

A biographical memoir on the late John Revere, M.D / by Valentine Mott ... ; delivered at the request of the Medical Faculty of the University.

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Mott (Vol.)

A

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

ON THE LATE

JOHN REVERE, M. D.

PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK.

BY

VALENTINE MOTT, M. D.

PROFESSOR OF SURGERY IN THE UNIVERSITY.

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UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, Oct. 28th, 1847.

TO PROFESSOR MOTT.

Dear Sir,—I am requested by the Faculty to request you to furnish them for publication a copy of your able and eloquent address on the life of our lamented colleague, Dr. Revere.

Hoping that you will gratify us in this particular, believe me, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

JOHN W. DRAPER.

DEPAU PLACE, Oct. 30th, 1847.

TO PROFESSOR DRAPER.

Dear Sir:—I cannot refuse the kind request of my colleagues, made through you, to furnish a copy for publication of my attempt to delineate the character of our late friend, Professor Revere. This I the more cheerfully comply with, from a belief that some of his family and friends, who were not present at the time it was delivered, may feel some gratification in its perusal.

Yours very truly,

VALENTINE MOTT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS
AND ARCHITECTURE
OFFICE OF THE CURATOR
OF THE MUSEUM OF ARTS
AND ARCHITECTURE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JANUARY 1911
TO THE HONORABLE
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF CHICAGO
SIR:
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the proposed purchase of the collection of the late Mr. J. H. Thompson, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the Committee on the Purchase of the Collection of the late Mr. J. H. Thompson, and that the same is now under consideration.
Very respectfully,
J. H. Thompson
Curator of the Museum of Arts and Architecture

MEMOIR.

GENTLEMEN,—

A MELANCHOLY and unexpected event has cast a gloom over the University, since we were last assembled in these halls. Our honored colleague, Professor Revere, is now numbered with the dead. Many of you knew him well, and there are few who have not heard of his well-earned reputation as a teacher of Medicine. His name will long be cherished also by numbers of practitioners of the United States, who have profited by his instructions in some one of the medical institutions of our principal cities, which, during his life, successively called upon him to fulfil the important duties of a medical professor.

Nor could I adduce a more conclusive evidence of his ability as a teacher, than that of the eagerness which so many distinguished medical institutions have thus manifested to advance their own prosperity, by the acquisition of his influential name.

Boston, his native city, Baltimore, Philadelphia, may all claim the right to do honor to his memory; but no city will so sincerely mourn his loss as our own, which was the last of his adoption, and to which has been assigned the reluctant and mournful duty of bestowing the last sad obsequies over his lamented and premature decease.

Death is at all times and every where a subject of most

solemn import, but there are occasions in which it is attended with associating circumstances that attach to it an absorbing interest, or awaken the keenest sensibilities.

When the soldier, flushed with conquest, plants his country's standard on the citadel his valor has won, he has not only courted, but may be said, almost to welcome death. For having achieved his glorious object, his task is, so to speak, accomplished; and he is ready to pour out his life's blood freely beneath that banner whose folds are floating proudly over him.

So on the ship's decks, in the midst of the most terrific carnage, the gallant sailor dies content, if his last thoughts and his last gaze can be upon that flag which has summoned him to battle and to victory.

And upon all occasions, whether it be those which are inspired by patriotism, or those that are prompted by social duties, or by professional pride, or by individual chivalry, so long as the great and noble object has been consummated, even if death be the forfeit of our perilous daring, it comes robed to us in an aspect more or less captivating, and in part, at least, divested of its harsher terrors.

So also in our professional walks, when we see it approach as it were like some sainted spirit, in humanity and charity, to put a termination to agonizing, mental, or bodily distress that no mortal or medical power can arrest, we hail it as a Divine interposition from above.

Death, also, after a long and well spent life, when it comes at the usual allotted time for our existence, to close up our earthly career by an easy transition into the world to come, is regarded almost as a natural or desirable event. The oil of life is consumed, and the last glimmer of the wick calmly sheds its expiring, flicker-

ing rays from the socket. The grey hairs have gone down with honor to the grave, and the tears of sorrow are soon dried, as one generation thus, in the necessary course of things, makes room for that which is to succeed. For as in the ocean's billows, "*undam supervenit unda*," so in Time's eternal march, each successively passes in this never-ending funeral *cortege* to the valley of death.

Even, too, when beauty, or childhood's innocence, in all the bloom of apparent health, and with all the fascinations that can be imparted to them by new and daily developing traits of genius, and the prestige of future usefulness and brilliancy, are suddenly cut off by Heaven's mandate and consigned to the cold and unnatural tomb; is there not some consolation offered to the bereaved friends? Yes, there is still the reflection that an early death has thus saved the sufferer from many a pang, and from all those sorrows and crosses which no mortal can hope to escape from in "this vale of tears."

Also the exhilarating thought must necessarily obtrude itself, and must almost acquire the certainty of realization, that those who have been thus abruptly taken from the world, have been so removed because they were better fitted to enjoy a life of beatitude in another existence.

But there are however occasions, Gentlemen, when this great event, which is to unveil to all of us both the past and the future, comes in a shape and at a moment so apparently inopportune, that it produces a shock upon our feelings and upon the community in which it occurs. Like other mysteries of Divine Providence, it then comes shrouded to us in such impenetrable darkness, as to excite our especial wonder, and to surpass our utmost comprehension.

Yet whatever to us may seem to be the incompatibility, or ill-timed harmony of the event, with the condition of the individual upon whom it has been visited, it is not for us, poor mortals as we are, in possession of scarcely one ray of the Divine light of infinite goodness, to call in question, in any manner, the judicious adaptation of such a dispensation to the requirements of the Supreme will.

For some wise and beneficent purpose, which it is not for us even to attempt, by any presumption, to fathom or divine, our lamented associate has thus been suddenly removed from us, and from the scene of his labors, at the very moment when he appeared to be in the meridian of life, and in the enjoyment of what may be called consolidated and permanent health; and when he was also in the zenith of his usefulness and prosperity, and had given to the cultivation of his mind the highest degree of maturity and energy.

