are being made in all things, and even in many of the accessory sciences of practical medicine; notwithstanding the diffusion of general information on every subject; and notwithstanding the number of highly talented men that are now devoting their time, their labour and their lives to the medical profession, still

|| Dufouard says this of Amputation.

the prejudices of the world are against its humble votary and he is often called upon to contend with ignorance and superstition. Should he still continue to devote himself to his studies, to retire from the busy crowd, and to forego the pleasure of society in order to improve every moment and opportunity to better serve his fellow-creatures, he will be considered cold and unnatural; while he who merely obtains a degree, and lays his books aside for the dissipations of life, by parading public places and courting popular favour, soon becomes the *fashionable* physician, in spite of a deficiency of intellect, of merit or of claims upon the community.

We wish not to be misunderstood. We are fully aware that in medicine, as in all other avocations, wealth and fame are the reward of industrious habits and of honorable deportment. But unfortunately for our profession, there exists circumstances in its present state, which have a tendency fatal to its advancement, which occasion it to be misrepresented, and which cause officious pretensions to be preferred to modest merit.—It cannot be denied that in this country, the great mass of people are less informed on the subject of medicine than on any other. Even those who are well educated and versed in classical literature, display here a want of knowledge totally at variance with its importance. This is undoubtedly to be attributed to our present systems of education, which enjoin on our youth the study of navigation, surveying, &c. to the exclusion of the elements of the most useful and noble of the arts and sciences. Were a professorship of medicine established in our literary Institutions, whereby a structure of the human body, and the laws by which it is governed, could be disseminated, we would not only see a host of imposters with their pretended panaceas, disappearing from this country, but the profession itself be elevated, and real worth and virtue be the only surety to its honors and distinctions.

Some pretend to think it is men and not books we are to study, to gain wisdom and knowledge. This, says an eminent writer, is the consolation and language of dunces, who shelter their ignorance under a few bright examples, whose transcendent abilities, without the common helps, have been sufficient of themselves to great and important ends. If this be applicable to some of the avocations of life, few I trust can believe it correct when associated to the study of medicine.—We live truly in a revolutionary age of the arts and sciences, our own is as much under its influence as any other, and it requires the greatest possible industry and daily application to keep pace with its steady and gradual march of improvement. He who is therefore continually seen in the streets and electioneering for business, besides lowering the dignity of the profession, *must neglect his studies*; and accordingly it has ever been remarked, that fashionable physicians are the most unsuccessful practitioners.

Much has been said of our uncharitableness to each other and of the disagreements among ourselves. With respect to this latter charge we would observe, that we do not candidly think there will be found to exist upon investigation, as much difference of opinion between physicians, as is generally imagined. All are more or less capable of forming some idea of politics, of religion, &c. , and in comparing these with medicine, it is too often forgotten that this latter is a *peculiar* profession, which few only study, and are consequently able to judge correctly of its theories and practices, as well as of the opinions of those who exercise it. Are there not differences too on subjects connected with the future state of the immortal part of man and are there not daily controversies and disputes about the policy of nearly every act even of our own happy government? And though we may differ as to the means employed, still like the navigators of the pathless ocean, we may have the same object in view and arrive at the same desired and destined heaven.

It is indeed a difficult task for any association of men, so to regulate their intercourse with society and among themselves as to give no offence, and this seems peculiarly the case with the medical profession. To be always ready to act without being officious, to be attentive without being too familiar, to be kind without being too yielding, to proportion the pleasures of society without neglecting study, to treat all claiming the professional fraternity with due regard and circumspection without exhibiting partialities or inattentions, is indeed a happy medium which few can practice in life.

Medicine according to our ethics "is a liberal profession; the practitioners are, or ought to be men of education, and their expectation of business and employment should be founded on their degrees of qualification; not on artifice and insinuation. A certain undefinable spice of assiduities and attentions therefore, is to be considered as beneath the dignity of a regular practitioner, and as making a mere trade of a learned profession: and all officious interferences in cases of sickness, evince a meanness of disposition unbecoming the character of a gentleman or a physician." If there be a case which calls loudly for our sympathy, it is surely that of the young physician struggling with misfortune and who though certain of his impending fall and inevitable ruin remains firm and steadfast to the honor and dignity of his profession. The way to dishonorable livelihood if not to ill-gotten wealth is open before him, for what student of medicine could not compound a nostrum with as much probable success as those who are confessedly ignorant of the subject, or who could not prostitute this high calling to a bare support. But happily for us and for society, the well educated are too high minded to stoop to such low measures, and prefer leaving the profession in all its purity, or by resolving to rise or fall with it, to immolate their lives upon its altar, by too ardent devotion, or

even by self-experiment in establishing its principles or in promoting its cause.

