

An address delivered before the Medical Society of the County of New York : July 25, 1836 / by James R. Manley.

Contributors

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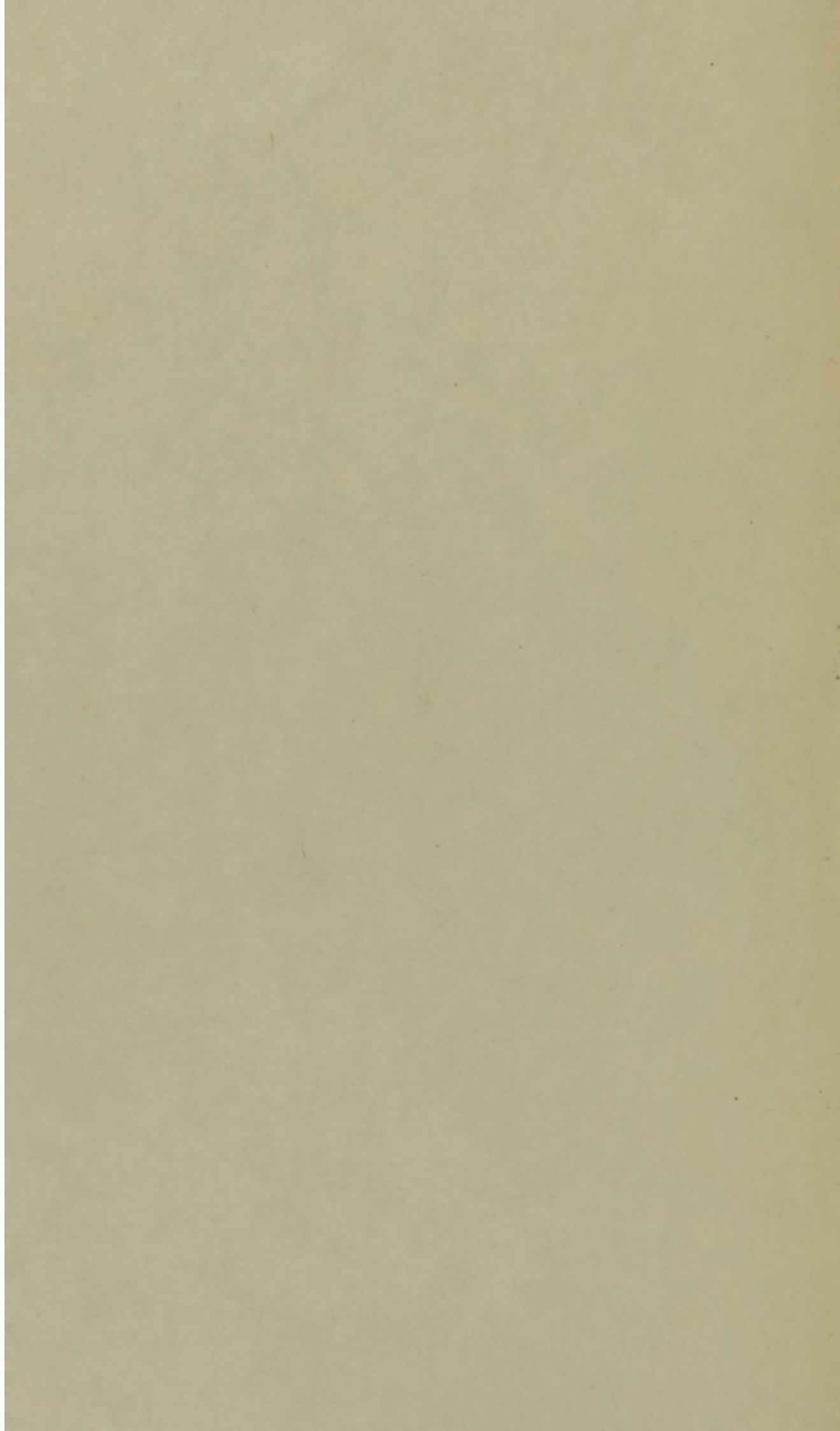
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1836



AN
ADDRESS
DELIVERED BEFORE THE
MEDICAL SOCIETY
OF THE
COUNTY OF NEW-YORK,

JULY 25, 1836.

BY

JAMES R. MANLEY, M. D. PRESIDENT.

Surgeon
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Washington D.C.
NEW-YORK,



PRINTED 144 NASSAU STREET.

1836.

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MEDICAL SOCIETY

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M279 a

1836

Film 2073 #7

JAMES R. MANLEY, M. D. President.



NEW YORK.