When I allude to his health, it may by some be supposed that I should have qualified my expressions. It is true that Dr. Revere was one of those constant examples of more or less prostration of the vital forces, which is an inseparable legacy or heir-loom to the man of genius and the scholar.

We never can in such look for any thing like robust physical energy, because the very character of a liberal profession, and its sedentary requirements are such, as to preclude the possibility of this result. The body must necessarily, more or less, languish in proportion to the preponderating exercise of the intellectual powers.

Still there is a matured epoch in the life of the student also, as well as in that of the husbandman who labors in the field. That epoch, when reached, indi-

cates that the constitution and organization have, like the oak, become set and firm. The utmost point of development is attained; the faculties, whether mental or bodily, have acquired a perfection and solidity, if I may so express myself, which are no longer to be thrown off their centre by slight concussions; consequently by this species of *repose*, so favorable to health, especially in the temperaments more or less nervous and irritable of all professional men, the prospects of the duration of life at this period, however wanting in outward bloom and vigor, are well known to be far better than under a contrary condition of things.

No one, to have seen him, could have imagined that the respected subject of these remarks, in the possession of all his natural composure, and of that sweet serenity of mind and suavity of manner, which everywhere won for him "troops of friends," was, alas! on the verge of the grave.

It is true, that for years past, he had been afflicted with a chronic irritation of the bronchial membrane, common in advancing life, and especially in such temperaments of the nervo-lymphatic character of his. But this, however it may have been increased at times into congestion, by sudden revulsions from changes in the temperature or humidity of our climate, was, through a cautious diet and regimen, kept in quite a manageable state, and perfectly controuled by nature herself, by a free and abundant muco-purulent expectoration.

His appetite was good; he was constantly in the active exercises of his professional and professorial duties, and rarely did it appear that these were interrupted by indisposition. A circumstance that should have been more seriously considered in the prognosis of a case of this kind than it was, were it not common in

such persons, was the occasional expectoration of small quantities of blood, which, however, were not deemed of moment even by himself, who regarded them altogether as venous emissions from the larger bronchial divisions.

This hemorrhagic tendency, as it would appear, must have acquired greater force from a constantly accumulating congestion of blood for years, in the more and more relaxed mucous membrane, until a general sanguineous œdema was thereby produced, ending in the fatal attack of a regular Hæmoptysis, with paroxysms of enormous expectoration of blood. Under the severe exhaustion following these discharges, and without any other apparent complication of disease, he, after a few days of suffering, which he bore with signal firmness and pious resignation, sank calmly into the arms of Him who gave him life.

I have thus, in some measure, anticipated this part of my subject, gentlemen, merely to illustrate the point I had advanced, that there was nothing in fact in the appearance of Dr. Revere, that would not seem to have indicated a prolongation of his life to a period much beyond that of the age of sixty, at which it has been unhappily terminated.

As it was with his outward appearance of the promise of continued health, to cheer and lighten the task of his declining years, so was it also with the fortunate combination of all those circumstances that he could have wished for, to conspire to his own worldly prosperity, and especially to the success of this University, in which he took such warm and heartfelt pride.

He saw all his labors and assiduity, while a student abroad or a professor at home, now at last rewarded. He felt, it is true, that he could not any where in his

own land, wherever in the changes of life he had been located, boast of ever having had the *clientelle* or professional practice of an Astley Cooper, or a Civiale. But experience at the bedside had, in his investigations of disease, widely opened her portals to his enquiring and active mind in various countries, and in various climates. The valued and various fruits with which he thus stored and enriched his understanding for its riper cultivation, he knew he never could have gathered by a stationary confinement for years to one spot, and to the severer duties of the drudgery of every day practice.

The question is, whether to you, Gentlemen, the outpourings of a mind thus cultivated by long and severe study, by rigid observation, and the constant annotations and comparisons of the diversified facts, thus gleaned at the bedside every where, are not far more important lessons and precepts, to guide you in your wanderings, than the mere monotonous details of monographs of symptoms. Such we consider to have been the secret of the pre-eminence of Dr. Revere, and of his popularity as a teacher. No one ever doubted the high cultivation of his intellect, the classic purity of his education, and the evidence which he every where discloses of a most accomplished collegiate education.

If to these he superadded such a mass of invaluable practical knowledge as he possessed, obtained in his attendance upon the schools and hospitals of Europe, as to give him the utmost facilities at the bedside, as a most sagacious, prompt and successful practitioner, intimately and extensively conversant with disease under all its protean modifications; can you wonder that a mind which had been put through such a searching ordeal as this from early life, which had never relaxed in vigilance,

and was ever looking forward to the glory of his profession; can you be surprised that one adorned so intellectually, having such extraordinary professional advantages, and gifted like him with such fluency of speech, to give utterance to his fine thoughts, should have been so often selected as the most suitable of all others, to teach and impart knowledge?

Some of you, Gentlemen, know personally, that in describing my friend, as I thus have done, I have not used terms of exaggeration. You know, and can say, whether his lessons were not such as would have done honor to the best name in the annals of the colleges, and whether he did not always portray to you in clear and graphic outlines, the great features of disease, as they have been described by the standard authors of our science in all times, and as corroborated by his own personal investigations.

You know whether the programme of his own department was not always full and complete, and whether he did not excel by that impressive and persuasive delivery which he possessed, in conveying to you minds a perfect type of medicine as it is, in all the branches of the subjects assigned to him.

It falls to the lot of but few, to have alike faithfully studied diseases under opposite climates of the globe, and every where to have closely followed in the track and footsteps of pestilence. It was Dr. Revere's good lot however, both in Europe and in this country, to have closely examined some of the worst forms of those distempers which so frequently desolate the human race.

To such experience, derived from its very sources, and constituting the very ground-work of his views and doctrines in medicine, he added also the happy talent of

constantly keeping pace with, and posting his mind up to all the rich acquisitions that have been made to the healing art within the last half century.