It was but yesterday that we were called upon to mourn the loss of one, whose talents, toil and privations promised much for the medical world. In his zealous efforts to prevent and alleviate the sufferings of others, in his strenuous exertions to advance the literature and medical science of his country, in the productions of his highly gifted pen, which will long remain a monument to his greatness, and in his solicitude for the welfare of an increasing family, “he grew still paler o’er the midnight lamp.” The hand of death has been upon him.—“But how unjust is society, how little it appreciates its true advantages, how unequal its estimate of useful services. Had Godman fallen by a foeman’s hand on the field of carnage, the butcher of his race in a quarrel of sordid interests, he would have passed from the world shrouded with its glories, mausoleums would have been erected to perpetuate his fame, eulogy have poured forth its pompous harangues, poetry lavished its gorgeous decorations to blazon his memory, and a nation’s coffers been open to protect the widow from want, and the orphan from desolation.

He has died a sacrifice to the best interests of society, and the permanent welfare of mankind—the advancement of knowledge, the progress of science, the refinement of humanity, and the melioration of the sufferings of human nature. The world looks coldly on, the tear of the philanthropist and friend in silence bedews his remains, the philosopher in retirement turns from his meditations to sorrow for his loss, and the widow and the orphan must look for their consolation and their support, to the sad remembrance of his virtues.”

As medicine is one of the most ancient studies of man, many suppose it ought therefore to be one of the most perfected. But when compared with the physical arts and sciences, it should be recollected, that for more than a thousand years after the christian era, superstition prevented the dissection of the human body, that the prejudices of the world have ever been and are still opposed to its free investigation, and that its cultivators operate upon living matter which is ever changing. If, however, the advancement has not been in proportion to its antiquity, and if its perfection has not been as great and satisfactory as some of the other studies, its present condition is far from being humiliating.

The first thirty-two years of the nineteenth century, will ever remain conspicuous in the annals of medicine, for the vast and important improvements which have been effected in it during that period; and it is now with honest pride and gratification we behold our profession rising in eminence, and capable of sustaining a comparison not only with divinity and law, but even with some of the most certain and positive of the physical arts and sciences. Does the astronomer foretell the

exact time of eclipses, and the conjunction of the heavenly bodies? does he calculate the return of comets, the distances of the planets? does he measure their magnitude?—present, says Jackson, (from a law established by Cuvier) to a well instructed zoologist a single tooth or a bone with an articulating surface, or even the track of the foot of an animal, and from these apparently imperfect data, he will construct the whole skeleton, even though it be of an undescribed or extinct animal. Does the sailor direct his ship across the pathless ocean and over unknown seas?—it is no more necessary, says Rush, with just principles, for a young physician to see all the diseases of the human body before he prescribes for them, than it is for a mariner, who knows the principles of navigation, to visit all the ports of the world, in order to conduct his vessel in safety to them. Does the chemist predict with almost unerring certainty the results of the admixture of two solids or fluids? does he reduce the diamond to its constituent parts?—the anatomist can unravel every tissue of the body, can foresee the effects of agents upon it, can calculate the contractions of the heart, the resistance of muscles, or even exhibit the material organ of the mind, *the seat of the reasoning faculties of man*. The physician does more. Guided by the principles of his science, he heals the wounds made in angry controversy, he arrests hamooragies that would prove fatal, he removes useless members from the body, he neutralizes poisons introduced into the system, he cuts short the progress of diseases, he even robs the grave for a time of its devoted victims.

If astronomy has not been so perfected as to prevent idle speculations and superstitious dread with respect to the movements of the heavenly bodies, (and which was so forcibly evinced a few months ago, when it was believed a comet was approaching our earth)—if navigation has not yet attained that degree of perfection when shipwrecks shall cease—or if chemistry cannot so calculate the expansive force of vapor as to obviate the annual destruction of hundreds of lives on our rivers—how can it be expected that Medicine, which has ever been studied under the most unfavorable circumstances, could be more clear, more certain, more perfect in its operations?