PRINTED IN NASSAU STREET.

1886.

CIRCULAR.

Albany, June 22, 1836.

SIR,—The Comitia Minora of the State Medical Society beg leave to call the attention of the Medical Society of your County to the annexed Circular, and request the co-operation of the Society in relation to the several matters therein contained.

By order, JOEL A. WING, *Secretary,*
State Medical Society.

AN ACT to amend Title seventh, Chapter fourteenth, of the First Part of the Revised Statutes, and for other purposes.—Passed May 26, 1836.

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows :

§ 1. The thirteenth section of title seventh, of chapter fourteenth, of the first part of the Revised Statutes, is hereby amended, so that it shall read as follows :

“ No student, who has attended one or more courses of medical lectures, shall be admitted to an examination by any Medical Society, except of the county in which he shall have pursued his medical studies for four months immediately preceeding his attendance upon his last course of lectures, or by the Censors of the State Medical Society.”

§ 2. The seventeenth section of said title seventh, is hereby amended, so that it shall read as follows :

“ No person coming from another State or Country, shall prac.

tise physic or surgery in this State, until he shall have been examined and licensed by the Censors of the State Medical Society."

§ 3. The Medical faculty of Geneva College are hereby authorised to appoint a Delegate to represent them in the State Medical Society, with all the powers and privileges which Delegates from the respective Medical Colleges in this State possess.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately after its passage.

STATE OF NEW-YORK, SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

I have compared the preceding with an original act of the Legislature of this State, on file in this office, and do certify that the same is a correct transcript therefrom, and of the whole of said original.

ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, *Deputy Secretary.*

Albany, May 27, 1836.

The State Medical Society at its Session in February, 1836, passed the following Resolutions :

Resolved, That no medical student shall be received for examination by the Censors of the State or County Medical Societies, until he shall have furnished certificates of having studied the full time prescribed by law, authenticated by the affidavit of his preceptor or preceptors, or in its absence, by his own affidavit.

Resolved, That when a student has attended lectures, he furnish a certificate from the College in which he attended, that he has attended a full course, or if not a full course, the extent of his attendance ; and that his attendance has been regular, and his conduct and character as a student, proper and respectable.

Donne four

OFFICERS
OF
MEDICAL SOCIETY
OF THE
COUNTY OF NEW-YORK,
FOR THE YEAR 1836-7.

JAMES R. MANLEY, M.D. *President.*

FRANCIS U. JOHNSON, M.D. *Vice-President.*

RICHARD K. HOFFMAN, M.D. *Corresponding Secretary.*

J. K. HARDENBROOK, M.D. *Recording Secretary.*

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C. R. GILMAN, M.D.

ALEXANDER E. HOSACK, M.D.

N. H. DERING, M.D.

JARED LINDSLY, M.D.

} *Censors.*

OFFICERS

MEDICAL SOCIETY

of the

CITY OF NEW YORK

FOR THE YEAR 1887

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Censor

8

*Extract from the minutes of the Medical Society of the County of
New-York, July 25, 1836.*

On motion of Dr. James Wright.—*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Society be presented to Dr. Manley for his able and eloquent address now delivered; and that he be respectfully requested to furnish a copy for publication.

On motion of Dr. Rice.—*Resolved*, That a committee consisting of five persons be appointed to carry the above resolution into effect, and that 500 copies be printed for the use of the society. Whereupon the Vice-President was called to the chair and appointed Drs. Wright, Rice, Duvall, Hoyt, and Beadle, the above Committee.

TO DR. JAMES R. MANLEY.

New-York, July 30.

SIR,—The undersigned, the Committee appointed by a resolution of the Medical Society on the 25th inst. to request a copy of your address for publication, respectfully ask you to accede to the wishes of the Society, in the belief that its publication will essentially serve the interests of the community at large as well as of the profession. It is unnecessary, we trust to assure you that individually we shall be highly gratified by your compliance.

Your's most respectfully,

JAMES WRIGHT,
C. C. WRIGHT,
J. W. DUVALL,
M. HOIT,
E. L. BEADLE.

TO DRs. WRIGHT, RICE, DUVAL, HOIT, & BEADLE.

New-York, 19 White Street, Aug. 2, 1836.

GENTLEMEN,—Not expecting to be called upon to furnish a copy of my address for publication, I have only to apply a good general rule in answer to your letter of the 30th ult. ; however imperfect the paper, it is your's by right if you require it, for I hold it to be improper to refuse to print opinions, which the author has already orally published. Accept my thanks for the very handsome manner in which you have communicated the society's sentiments.