It was from thus being vigilantly on the look-out for new inquiries and discoveries, which could possibly improve our science, and always equally capable also of sifting the wheat from the chaff, and of substituting the solemn judgment of truth and reason for the deceptive illusions of fancy and hypothesis, that he rendered himself so peculiarly fitted to be a teacher of medicine.

He was in truth a sentinel upon the "outward wall," on whom you could scrupulously confide. He gave you in his lessons such practical axioms for your guidance, as have been thoroughly established upon indisputable evidence; and with a nice and discriminative analysis, he discarded whatever was known to be pernicious, and especially whatever marred against his keen antipathy to empiricism.

I knew him intimately, and never knew any one who had a more sensitive feeling of refinement, in all that appertained to the honor and glory and well being of his profession. He avoided, it is true, on all occasions, ever employing harsh or offensive language, for he never forgot the high-toned Revolutionary blood from which he descended, and felt that a certain rigid courtesy, so long as it was mutually observed, was due to all men on all subjects. Though he severely combatted opinions, he never therefore descended to personalities. For even had it ever occurred, that one so imbued with the charities and humanities of life as he was and so disposed to forgive rather than accuse, had been assaulted by the tongue of malevolence, Dr. Revere was too polished a gentleman, to have thought of retaliating by such weapons.

Both as a physician and as a man,—both in his *morale*, as well as in his profession proper, he was a model, gentlemen, that you might have good cause to remember. Such as he was at his death, so was he in his youth and manhood; marked always by that punctilious and delicate course of conduct, which every where gathered friends around him, who loved and cherished him. In him they knew there was indomitable honor, cool determination, unflinching devotion to truth, and an abhorrence of deceit and treachery.

In his religion, too, there was a beautiful point or trait in his character, which we would for one moment desire to dwell upon. Religion in him found a sincere and a humble worshiper; one who felt in the enlarged sympathies of his own heart a conscious truth, that it was a supreme consolation and a just recompense, that Divine goodness had intended and designed for the whole human race.

He was no partisan or declaimer on such subjects, but let it be added, that although his whole life was thus free of all cant or outward profession, he felt within himself an inward repugnance to those narrow-minded and selfish persons who would appropriate the mansions of Heaven to a chosen or exclusive aristocracy.

He could worship his God at the chapel of his own heart, and upon his own hearth, and remote from all eyes but that *One* which knew and saw the truth and holiness of his devotions. Thus it was that without the least pretensions toward, or encroachment upon others, he pursued “the even tenor of his way,” neither wounding or crushing the feelings of any one, but enjoying through the aid of his own remorseless and pure conscience, all the sweets and delights of an exalted religious belief, as free from guile and design, or

worldly admixture of ostentation, as was his own spotless character.

Gentlemen, I would say thus much in the utmost sincerity of my own heart. I would not say more—I can not say less. For I have seen in him some of the blessings of a religion thus untainted of all sectarian and selfish impurities.

There are sorrows and troubles, which do what we may, or however fortune may smile upon us, we must all both encounter and endure. It was in such moments of affliction that our noble friend felt himself buoyed up, *not elated*, with the blessed hope, which can turn darkness into day, and extract the thorn from the deepest wound.

More than this, gentlemen; it was this religion, and this *alone* could do it, which gave to him, when death so suddenly summoned him from us, that calm courage, and that benign resignation, which enabled him to meet with serene composure, this final doom that awaits us all. What was it but this, which could impart that tranquil look, that placid smile even in that last death-grasp which was to separate him from us forever?

What though all worldly admonitions would seem now to urge him to remain, and to enjoy at last, in peace, that which had been prepared for him; for every thing around beamed prosperously upon him. They were as the idle chaff, or the “tinkling cymbal.” His God had announced that the hour of departure had arrived—he was prepared for it—his house was in order—no reluctance did he evince at severing his connection forever from all temporal things;

“All former days of dear delight,
Connubial love, parental joys,
All else on earth he held most dear.”

All these he heroically resigned, and nobly surrendered his soul and his spirit to the Almighty power that gave them into his keeping.

It was, gentlemen, a death-bed scene which his family will never forget, for in this terminating *stadium* of human existence, when the mind is clear and self-possessed, there was here, as has been so often said, and truly said, another precious lesson to be learned, of that absolute and supreme mastery and control, which Christian faith, as a means of consolation, possesses over every other thought that can enter or influence the human mind, and over every earthly affliction that can torment the human frame.

We trust that in this too, I mean in the religious portraiture of my friend's character, and which emits an undying lustre over all his other estimable endowments, you will be mindful and imitative of what he has proved to you may be obtained by a meek observance of the Christian duties we all owe to each other, and to our God.

With a brief enumeration of some of the events of Dr. Revere's life, I will conclude the tribute, which, as much from personal regard as from professional duty and appointment, I have sought to render upon this occasion, to my much respected and ever to be lamented colleague.

JOHN REVERE, M. D. was born in Boston, State of Massachusetts, on the 17th of March, 1787. He was the youngest son of Colonel Paul Revere, a distinguished mechanic of that city, who organized and headed this powerful and respectable interest, in resistance to the aggressions of the British crown during the thrilling and memorable epoch of our Revolution-

ary struggles. The family are of the famous Huguenots, and are descended from the *Rivoires*, now written *Reveres*, and of the south of France.*

His boyhood days were passed "partly in the excellent public school of his native town, and partly under the superintendence of the Rev. Thomas Thacher of Dedham, a gentleman in that day much entrusted with the discipline of youth designed for the university."†

He then entered and received a regular classical education, at that celebrated and most ancient seat of learning, Harvard University, and there graduated in the class of 1807.‡

He studied medicine under the care of Dr. James Jackson, professor of the theory and practice of medicine in Harvard University, and enjoyed the friendship of that eminent man during the remainder of his life.§ "We had attended," (says an old fellow pupil and an early friend,) "medical lectures together at Cambridge, and our classes were so near as to allow of some intercourse before. He was an excellent medical student; he was desirous of success, and he labored to obtain it. It is in certain memory that he did not study in vain. It was the custom then to study in the preceptor's office or house. The student was called on to *put up prescriptions* when needed. A great deal of time, the day, the whole day and evening were devoted to work.