Perfection belongs alone to Him whose image we only bear, and who made and fashioned us such as we are. It is not attainable by man in his earthly career. And in medicine, to re-produce even an amputated finger or to restore a part disorganized—“these states once induced the power to heal must be able to create—the attribute and prerogative of Deity.”

“What, it may be inquired, is to be understood by the perfection of medicine? Is it supposed with some enthusiasts of the profession, that medicine will invariably prove successful in its contests with disease, and that old age and accidents will be the only outlets of human life? Most certainly not. It is the destiny of man that he shall be the victim of disease and

mortality, even from his foetal condition to the ultimate period of his allotted existence?" *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*, is a mandate to fulfil which we are all hastening, and from which there is *no variableness nor shadow of turning*.

"Diseases—the thousand maladies that "flesh is heir to," are the chief instruments, provided by a governing and protecting providence, to repress the accumulation of the human race; for its security and happiness, within the limits of an active and vigorous organization of society.

Could our science be brought to the perfection that has been vainly imagined for it, a curse would be inflicted, not a benefit conferred on man. Subsistence being limited, a population diminished only by the decay of nature, would soon become redundant. Disorder, confusion, violence and outrage, would invade society: its firmest bonds would be dissevered, and its tenderest ties dissolved. Anarchy and revolution would shatter the frame of governments—all charitable and humanly sentiments would be extinguished, in the predominancy and intensity of selfish feelings, generated by sufferings and the necessities of self-preservation. Children would utter denunciations against the fecundity of parents, and parents exclaim against the wants of their offspring.

The benefits that medicine confer, are, and will always be restricted to individuals. It diminishes the mortality of diseases; it palliates where it cannot cure, it lessens the mass of human sufferings and evils; it often saves from a premature tomb the great and the good—their country's stay and support,—the ornaments of society, the benefactors of humanity, the promoters and cultivators of science. In the hour of distress and despair, when the hopes and expectations of happiness, and of the means of subsistence of families, depend on the existence of a father, a mother, a child, stretched on the bed of disease, medicine with its salutary aid, like an angel of light dropping healing from its wings, dispels the gloom, wipes the tear from affliction's eye, and pours the balm of comfort in the anguished heart. These are the benefits that medicine bestows, and which its improvement will augment; that make it a blessing to humanity, and impart to it elevation and dignity of character, that render it, when exercised on the principles of an enlightened science, one of the noblest studies, and most exalted professions, to which man can devote himself."

To present a correct view of the present condition of the medical profession in the United States, it will be necessary to observe that in adopting our manners and customs, and in deriving our arts and sciences from Great Britain, medicine, as practised here, was almost exclusively English. But happily within the few past years, a revolution has commenced in our science, which we conceive to be as expedient and trust will be as salutary for it, as the one was productive of good in our political relations which severed the colonial ties that bound us to the

mother country. "The remuneration of the English Apothecaries for their attendance, is derived from the physic the patient swallows, and the more they can get down him, the better is their pay. The great mass of the medical profession of England being of this description, uniting a trade to the science, we still see in English medicine an absolute confidence in pretended specifics, and the interminable search after new remedies, new medicines, &c." Hence the popular opinion in this country, how strange is it that no certain remedy has been discovered for the present existing epidemic, and this too after its prevalence to so great an extent in so many countries and for so long a time. No one possesses a specific for any disease whatever, none ever existed and *emphatically, none ever will be discovered.* "*Millions of experiments and two thousand years of experience, have demonstrated the utter futility of this expectation.*"

As each individual of a community is distinguished from his neighbor by his physiognomy and appearance, in like manner he possesses a peculiar constitution, cognizable at first sight, to a well educated physician, and it is as necessary to successfully prescribe for a patient to see and examine him, as it is for a witness in swearing to the identity of a person to have that person present or to have him accurately described. The best instructed and experienced in our profession cannot safely prescribe for the name of the simplest disease; what then must be thought of those issuing nostrums, which they declare to be equally applicable to the tenderest infant and most vigorous manhood, to the mildest affection and most dreadful malady—alike beneficial to exhausted nature and a burning fever or sinking debility and active inflammation!