Your's respectfully,

JAMES R. MANLEY.

JAMES WRIGHT,
G. C. WRIGHT,
J. W. DUVAL,
M. HOIT,
E. A. BEADLE.

ADDRESS.

It has been usual for the President of this Society, on taking the chair, to present for the consideration of its members some subjects connected with its duties, its interests, its usefulness, or its reputation ; and in compliance with a custom which has much to recommend it, and so far as I believe, nothing which can be seriously urged against it ; I have drawn up a few remarks in the hope that they will be received in a spirit becoming gentlemen, who whether they are at all times sensible of it or not, possess a larger share of power, to be exerted for good or for evil in society, than any other class of men in the community. I have no idea that any thing which I may say, will interest from its novelty ; the theme is old as the practice of physic, the facts well known, and the reasoning from these facts obvious ; all that I can promise is the discharge of my share of a duty which becomes each day more and more imperative : viz. to direct your attention to abuses, which if they admit of the application of remedies, call loudly for their exhibition. The measure of influence which each individual of the profession possesses, must not only be exerted in his corporate but in his personal character, in order to arrest, if it be possible, that reckless spirit of a mistaken liberality, which would break down all the barriers which the common

sense of legislation has established, to protect the public from the disastrous consequences of the unrestrained exercise of ignorance, fraud, and imposture.

One of the most astonishing anomalies in the history of human conduct will be found in the fact; that while the whole business of life is the pursuit of happiness, and while enjoyment is the end to which all exertion is directed; men are comparatively indifferent on a subject which involves the issues of life and death. The laws of the land, although they are not silent, are in their practical operation almost nugatory; and health the essential ingredient in that cup of various mixtures of which all must drink, is left without a single defence, against the attacks of ignorance, avarice, and imposture, which the cunning of the quack, the unblushing effrontery of the mountebank, or the mistaken sympathies of a prejudiced community cannot destroy. This truth needs no confirmation; and it is calculated to teach a lesson which cannot fail of its effects with all ingenuous minds; for if law offers very little, or no protection, the course of conduct to be observed by the medical profession is not only plain but imperative. It seems indeed a paradox that the blessings which we most highly appreciate, should be those which have the least practical influence on our lives, but the fact is undoubted; and as wonder is the offspring of ignorance, our surprise may cease when we have opportunity to examine into its causes.

All other professions address themselves to the understanding or to interest, our's to the affections; ignorant assiduity therefore, whether it be real or pretended, and it is as likely to be the one as the other, will be more effective to build up a reputation out of nothing; than the most intelligent discharge of duty, without this apparent sympathy with suffering, in raising one on the most solid foundation. He who is ignorant of his profession,

must be, or at least appear to be sedulous in his attentions, since it is no more than a fair presumption that he is labouring to correct his own mistakes; for impudence is not more naturally allied to imposture, than is ignorance to presumption. The public, strange as it may seem, will not be at the trouble to inform themselves on the subject of our art, sufficiently to enable them to form a judgment of the ability of the physician; and their self-love is always flattered, when their own prejudices are indulged or approved.

In the medical profession is found a greater variety of character than in any other; it seems as it were a great moral menagerie in which every quality of head and heart finds a place, simply because there is no quality attaching to humanity which may not be directed by interest in its appropriate exercise; the cunning can find dupes; the ignorant can find those more ignorant than themselves; the braggart can find simple ones to believe his tales of wonder; the knaves by calculation, can find fools by nature; in short the number of the credulous, the stupid, the prejudiced, the vain, the vicious, and the timid, offer abundant temptation for the display of all those varied arts which disgrace the profession, and render the science which ranks by right first in the catalogue of human benefits, the last in the scale of human confidence. It is beyond a peradventure settled in the opinion of the public, that no deficiencies of mind, moral, or acquirement, preclude the possession of the public confidence; that the fashions of physic are as fanciful and various as the fashions of our clothes; and that all this absurdity finds apologists among men who are sensible of its folly, but too timid or too interested to attempt its correction. It would seem that even among physicians of education and acknowledged character, the duties which they owe to the public, like the ornamental and useful plants in a neglected garden, are suffered to be overshadowed and

stinted in their product by the rank growth of weeds which take root in the same rich soil ; the fear of being charged with interested motives on the one hand, and a spirit of cupidity on the other, which overlooks the character of the profession, because they know that the public do not estimate it, are alike influential in perpetuating the frauds every day practised by pretenders in medicine. Instead of taking ground and testifying with boldness against the suicidal folly of placing reliance on "lying vanities that cannot profit," and showing their utter absurdity from evidence adduced by themselves, and that it is simply impossible, their representations can be true ; they are frequently found conniving at the prescription of nostrums of which they know nothing, and in truth, admitting their exhibition in chronic diseases, rather than submitting to the trouble of convincing patients of their error, or hazarding their interest by a pertinacious adherence to the line of known duty.