"We were examined in the books we read. We did not in the first weeks or months of pupilage see much

* Extract of a letter from his brother, Joseph W. Revere, to V. Mott, dated Boston, May 16, 1847.

† New York Christian Enquirer.

‡ See notice of his death, by W. C., in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, May 12, 1847, Vol. xxxvi, No. 15, p. 292.

§ Letter from his brother to V. Mott.

practice. We devoted the time to getting eyes, so to speak, to see with. Accidents, surgical operations, and post mortuary examinations we were permitted to witness; and those formed the principal matters of practical observation and of outward study. Dr. Revere was very faithful to such opportunities, and early acquired habits of investigation which were confirmed in later and wider fields of study."

I mention these particulars, related by his friend and fellow pupil, to show you, that while yet a youth and simultaneously with or perhaps before his graduation as Bachelor of Arts at the University, he not only, as we know from his scholarship, did full justice to the classics and the sciences, but entered heartily and thoroughly into the rudimental studies of the profession he had selected; and thus, while his young mind was in a state to retain vividly all the impressions made upon it, he was, according to the wholesome usages of those days, which are too much if not totally neglected now, made conversant with all the practical duties of the student; the preparation of medicines, and a knowledge of their qualities, properties, and appearances, besides being subjected also to a close examination upon all the subjects studied in the elementary works placed in his hands.

I would place before you, gentlemen, the studious habits, and the elegant culture of mind which, as the natural fruit of his early devotion, distinguished our lamented friend in maturer years. They are the beautiful evidences of what he accomplished, and what you also may all accomplish, by consecrating even your moments of leisure from practice and severe reading, to those literary and classical pursuits, which, while they strengthen the intellect, so appropriately adorn the profession to which we belong.

Nam ceteræ neque temporum sunt, neque ætatum omnium, neque locorum; hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent; delectant, domi, non impediunt foris, *pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur*.*

After the usual courses of study he visited Europe, and especially Edinburgh and Paris, and in 1811 graduated as Medicinæ Doctor at that renowned Alma Mater of medical science in the Scottish capital.

"We parted, (says his friend and fellow pupil in Dr. Jackson's office, already cited,†) upon leaving the office of an excellent and most important instructor, he for Europe and I for Philadelphia. After three years or more, I met with Dr. Revere again in Edinburgh.

"He had visited other cities, devoted himself to professional studies in them, and had reached Edinburgh with a view to graduating in its celebrated medical school. That winter was a most pleasant one. The best opportunities for study and for practice were offered the students, and the society of Americans and the inhabitants made our Edinburgh residence exceedingly agreeable.

"We lived in the same house, pursued like studies, and had the same society. In the school were Gregory, Hope, Home, Monro, Hamilton—in the literary society were Mackenzie, Ferguson, Scott, Jeffrey, Sinclair, Grant, Brown, &c. I cannot forget," says the same early friend, "a tour on foot which we made together that autumn through the Highlands of Scotland, then made classic ground by the poetry of Scott, and even more so since by his wonderful prose."

Permit me, gentlemen, here to digress for a moment, from the thread of this narrative, to make a personal al-

* See Ciceronis pro Archia Poeta Oratio, Tom. IV, p. 428.

† Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, loc. cit.

lusion to the galaxy of talent which gave such deserved celebrity to the Scotch capital. As I preceded him but a year or two in my studies at that renowned university, we had both enjoyed the opportunity of listening to the lessons of the same great masters of our art. Our Alma Mater was dearly cherished by us both. Often in our hours of relaxation and leisure from professional duties, while here united again in brotherhood under this University in our maturer years, have we recalled those pleasant moments of our youthful studies. Often have we held delightful converse, upon the prominent traits and respective merits of our great teachers, and recurred back to the reminiscences of those halcyon days of our pupilage, with a pure and unalloyed satisfaction. Pleasant was this interchange of thought with one, whose sensitive mind and delicate perceptions were capable of appreciating worth, and so susceptible of that high enjoyment derived in looking back upon the beauties of the past. The fragrance of these sweet memories is a soothing balm to the heart, and these cherished reunions with my departed friend, in the evening of our days, will never be forgotten, but hallowed in my remembrance like the mellowed light which sheds its mild radiance over the last beauties of the western sky.

It was pleasant for us upon these occasions, to discourse upon the profound learning and emphatic manner of the great Gregory—the clear, perspicuous and eloquent style of Hope; these and the matchless talent of the elder Duncan and Home as clinical professors, were often the theme of our admiration and gratitude. For our Alma Mater, both of us could truly say,

“*Salve magna parens,*” etc.

On his return from Europe, Dr. Revere commenced the practice of his profession at his native city of Boston, but soon found the austere winters of this residence wholly incompatible with the tendency to bronchitic inflammation which we have already alluded to, as an affection which appears with him to have been more or less constitutional. Though subsequent events, however, proved that there could not have been any radical tubercular disease in the respiratory apparatus, a considerable degree of expectoration of blood at this first severe attack, which took place in the year 1816, clearly admonished him to seek out in time for a milder and more propitious climate.

He accordingly* immediately embarked for the south. But to show how far from being deep-seated this pulmonary affection was, we have only to remark, that he had to go no farther south than by a short excursion by sea to Richmond, in Virginia, when his troublesome cough and other symptoms almost immediately vanished.† “So that after remaining a short time in Richmond he left for Baltimore, with a purpose of settling in that city. He began practice there, and having leisure, devoted some of it to the study of chemistry, and to experiments which might result in useful discoveries. Among these were attempts to prevent the *rusting of iron in sea water*, with a view to using this comparatively cheap metal on the bottom of ships as a substitute for copper. Dr. Revere, thinking he had arrived at his object, went to England in 1829, and there interested Sir William Adams, formerly a distinguished oculist, in his project.”

He remained abroad two or three years, during which time he had another golden opportunity to profit by the

* Letter from his brother to V. Mott.