We do not deny that there are preparations of medicines of more general application than others, but we contend that practice to be correct and philosophical, must be regulated by the peculiar circumstance attending each case; and moreover, that modern medicine in opposition to the received opinion, does not depend upon the introduction of one poison to overcome the effects of another or of the disease itself, but upon the direct abstraction of this latter.

The revolution that Medicine is now undergoing in this country owes its origin to the French capital, which has been for the last thirty years the head quarters of the medical sciences. Time and your patience will not allow me at present to enter upon an explanation of the general principles of the physiological medicine. It teaches that life is maintained by stimulants; that there are only two classes of diseases, these are originally local, and are the results of irritation; that there are no specific diseases and consequently no specific remedies; and that the abstraction of blood, local applications, rest and diet, will affect more in treatment than the internal administration of medicines. It has shown the necessity of extending our researches beyond the extinction of life, of tra-

cing diseases to the organs affected, of localizing the most of them to the alimentary canal, of referring symptoms to their true causes, of overthrowing nosology, of destroying confidence in the idea of specific remedies, of exhibiting in their true light, the pretended properties of medicaments, of simplifying treatment, and of reducing the practice of medicine to a *certain and positive science*, based upon a few general, fixed and variable principles which are daily and hourly confirmed by reason and experience.

It is too common to hear theory denounced in medicine and experience declared to be the only guide to successful practice. This, says an eminent physician, appears to be one of those maxims, uttered by some authority without reflection, and repeated by hundreds without examination. What, continues he, is there in theory, that renders it peculiarly hazardous and so to be distrusted? *To theorise is to think*; to exercise the noblest of our faculties, *reason and judgment*, in the investigation of knowledge, and the pursuit of truth.—Theory is no more than the evident logical inference of the intellect, from an examination and comparison of facts offered by observation, experiment, and enlightened experience.—Experience may enable an individual to observe better, to think better, to theorise better; it may impart a tact in the detection, discrimination, and treatment of diseases, but which cannot be imparted to another. It dies with himself. Experience partakes of the character of the individual, and, deserves confidence only as he is intelligent, well informed, free from credulity and prejudices, with a well-balanced mind, capable of clear conceptions, logical arrangements, and unembarrassed deductions, the fruits of an exercised judgment.—Experience and theory, are by nature, intimately connected: let none put them asunder.

A circumstance peculiar to the members of the medical profession operating to their disadvantage, to which I would call your attention before concluding this address, is, that after having offered their services to a community, it would be officious, intrusive and beneath the proper dignity of our honorable avocation, for any physician to prescribe voluntarily or interfere with a case of sickness without a special invitation. The lawyer, however, can at any time advocate the cause of the innocent and the wronged; his reward and his reputation depend upon his own talent and his own exertions. The Divine has almost daily opportunities of exhibiting his zeal and his devotion in the holiest of causes. But the physician's calling is to the lonely bed-side of the sick and the distressed. The midnight hour witnesses his privations and his labors. He does not display the strength of his mind or the power of his eloquence by addressing assemblies; the means, the instruments, even the language he employs, is unknown to those around him; and if called upon to perform an operation, they

shudder at the idea, and retire in sorrow and disgust. His only field for action is in the Lecture room teaching his science, in the debate of the medical society, or in the productions of his pen: the only competent tribunals are his professional brethren. All others are incapacitated to judge of his skill and acquirements, and when we hear of individuals and families boasting of their physicians, we know it to be most commonly a judgment without comparison—an act of the heart and not of the head.

But though we cannot consistently volunteer our services in individual cases, yet when nations suffer from the rude hand of tyranny, or from the desolation of the pestilence that walketh in darkness, who have been more liberal, who have manifested mere philanthropy, who have displayed more self-devotion? The mouldering remains of five and twenty members of the medical profession, now lie buried in the ruins of an unfortunate, but heroic and hallowed land; and the lives of several of our own countrymen have been sacrificed in their efforts to arrest that disease, which probably, were it not for them and their companions might now be spreading dismay among us, and be sweeping as with a besom of destruction over this continent. Do we indeed deserve the prejudices of the world, the low estimate in which our services are held by the community, for offering up every thing he hold most dear and sacred in this life, even our very existence, for its benefit, for its security, for its happiness? Rob us of our theories of medicine; say we experiment with the lives of our fellow beings; that we are insensible to the sufferings of others; that we are destitute of the finer feelings of human nature; that we are devoid of sympathetic benevolence; publish to the world that our actions are regulated by the hope of gain; brand us with the deepest infamy: still you cannot take away that *satisfaction* nor deprive us of that *consolation*, which every honest physician enjoys in approaching the confines of eternity—the satisfaction and consolation of having done good in relieving the sick and the distressed, with the hopes and expectations of happiness hereafter.