The great mass of the community act from first impressions, they arrive at conclusions, often from very narrow premises ; and in this case, although wrong, they for the most part, have attained to the conviction that the practice of an art which admits the exercise of so much fraud and folly, must of necessity be conjectural, and that its hazards countervail its benefits.* It is in this

* In proof of the practical operation of such opinions, although denied in terms by all intelligent men, we have only to advert to the fact that almost every physician on his first visit finds that his patient presumes to be his counsellor ; in addition to stating his case, he suggests his own remedies with deference however to his superior judgment. And in cases where friends or relatives are the patients, many persons feel at liberty to prescribe, the opinion of the doctor notwithstanding ; indeed so general has this practice become, that those who would shrink from the responsibility of giving their advice when asked, respecting the purchase of a house, a horse, or a lot of cotton, and would kindly refer you to others who know more on these

way, and in this way only, that we can account for the indifference which they manifest on all subjects connected with the improvements of medicine. Here the apparent paradox finds a ready solution; and although we may, and do regret that there is such abundant evidence to cherish these unfavorable impressions; we are bound by every obligation which conscience and honor can impose, to undeceive the multitude; to shew them the wrong which they inflict upon themselves by judging the whole from the baser sample; and to convince them by our individual conduct and opinions, that although we *may be scandalized* we *ought not to be condemned*.

That the character of the physician has suffered, is true; but it has been through the agency of those who have assumed it without sufficient warrant; the high-minded, moral and intelligent practitioner, who pursues his profession influenced by a just sense of its responsibility, is at once an ornament and a blessing to society; and it is to these that the public should look, as the exemplars of the science which is calculated to do infinite good or irretrievable mischief, according to the measure of intelligence and morals which are brought to bear upon its practice. This society was instituted to educate and to cherish such, and it has existed long enough to have made its influence to be felt, if the means had not been mistaken to attain this desirable end. Its charter was thought to be as liberal on the one hand, and as restrictive

several subjects; will, nevertheless, *obtrude* their advice in cases of disease when, for any thing they know to the contrary, the consequences if followed out may terminate in *death*. If this officious ignorance be not arrested by a larger measure of intelligent moral sense, the consequences will be deplorable; for it cannot admit of a doubt that many of the items which make up our bills of mortality if called by their proper names would have the character of *homicides*—and homicides too, by the hands of friends!

on the other, as could well consist with the genius of our political institutions ; and it was presumed, that what it lacked in power to restrain unlicensed or unqualified practitioners, could readily be supplied through the influence of the personal character of its members : if the framers of the law were deceived in the result, it was not so much their fault as their misfortune. They knew that the improvement of the profession would be the work of time ; but they believed it would be constantly progressive : they never could have anticipated the occurrence of events which have happened to retard the march of its improvement ; they never foresaw that schools of medicine would be instituted with the double view of making characters for teachers, and of educating men to be called physicians, at less expense than would be required for the support of an apprenticed tradesman, and in less time than is ordinarily necessary to make a master workman in any mechanical employment ; that the candidate for licence rejected by a competent tribunal as unqualified, would himself become a teacher, and claim merit for contemning the requisites of an education rendered indispensable by the laws of the state and of the institutions chartered under its authority : that all the preliminary studies necessary to qualify the pupil to receive instruction would be dispensed with, in order to bring, if not the honors, at least the profits of the profession within the compass of the most limited means ; it did not enter into their calculation to provide against contingencies so improbable.

They could not believe that within the short period of twenty years, the requirements of a medical education would in some districts of our country be reduced so low as to offer strong temptations to abandon other pursuits with a view to profit by the exchange : they would have been shocked at the bare suggestion that within a little more than thirty years from the grant of this charter, *Medical College making* would become with some inge-

nious men, A TRADE:—that colleges would be chartered giving powers to confer medical honors and political rights which to this hour exist but on paper; that seals would be granted, and to save labor in the wholesale manufacture of diplomas, signatures would be lithographed and sold about the country at various prices, like the merchandize of an itinerant pedlar; and least of all could they have anticipated that persons belonging to this society would become the agents in this disgraceful traffic,* and yet how humiliating the truth! all these things have happened. Is it matter of astonishment then, that the public have become disgusted, and that their confidence in the resources of an art which can admit of such abuses should have been impaired? The results of all these devices to defeat the plain intentions of the legislature we are now suffering; and one of the most disastrous, because, the most comprehensive evil is, that with many practitioners the medical profession has become a *trade*, in a great degree resembling other trades, governed by the same general laws; practised for the same general purpose; to wit the profits which it may afford; while the high and holy obligations which it requires, are in danger of being forgotten in the strife to amass a fortune, manufacture a character, or attain notoriety.†

* The history of the medical department of the college at New Albany, in the state of Indiana, as spread upon the minutes of this society in 1835, abundantly warrants the severity of this remark. All this is emphatically true of this institution, to the letter.