† Boston Med. and Surg. Journ., loc. cit.

lessons of the great medical teachers, who had now appeared above the horizon since the days of his early studies at Edinburgh. In these opportunities he doubtless again largely participated, and added to the already well garnered stores of his cultivated intellect; finding, in his attendance upon the English schools and hospitals, an infinite deal more of substantial remuneration than he ever probably would have obtained from the El Dorado which his inquisitive and ingenious mind was in pursuit of. This episode or deviation of Dr. Revere from the more accustomed beaten path of the severe regime of his profession, though not perhaps injurious to him as regards the disciplining of his ideas to scientific analysis, is probably the only one of the kind in his career which ever probably so entirely absorbed his attention. And if it proved to him, as it did virtually, an *ignis fatuus*, in as much as the preparation he recommended was found to be too costly a substitute,* it served him also for a lesson not to be again seduced from the rail-road track of a uniform and systematic devotion to the duties that appertained to his appropriate sphere.

To all these reflections, however, we might subjoin the remark, that even the immortal Cullen, who filled the same chair of medicine at Edinburgh, which our esteemed friend so elegantly adorned here, also himself began his professional life with the teaching of chemistry.

While in Baltimore Dr. Revere had translated Majendie's Physiology, and published some papers on professional subjects.† From Baltimore he removed to Philadelphia, and there, in 1831, was appointed profes-

* See Christian Enquirer, loc. cit.

† Boston Med. and Surg. Journ.

sor of medicine in the Jefferson College of that city. In this chair he fulfilled the high expectations that had been formed of his ability, and his accession to the college named, contributed largely to the fame which he and those associated with him gave to that institution.

From Jefferson College at Philadelphia, and at that time, as now, in a highly flourishing condition, he was, upon the re-organization of the medical faculty of the University of this city in the year 1840, invited by the council of the institution to the chair of theory and practice, which he had occupied with so much distinction at Philadelphia. In what manner he has realized the favorable anticipations with which his name had been associated, and to what extent he has justified the good opinions that had been every where entertained of him, I have already briefly stated in the commencement of this discourse.

It is not for me perhaps to say or to speak in behalf of my colleagues, of what we ourselves may have contributed to this institution, to the attainment of the uninterrupted prosperity which has been constantly augmenting, in measure and in strength, since the day when its doors were first thrown open to the admission of medical students. All of us, however, could not pay a higher homage to the distinguished influence which we, his brother professors, believe his talents to have exercised upon our destinies, than we here manifest in the profound and sincere grief with which we deplore his loss.

The language of his early friend and fellow pupil, to whose obituary notice of our lamented colleague I have had frequent occasion to refer in the course of my remarks, can perhaps be more appropriately and delicately

appealed to on this occasion. It will convey a correct idea of the impression which Dr. Revere's peculiar tact and ability, as a teacher, left on the minds of others who may be deemed more impartial witnesses than the testimony which we, his colleagues, might give, commingled as our testimony must be, with the poignant sorrow we feel in the bereavement we have sustained.

That friend remarks—"It will be seen that Dr. Revere's professional life was very much occupied in lecturing and in its preparation. To this he at length almost exclusively devoted himself. He passed a part of his summers here, (in Boston,) in the society of his family and friends, and returned to his public labors as the time approached for their exercise. He is spoken of as a successful teacher. He studied faithfully his subject and after strictly philosophical methods, which gave great accuracy to his teachings. The philosophy of Bacon and its methods, were favorite studies with him; and his lectures, it is said, had their character from the instructions of that great master of thought. An intelligent pupil who had attended a course of the New York University, and was a late graduate in our own, said to the writer, that he thought Dr. Revere one of the best lecturers he had ever listened to. He said that he always laid out his ground with care, kept his subject steadily before him, and presented it as a connected whole, after a method so severe and exact, that a student who would give to it his undivided attention, could not fail of receiving important instruction. I was glad of his success," feelingly adds his distinguished friend, "and this illustration of it is fresh in my memory."*

* Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, loc. cit.

In this plain and unvarnished judgment, I most fully and cordially concur; and there are none of you, Gentlemen, who have ever had the good fortune to listen to *him* whose voice is now never more to be heard within these walls, that will not, I feel assured, give your unqualified adhesion to this well merited encomium. It is to be hoped that a correct copy exists of the lectures delivered by this eminent physician. At the time of his death they must, by the successive emendations they had received from his polished pen, his extensive erudition, and his discriminative judgment during a period of several years, have attained such a degree of perfection, both by the luminous views he entertained, and by the careful and beautiful diction he employed, as would make them, if published to the world, a text-book of inestimable value.

We would fain express the hope that those to whose charge they have been confided, may soon have it in their power to issue from the press these lessons, which embody by far the most important labors of his life, and the publication of which is due to his country and to the profession of which he was so bright an ornament. So also it is due to his respected family—his afflicted widow and honored children, who are left to mourn his irreparable loss. The heads of lectures, as I am informed by his son, are only to be found among his papers.

For some time before his death he was engaged in an extensive work on the practice of medicine, to the extent of about 1500 octavo pages. Four hundred of these are printed. No trace of its continuance in manuscript can as yet be found, which is much to be regretted.

The world, at present, are debarred from an accurate

knowledge of what those excellent lessons contained. For, except in the memory of those students who have profited by a personal attendance upon his course, and in whose recollections they will long be vividly retained for the soundness of their doctrine, and the practical facts in medicine in which they abounded, there is scarcely any where a trace of them to be met with in print.

The apprehensions which may have been indulged in by some, that the lectures of Dr. Revere, because he was not daily occupied in an extended field of practice, do not contain materials of sufficient originality and value to be transmitted to posterity, is, I can affirm as far as my own personal knowledge goes, entirely destitute of foundation.

If it were only for the correct judgments which a mind so systematized and so well balanced as his, has recorded upon the various embarrassing questions which medical science presents, these alone would give to his lessons an intrinsic worth, which would render their preservation a most desirable event. But it is not true, as we have already before hinted, that there are any evidences to show, that the courses of instruction delivered by this able professor, were in any respect deficient, in a full and perfect exposition of the great practical truths embraced in the department which was assigned to him.