In Poland.

Philadelphia

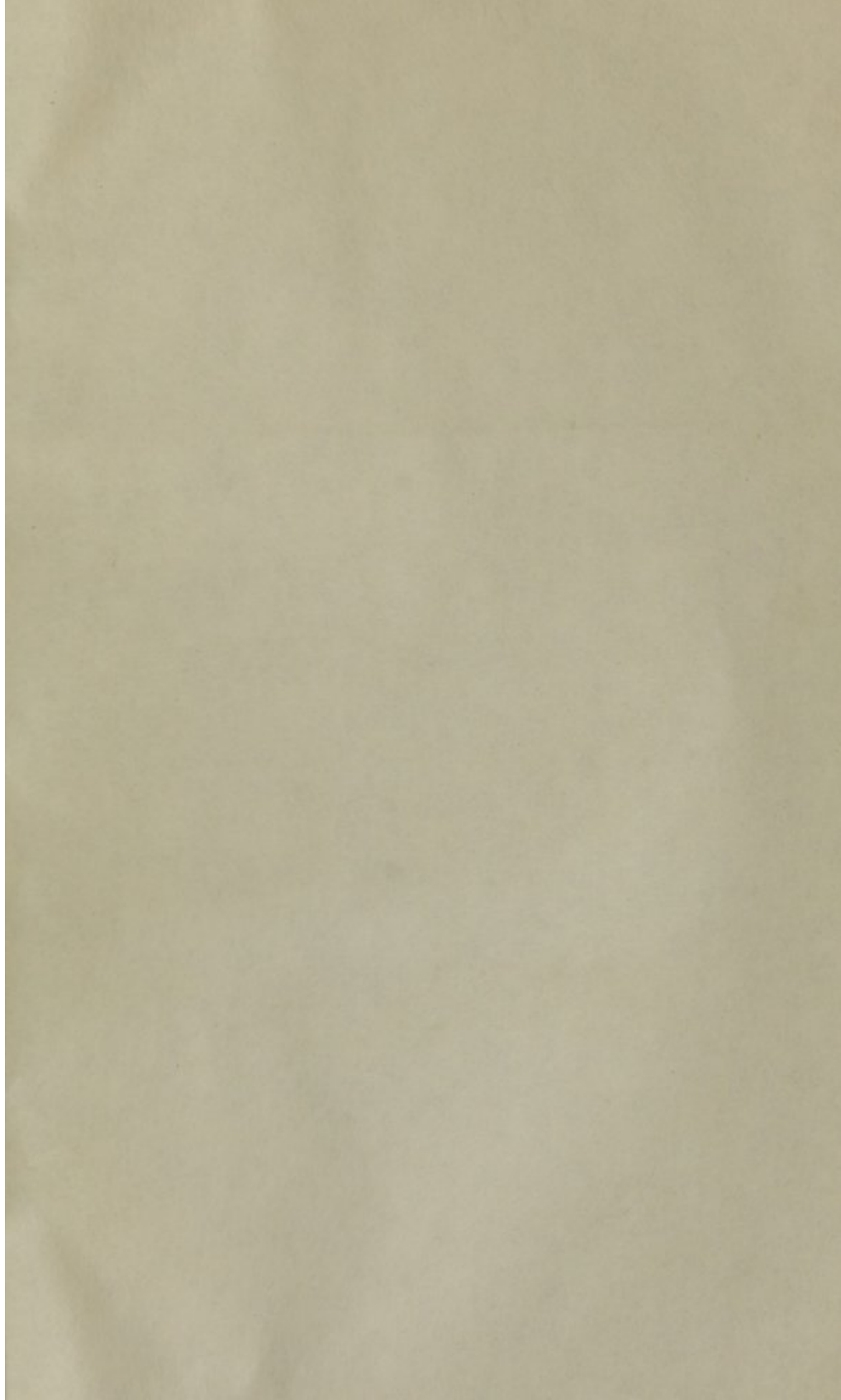
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Germania

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