† Medicine practised merely as a trade, is of all trades the most fraudulent, because the advantages are by necessity on one side, the patient being always the dupe: his hopes and his fears, his sorrows and his sufferings both for himself and those whose interests are involved in the issue of his illness are all instruments in the hands of his physician to magnify the dangers of disease in order to enhance the merit of his services; by his knowledge of the immediate effects of medicines, he can with apparently a wizard foresight

The reduction of the requisitions for license has had the effect in mercantile phrase of increasing the supply of physicians beyond the demand, and multiplying their number at the expense of their qualifications; it has also invited from the walks of middle life, many who, but for the temptation thus offered, would have qualified themselves to excel in various vocations, which do not necessarily require an expensive education. But this is not all; it has been productive of injury, by increasing the number of those who from their entrance on the duties of the profession were obliged by necessity to live on its proceeds; and that these are small in the outset of his career, every physician too well knows. There is no employment which promises less reward for at the least, the ten first years of occupation, than that of the physician; his road, if he is an honest man, is both rugged and tedious; "the steep where fame's proud temple stands afar," is more difficult of access to him, and much farther removed than from others, however legitimate his claims, or however great his desert: he must have other resources than those to be derived from his practice in early life if he would avoid the temptations of poverty, since there is little room for the exercise of that professional liberality, which should always distinguish the physician where the *res angusta domi* goads to the exercise of duty.

But it is unnecessary to dwell on the unpleasant detail of the causes which have, and do operate, to impair public confidence,

predict results, which while they astonish the ignorant, serve to command the confidence of the patient; and last of all, when dangers thicken and prospects of recovery become more and more remote, he has only to manufacture a case for his counsel which never had existence in any of its previous stages: and when the gloom of the grave settles around the patient's death-bed, justify himself to the sorrowing family by the affectation of a solicitude which he never felt.

to degrade the character and circumscribe the usefulness of physicians; the enquiry should be, how can their condition be amended? what measures can we adopt which will give promise of improvement in the system of education; which shall elevate it in the public opinion; which shall rebuke pretence and imposture; and give assurance to the world that its weighty responsibilities are properly estimated by the members of this society? We have ample evidence of the insufficiency of penal statutes to protect either the public or the profession; and the legislature of this state at their last session displayed their wisdom by leaving their late amendment of the law of Medical license, without any other than a negative sanction. Public opinion will effect what law is unable to execute, provided, educated physicians do their duty to themselves. It is to the indifference manifested by the profession to the inroads of ignorance and imposture, that we have a right to attribute a large measure of their success. It is not to be expected that the public will interpose to prevent their extension, when those to whom is committed in an especial manner the keeping of the honor and interest of the medical character, appear to acquiesce in the degradation of both. It is treason to the interests of humanity to permit, when we have the power to prevent this wholesale speculation on human suffering; and if there is a reality in the succours which medicine can afford, it is our duty not only to afford them, but to guard against the frauds which would prevent their timely application.—As a society especially chartered to regulate the practice of physic and surgery in this state, we have been culpably deficient; it is time that we awake from our lethargy, and make the attempt to expiate our former omissions of duty; it is due to ourselves, it is due to our country, and especially to those who in a few years will succeed us in the employment in which we all are now actively occupied. If we fail in the effort we shall have the consolation