When Dr. Revere, without the necessity of our adverting to an anterior period of his history as a teacher of medicine, began his lessons at this University, he had, it must be recollected, passed the meridian of his life. His mind had now become ripened to full and vigorous maturity, by the ample and diversified opportunities he had, we repeat, long enjoyed for

professional observation and study, both abroad and at home, and more especially by his having triumphantly withstood the searching ordeal to which his pretensions had been submitted during the period of years, in which he so successfully taught the theory and practice of medicine in the Jefferson College, with which he had been connected previously to his removal to our own city.

Here also, he engaged more or less in the duties of daily practice. But by the greater leisure which he now enjoyed, and by his exemption from those unremitted professional engagements which make the life of a physician a painful drudgery, and one which his constitution could not have sustained, he was now thereby better enabled calmly to review and correct the acquisitions he had made in his own personal experience in former years, and to canvass with greater accuracy those disturbing doctrines and opinions, which for a long time past have divided the medical world.

Subjected to the crucible of his cool and philosophical powers of reasoning, these opinions, in the retirement and seclusion of his closet, could be deliberately and impartially examined. The results that he would arrive at, were thus far more likely to be in accordance with truth, than would be the conclusions of those whose judgments were warped or biased by preconceived prejudices. For he by his constitutionally sedate temperament and his cool composure, and his punctilious sense of right and wrong, was pre-eminently calculated to deliver a clear and just decision upon whatever was presented for his investigation. Disconnected as he was with all extraneous influences, and never in any shape permitting his feelings to become enlisted in controversial disputation, he was therefore, by his very

position, and by his abstraction as it were from the world, so much the more capable of submitting every debatable question or point, to a rigid and exact analysis.

The facts were all and fully before him, for he neglected no opportunity to keep himself accurately posted up and informed in the knowledge of every improvement, discovery or suggestion, that could shed the least degree of light upon the great department of medical science entrusted to his keeping.

It is not that physician, Gentlemen, who is perpetually occupied and annoyed with those subordinate details that almost hourly demand his presence in the sick chamber, who can ever hope to have leisure to arrange in such organic order, as to be rendered serviceable to mankind, the countless multitude of facts he must thus necessarily have presented to him.

Such physicians, though thrown into occasions in which they are constantly surrounded with masses of new and interesting phenomena at the bedside, have not the inclination, and most frequently, it too often happens, not the ability or education, even if they had the time, to profit by the splendid opportunities thus prodigally lavished upon them for enlightening the world.

It is at least a lamentable truth, that there are but very rare exceptions indeed, in which those who are overwhelmed as it were with such opportunities for investigation, do ever gratify their fellow men with the fruits of their observations.

It is not in most instances within the scope of human physical power to do so, whatever may be the intellectual ability, the will, or the ambition of the practitioner, to sit down calmly at midnight, after the exhaust-

ing fatigues of the day, and write out in a systematic and deliberate manner the information which he has hurriedly gathered in an interminable succession of visits from one sick room to another.

So that in fact some of the best standard works perhaps that we possess, both in medicine and surgery, are those that have emanated, either from men once largely in practice, and who have had, during the course of it, time but to note down only a memorandum of its more prominent points and heads for after reflection, or from those individuals whose opportunities for extended practice have been comparatively limited, but who have well and most accurately recorded at the time all they have seen, and precisely as it has occurred, and faithfully registered the phenomena, from the evolution of the first symptoms, down to the minutest appearances presented by the post-mortem examinations.

And if there be a choice between the two, it stands to reason, Gentlemen, that the results of the last mentioned class of enquirers, are far more likely to possess an inherent and permanent value, than those of the first. Those of the first, or more laborious and incessantly occupied class, will be more apt to be confused or unorganized masses of details of uninteresting phenomena, and of irrelevant circumstances and facts, dilated and expanded out into dimensions that no student can ever hope to master; because they are comparatively destitute of generalizations—they want the great landmarks of science, and therefore lead to no practical, serviceable truths. We require constantly a classification, in other words, a reduction and retrenchment, of all these special observations, to such brief and general laws, or intelligible rules, as will render them practical and useful.

In the vast and chaotic multiplication of details, the mind becomes lost and embarrassed, and knowledge in such a shape as this never can be made portable or available. Nevertheless, every case of disease has some new point or feature to be noted down.

I shall not, Gentlemen, on the present occasion, fall into the error myself, of expatiating too much at length upon this subject. My object has been briefly to explain to you, why a man of the character and habits of Dr. Revere was, notwithstanding the apparent disadvantages he had to contend with, capable nevertheless of rendering himself far more useful as a teacher, than others perhaps who possessed infinitely greater opportunities of attending upon the details of daily practice.

"Cucullus non facit monachum"—the hood don't make the monk; and it is not the sick room alone, nor the bedside, nor the operating table, indispensable as they all are, both to the surgeon and physician, that can alone make the most accomplished teacher of our science.

That a physician or surgeon, or individual in any one department of medicine, should have first made himself perfectly familiar with all those elementary details upon which the entire superstructure of the science rests, before he undertakes to teach that branch, is a truth that must be obvious to you all.

But that, after having passed through the great ordeal of his profession, and after having stored his mind with the personal observation of such truths as are immutable, and that neither time nor sophistry can ever overthrow, he should still go on ceaselessly to encumber and crowd his memory with the mere monotonous, mechanical routine and accumulation of unimportant details of practice, before he can venture to teach his art, is what I do most absolutely deny.

We will here leave the discussion at this point, and revert more particularly to the immediate history of the distinguished individual whose regretted death has suggested these reflections.