of knowing that we deserved success, and if the attempt be but partially successful, many will bless us, who otherwise may become the victims of heartless and mercenary imposture. It cannot consist with honor, or with conscience, with duty, propriety or humanity, to remain longer, unconcerned spectators of the ravages of medical deceit, when we know of a surety that there is no such wide waste gate of human life in the whole range of creation, as the misplaced confidence of the community in those miserable pretexts to plunder the public, known as nostrums and specifics; when we know that the wretched dupes of these delusions would improve their chances of recovery from serious disease by adopting the faith of the wandering Arab, *that whatever be the issues, they cannot be controlled by human agency*; since in the one case the strength of constitution might overcome the malady, whereas in the other, no scope is permitted for its exercise. It is astonishing, with what facility the confidence of the ignorant is accorded to the pretender in medicine; he who has extirpated a corn, will have the credit of ability to cure a cancer or a consumption: (*and tumours are apt to become cancerous after the knife has removed them!*) in all other cases some small measure of ingenuity or cunning is necessary to ensure success, in this, none; downright absurdity supported by unblushing impudence is all that is necessary. The proprietors of secret *remedies* so called, promise any effect from them which may be required, nay, every thing but immortality; and if they promised that, it would be almost the only part of their engagement, which they are calculated with most certainty to fulfil. If it be asked, what can this society do, to arrest this destructive evil, or to disarm it of much of its power to do mischief; the answer is at hand, "INFORM THE MULTITUDE," shew them the folly of placing any reliance on means for the preservation of health, or the cure of disease which their own experience being the judge, are destruc-

tive to both. We can, as a society, collect and embody facts on this subject which will not fail to instruct ; and may we not hope that measures will be early instituted which will produce this desirable result. Some years ago a committee charged to enquire into the nature and effects of secret medicines was appointed by this society, which for a time prosecuted the subject with success ; but that committee being a special and not a permanent one as it ought to have been, suspended their labors at the expiration of the year ; their power ceased and the subject was abandoned : their report however is before the public, from which we may form a judgment of the benefits which such a measure (if properly carried out) would confer on them as well as the profession.

As a society we can and ought to bear testimony against those abuses of common sense, which have for their objects a change in the moral condition of the community, at the expense of health, or that measure of temperate enjoyment in which a beneficent creator has allowed us to indulge ; and of this character is the attempt to induce men to live exclusively on vegetable food, and that of the coarsest kind. * That the physical constitutions of men may be changed by the substitution of vegetable food for

* The history of a course of diet, on the principle of one of these modern reformers, is full of instruction to those who will be at the trouble to enquire. It is in fact an attempt to engraft the habits of the toothless infant on the constitution of the full grown man ; and to make the food intended for his support, his medicine ; as if the last was most essential. In this they may be for a while successful, but it is always found at last that the muscular, robust and sanguine man, is converted into the puny white faced valedudinarian, and when disease attacks in an epidemic form, (and there is no way of escape but by avoiding occasional causes,) the converts to the doctrine are among the first victims, as their mode of living eminently predisposes them. The history of the late visitations of cholera abundantly confirms the above fact.

that wholesome admixture of vegetable and animal food, to which we are all accustomed, there can be no doubt; and there can be just as little doubt that the change would be for the worse. Man was made an omnivorous animal, his organs for the preparation and digestion of his food conclusively shew this truth; if it had been the design of the Creator that he should subsist on fruits and pulse, is it not highly probable that he would have been furnished with an apparatus suited to their digestion, as well in number as capacity, as in the case with animals who do so subsist? How absurd then to attempt to change the very law of his being, in the hope that his condition both morally and physically will be amended. It is neither more nor less than claiming to improve what the Almighty Author of our being has ordained. Setting aside the moral offence which these pseudo-philosophers commit, with which we have no concern as physicians, is it right that we (who are presumed to be acquainted with his physical constitution,) should calmly acquiesce by our silence in the serious absurdity from day to day doled out to the community, on a subject so closely connected with his health and comfort? It is time that the public were disabused, that their prejudices were dissipated, and their common sense taught the first principles of their being. Whether you will, or will not consider the subject worthy your attention, I cannot say; for myself I confess that I am so well satisfied of the folly of such doctrine and of the disastrous consequences which will assuredly follow it, that I cannot omit the present opportunity of presenting it to your attention.

There is one subject on which medical men differ, but which to me, appears too obvious to admit of being questioned; it is, whether it can consist with the duty which medical men owe to the community or to themselves, to deal in secret remedies; and on this subject I would be distinctly understood. I hold it to be not only a breach of professional obligation but a positive offence

to withhold the knowledge of any remedial agent from any practitioner who may please to require it: no man claiming to be a physician has a right to appropriate a remedy to his exclusive use, and he who does, whether he is aware of it or not, declares to the public in so many words, that he practises physic for his own account exclusively.

On this subject there can be no mistake, the man who is authorized to practice physic has taken upon himself the discharge of obligations which will not permit him to appropriate any remedy to his *own profitable use*; he is bound by a solemn obligation, sacred as an oath, to do all in his power for the benefit of the sick, and to withhold the knowledge of any means from those who may suffer from the want of them, is a manifest breach of this obligation, if indeed they be remedial; if not remedial, he must stand before the public the professed propagator of falsehood, for the base purpose of making merchandise of their credulity. The histories of all nostrums are alike; they are schemes to profit, and but two things are necessary to their success—a want of conscience in the proprietor, and a total want of common sense in the consumer.