German to this point of our subject, is another quotation we will here give from the friend of Dr. Revere, Dr. Channing of Boston. "Dr. Revere (he remarks) was courteous, of very agreeable manners, and a truly amiable man. He was desirous of excellence. He was ambitious of distinction in that to which he devoted himself, and labored to obtain it. He had wide opportunities for that study which might qualify him for public teaching; for he was not interrupted by disturbing professional engagements. His mind was filled with the observations and thinking of others. He gave to these his own mind—gave to their study his nights and his days, and so made them his own. He studied medicine very much, but not exclusively as public teachers study other sciences; and he taught after their methods. Authority took the place often of personal observation, and the professor was satisfied, that with true light he should not lead others astray."

The only objection to these remarks is, that they do not go far enough, and tell the whole story; for Dr. Revere not only exhibited in his own mind a storehouse replete with the useful knowledge of other men, both that of his predecessors and cotemporaries; but he possessed also a large repository of useful knowledge which had been obtained by his own patient and laborious industry. Add to all which, he had the genius and the discrimination to accord, as we have said, the exact amount of value due to all this fund of information, and it was this sifting and analytical talent, and the power he also possessed of communicating his

knowledge in the most perspicuous language, redolent with the beauty of diction, and devoid of all useless ornament, that gave him such a decided rank as a medical teacher.

Another friend, who must have known him well, pays a touching tribute to the overflowing goodness and ever active humanities of his heart, as these were illustrated in the deep and abiding interest he always expressed in behalf of the medical students who came to attend his lectures. "The young, the hope of the world, were especially the objects of his unselfish hope and his generous consideration. He entered into their feelings—he was all courtesy and kindness to them, and his exterior bending was the genuine exhibition of a kindred heart and a sincere humanity."

A beautiful specimen of this was not long ago related to the writer of this very imperfect memorial. When about to join himself to the Jefferson College, he spoke nearly as follows to some of the professors. "We must not consider our functions as teachers to be confined to science solely. A medical school should be one of civility and generosity—a parental duty belongs to the professor—he should treat young men, away from domestic society and counsel, as he would wish his own son to be treated.

"Men of riper years may not find perfectly congenial conversation with the young and untaught, but we must divest ourselves of our own peculiar preference in companions, for the good to be conferred by a little self-sacrifice. We may teach the young to respect themselves by extending to them some hospitality—by giving a portion of time to such intercourse with them, as may elevate and gratify their tastes. We ought to do this, and we must do it."

Such sentiments are worthy of Boerhaave, and are in advance of ordinary practice in professional education.

"It would be difficult, (truly remarks the same friend,) to calculate the amount of good done by Dr. Revere, by his dignity and refinement, his social grace, and general information. *The true gentleman is a character of vital beauty ; it is the better nature embodied and in action ; not for great occasions only, but for all occasions.* The spirit that animates him is a leaven that pervades all that he says and does."

Dr. Revere "was not only courteous, but modestly instructive in discourse. He had no bitter prejudices, no deadly antipathies, and he provoked no enemies. Perfectly free from pedantry, he drew from ample sources. The countries he had visited, the eminent men he had known, the science he had pursued, and his professional experience, not only ministered to his own knowledge," but constituted, (the writer might have added, a rich arsenal to draw upon in his communications to other men.) "The seed (concludes this writer) that he sowed in more than thirty years of professional life will not be lost ; but must, if virtue be imitable, and truth be a germinant principle, spring up and bear fruit abundantly. All the charities of father, son and brother, were parts of his moral nature ; all the duties of husband, parent, friend and citizen, were the habits of his daily life. Those who knew him most intimately, and loved him most dearly, cherish the memory of his virtues as a legacy of great price, and look confidently to a reunion with him where there is neither sorrow nor tears."*

I shall now close this tribute, which I have tendered as much from personal feelings of sincere affection, as on account of the professional duty assigned to me,

* Christian Enquirer, loc. cit.

by briefly recurring to the last hours of our departed friend. He received the announcement of his approaching end with a coolness, and serenity of resignation to the Divine will, becoming in the highest degree to the character of a philosopher, and the duties of a Christian ; and in perfect correspondence to and in keeping with the blameless tenor of his whole life. He had often meditated upon this event as one which might, from the tendencies of his constitution, come upon him at a moment when it was least to be expected. With that caution, therefore, and prudence which no one should ever under any circumstances neglect, he had long since arranged all his worldly affairs, and as I have said, had set his house in ample order, that he might be ready whenever that death summons should arrive. And when it did come at last, like an unwelcome apparition, (for to all of us, it is at best, and even when we are to all appearance best prepared, an unwelcome messenger,) he looked upon it with heroic fortitude, and commending his soul to God, with the true humility and piety of a sincere believer and upright man, resigned himself to its mandates.

“ Yet who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned ;
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind ?”

For so to speak, in a worldly sense, our friend had every thing to live for, and the great object of all his labors and industry had been fully achieved. Living in an easy competency, with troops of friends that clung to him with “ hooks of steel,” with a reputation for kindness of heart, and talents as a popular teacher, that most men might have envied—and surrounded by an amiable and affectionate family, a loved wife and endear-

ed children, who were all he could prize most dear on earth—he was torn abruptly from this picture of true domestic happiness, and from the midst of his public labors. At the very hour when all seemed lighted with cloudless sunshine ;—to become, alas ! the tenant of the dark and cheerless tomb !

What imparts a still more interesting character to this event, was the immediate circumstances which *he* at least supposed had given a fatal issue to his constitutional pulmonary infirmity. In that benevolence of his heart, and with that prompt and active spirit of charity which was a distinguishing, if not the brightest trait of his whole life, he was called upon to give professional attendance upon a medical student of this city. Thus did he again illustrate in the last act of his life, it may be said, those kindly duties which, Gentlemen, as we have said, he always enjoined upon his brother professors, as among the most important which it behoved them to perform to those confided to their charge. It was thus, Gentlemen, to the bedside of one of your own class, and of one who perhaps was a cherished companion of some of those whom I am now addressing, that Dr. Revere hurried with anxious feeling, to pay all those attentions which medical skill could suggest, and to administer such soothing sympathies as his natural goodness so well knew how to bestow.