I am induced to touch this subject in order to introduce to your acquaintance a class of men some of whom I believe belong to this society, who are styled Homœopathists. The doctrine holds a kind of middle rank between absolute quackery, and a sublimated philosophy; the one too bald to be mistaken, and the other too intricate and ethereal to be understood, at least by common minds. It is based on the strange assumption that causes are cures if properly understood, and given in proper doses—that what will produce disease when taken in health in large doses, will cure the same disease when taken in doses so minute as to defy division or comminution.

It is difficult to speak in respectful terms of folly, when it as-

sumes the garb of wisdom, or of fraud when clothed in the semblance of sincerity. The whole doctrine, if doctrine it may be called, which no man without some tangible illustration can understand; rests upon the bare assertion of some facts and the perversion of others; and the practice of it is so feeble and inert as to stagger the faith of the most credulous: It is in truth an apology for doing nothing, so that it differs from bold imposture which would destroy; and is marked by a cunning only, which pretends to cure. That I may be understood I will relate a fact in illustration. It is assumed that Belladonna will produce a disease similar to Scarlatina, it is therefore the appropriate remedy to be exhibited to cure it, and the following is the recipe:—Mix one drop of the expressed juice of the Belladonna with 100 drops of alcohol: take one drop of this diluted mixture and add to it another 100 drops of alcohol, and repeat this process of dilution 60 times, and then give one drop of the last mixture to the sick child as a dose to be repeated every two or three or four hours as there may be occasion. This my friends was the serious advice of a Homœopathist in a serious consultation not long since in this city! the dose of Belladonna thus prescribed or rather recommended, for it was not given, was that part of a drop, which could not be put in terms by the most intelligent mathematician; and the child to have taken the entire drop in the same state of dilution, (the menstruum being water,) would have been obliged to swallow more than could be contained in all our northern lakes, with the Erie Canal and Hudson River in addition; and if the original drop had been mixed with the head waters of the river Mississippi above the falls of St. Anthony, and the child had been required to take one spoonfull from the same river at New Orleans, every three hours, allowing time for the current to have reached so far, the remedy would have been overdosed!!! Are not the ravings of a tenant of Bedlam philosophy compared with this?

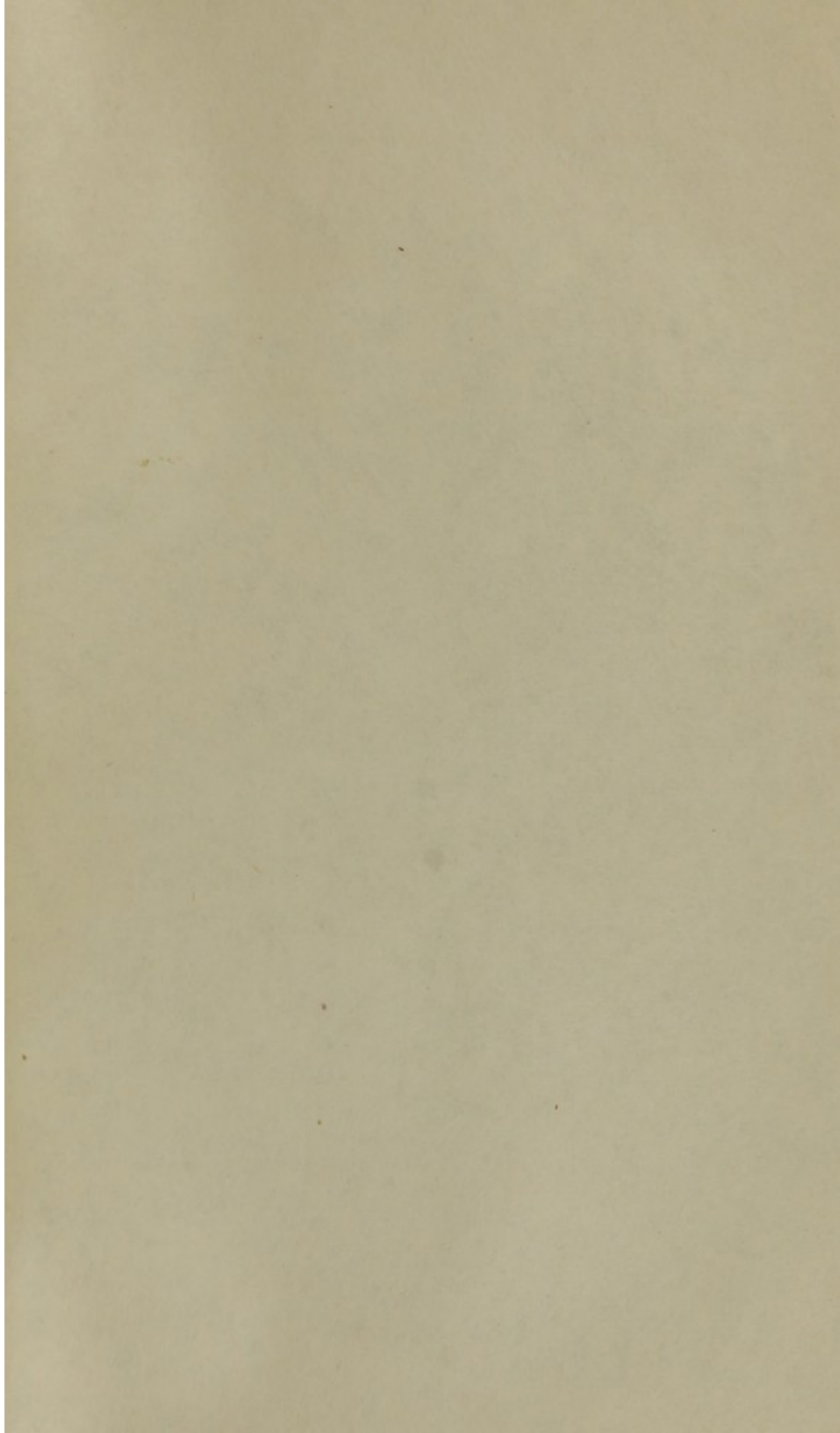
Does not the absurdity of practice like this, call for an expression of marked disgust?

Before I close I would remark that the duties of this society naturally range themselves under two divisions, those having relation to the suppression of quackery, and those, which embrace the improvements of a medical education; on this last subject we cannot go wrong unless we are determined to act perversely: our duty is to enlarge, in place of diminishing the term of study; and to require more preparation in the pupil to commence the study; heretofore sufficient attention has not been given to these subjects, and the result has been that the ranks of the profession have been crowded by men who have regretted that they ever were induced to devote themselves to its duties. They have found when too late to repair their error, that although the study of medicine was delightful, and every step of their progress displayed some new motive of pursuit; the practice is arduous, laborious, responsible, and unprofitable: that this is all true many now present can by their experience testify.

The moral culture of the physician is also a subject of serious concern which ought not to be overlooked; but as it devolves by necessity on the individuals composing the society and not on the society in its corporate character, it need not be especially insisted on in this place. I may be permitted to say, however, that the physician who undertakes the task of educating pupils, is lamentably deficient in duty to society, to the profession, to his pupils and to himself who neglects it. The student commences his medical education at a time when impressions are readily received, which for good or for evil will be matured into settled principles of action; no vocation in the world offers more temptation to swerve from the strict line of duty and propriety; familiarity with suffering is calculated to render him hard hearted and indifferent; necessity may render him illiberal and penuri-

ous; ingratitude may render him irascible and vindictive, and mortifications of various kinds, acerb and petulant: defeated in his expectations to attain eminence in his profession, he may attempt to compensate himself by indulging an avaricious and mercenary spirit, and to cast away his hopes of reputation for the more probable expectancy of wealth; how necessary then, that in early life he be furnished with a moral panoply which will enable him without effort, to resist all these temptations? A mercenary spirit of all vices in a physician is the most blighting; since it involves the sacrifice of every thing which can give dignity or grace to his profession.

Such a physician, even if qualified, is unworthy of confidence; and he is rarely so: for no well instructed physician can value his profession merely for the profit which it yields; the inordinate love of money bars all such expectation. The patient who places his life in the keeping of his physician surely has a right to expect that the trust will be guarded with a solicitude with which mercenary motives cannot associate; he has a right to expect that his absolute reliance will be met by a spirit in his physician worthy of such unconditional confidence, and a mercenary spirit is not such. For myself I am free to declare that I would rather be the sick tenant of a lodge by the road side, and trust my recovery to the unassisted efforts of nature, surrounded by my family, whose sympathies would alleviate my suffering, though their limited information might mistake the means; than be the proprietor of a well furnished and comfortable home under the same circumstances, attended by a mercenary physician, who might send me to my account before my time, make my wife a widow, orphan my children, and at last receive the extortionate wages of his iniquity through the sale or mortgage of my estate.



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