Though he was well aware that the disease which he was thus called upon to combat, was a case of that frightful pestilence which was then desolating the masses of famished and miserable emigrants from Ireland, at all our public charities ; that it was Typhus, with all its aggravating and loathsome symptoms, and a fever so eminently contagious under certain circumstances ; the thought of danger, no more than it should in the youngest

soldier on the field of our profession, never entered his head. He was assiduous and unceasing in his attendance at the bedside of his young friend. He saw his patient gradually decline before him—the malady obstinately resisted every remedy devised; till at length death closed the scene, and thus, in the person of the lamented Samuel M. Farrar,* added another victim to the number of those young men in our profession who have honorably sacrificed their lives in their ardent devotion to medical science, and to the relief of suffering humanity.

Never in the annals of history shall it be forgotten, that when unhappy Ireland was perishing from a desolating famine and pestilence combined, our own beloved country was by Divine Providence left with its abundance of the fruits of the earth, as a blessed asylum in their distress. Here American generosity was ready to offer them, not only a comfortable and happy home, and an exhaustless magazine to replenish their wants, but heroic lives to be sacrificed if necessary, in administering to them at the sick couch.

It was the conviction, strongly and constantly impressed upon the mind of Dr. Revere, up to the hour of his dissolution, that the fatal seeds of Typhus infection were by him imbibed during his attendance upon his young friend. Thus engrafted upon that organic disease which was constitutional with him, it speedily resulted in an uncontrollable hemorrhage from the lungs. Then, alas! have we to record *him also as another*, and yet more distinguished victim, who has been prematurely sacrificed to that hallowed and God-like charity, which in the fulfillment of its divine requirements, has spread

* Of Fincastle, Virginia.

out our open arms to give shelter and a resting place even to pestilence itself.

Memory thus, with all his other virtues and benevolent deeds, will associate this too with the estimable character of our departed colleague, and fondly cling to it, as one of the noblest acts of self-devotion that history records.

But he was ready, and his glorious task on this earth, if not wholly completed as he could have desired, had culminated to a point of high distinction. He had so thoroughly fulfilled all the God-like duties of a man and a Christian, that he well could meet the relentless tyrant with a smile, grappling with him as he did on the field of battle, and thus dying in the midst of his perilous duties.

“Come to the bridal chamber, Death!
 Come to the mother when she feels
 For the first time her first-born’s breath;
 Come when the blessed seals
 That close the pestilence are broke,
 And crowded cities wail its stroke;
 Come in consumption’s ghastly form,
 The earthquake’s shock, the ocean’s storm;
 Come when the heart beats high and warm,
 With banquet song and dance and wine,
 And thou art terrible;—the tear,
 The groan, the knell, the pall, the bier,
 And all we know, or dream, or fear
 Of agony are thine.

But to the hero, when his sword
 Has won the battle for the free,
 Thy voice sounds like a prophet’s word;
 And in its hollow tones are heard
 The thanks of millions yet to be.
 Come when his *task of fame is wrought*,
 Come with her laurel-leaf, *blood bought*,
 Come in her crowning hours—and then
 Thy sunken eye’s unearthly light

To him is welcome as the sight
 Of sky and stars to prisoned men ;
 Thy grasp is welcome as the hand
 Of brother in a foreign land ;
 Thy summons welcome as the cry
 That told the Indian isles were nigh
 To the world-seeking Genoese,
 When the land wind from woods of palm,
 And orange groves and fields of balm,
 Blew o'er the Haytian seas."*

In the death of him whose loss we this day so deeply deplore, his "task of fame," too, in the words of our matchless poet, was, it may be truly said, completely wrought. The last sad and touching event too in the drama of his life—his "crowning" hour—like that of the Grecian hero, was adorned with "the laurel leaf," not however "blood-bought" in the pageantry of the battle field, but braided with the leaves of the mournful cypress, and purchased in the sublime act of self-sacrificing devotion to the highest considerations of professional duty and of personal friendship, to a noble and generous youth—to an honored pupil.

"Him we all mourn ; his friends still heave the sigh,
 And still the tear stands trembling in the eye.
 His was each mild, each amiable art,
 The gentlest manners and the feeling heart ;
 Fair simple truth, benevolence to all,
 A generous warmth that glowed at friendship's call."

STUDENTS OF MEDICINE OF THIS UNIVERSITY,—

In public institutions, as in the life of private men,
 there are no misfortunes so heavy as to exclude hope.

* Halleck's Marco Bozzaris.

A kind Providence orders our affairs in such a way, that we instinctively turn from the calamities of the past, and expect a prosperous future. In this spirit I also may turn from the great loss which has befallen us in the death of our friend, and feel I shall be excused in still hoping for our University a coming prosperity.

In the metropolis of my native State, and I may also say of my native country, I have seen with an honest pride, an institution devoted to the advance of medical science arise. Year after year it has extended its influences, until it has grown to be equal to the oldest and greatest in the land. Founded for the purpose of sending forth men for the relief of human afflictions, it is in the full discharge of its mission of mercy. There is no part of this extensive continent in which even at this day its influences are not felt. Whatever misfortune betide it, or whatever its losses may be,—of its perpetuity, its usefulness, its success, I shall be the last to despair.

The decease of our lamented friend has thrown upon the Faculty the responsible duty of providing you with another instructor. To find one who should in a measure compare in talent, acquirement, and the powers of communicating knowledge with him whom we have lost, was a task full of difficulties. It was necessary that he should possess the practical knowledge of medicine, which the experience of many years alone can give, and be familiar with the present advanced position of our science; that he should have proved by his publications, his right to take a stand among the foremost of our profession, and (a most important requisition in a medical college) have already passed successfully the ordeal of public teaching.

It is to me a source of no common satisfaction, to feel

that in all these particulars our hopes have been more than surpassed; and that what the Faculty have done in this respect, has met the views of the profession, the public, and I am sure it will have the abiding approbation of the class also; and that you will not fail to receive our friend,* and transfer at once to him, the confidence and good will which you so liberally extended to his predecessor.

* Dr. SAMUEL HENRY DICKSON, late Professor of the Medical College of Charleston, South Carolina.

FINIS.