

Charge to the graduating class of Jefferson Medical College, of Philadelphia : delivered March 10, 1863, in the Musical Fund Hall / by Ellerslie Wallace.

Contributors

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Wallace (E)

CHARGE

TO

The Graduating Class of Jefferson Medical College,
OF PHILADELPHIA.

Delivered March 10, 1863,

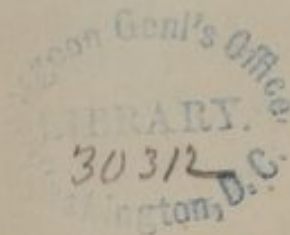
IN THE

MUSICAL FUND HALL.

BY

ELLERSLIE WALLACE.

Published by the Graduating Class.



PHILADELPHIA:
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.
1863.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE,
March 6, 1863.

PROFESSOR ELLERSLIE WALLACE.

DEAR SIR: At a meeting held this day by the Graduating Class of Jefferson Medical College, Mr. THOMAS F. CAMPBELL, of Pennsylvania, being called to the chair, and Mr. J. NEWTON McCANDLESS, of Pennsylvania, Secretary, the following resolution was adopted:—

Resolved, That a committee be appointed by the chair to wait upon Professor WALLACE, and solicit a copy of his Valedictory Charge to the Graduating Class of 1863 for publication.

We, the undersigned, being the committee appointed under the above resolution, take pleasure in submitting it to your consideration, and trust it will meet with your acquiescence.

C. C. V'A. CRAWFORD, Pa.	WM. L. HAYES, Md.
WM. M. REBER, Pa.	GEORGE W. CLARKE, N. S.
I. NEWTON SNIVELY, Pa.	CHARLES ROBINSON, C. W.
J. M. HUSTON, Pa.	J. W. CADWELL, Ill.
C. H. WILES, Ohio.	WM. B. CORBITT, Del.
R. A. STEPHENSON, Ohio.	CHAS. M. JOHNSON, N. Y.
JAMES A. CROSBY, Ky.	MATTHEW C. DOUGHERTY, Va.
GEORGE W. RITTENHOUSE, N. J.	CHAS. H. SACKRIDER, Mich.
CHARLES H. VAILL, Conn.	W. J. DONOR, Canada West.

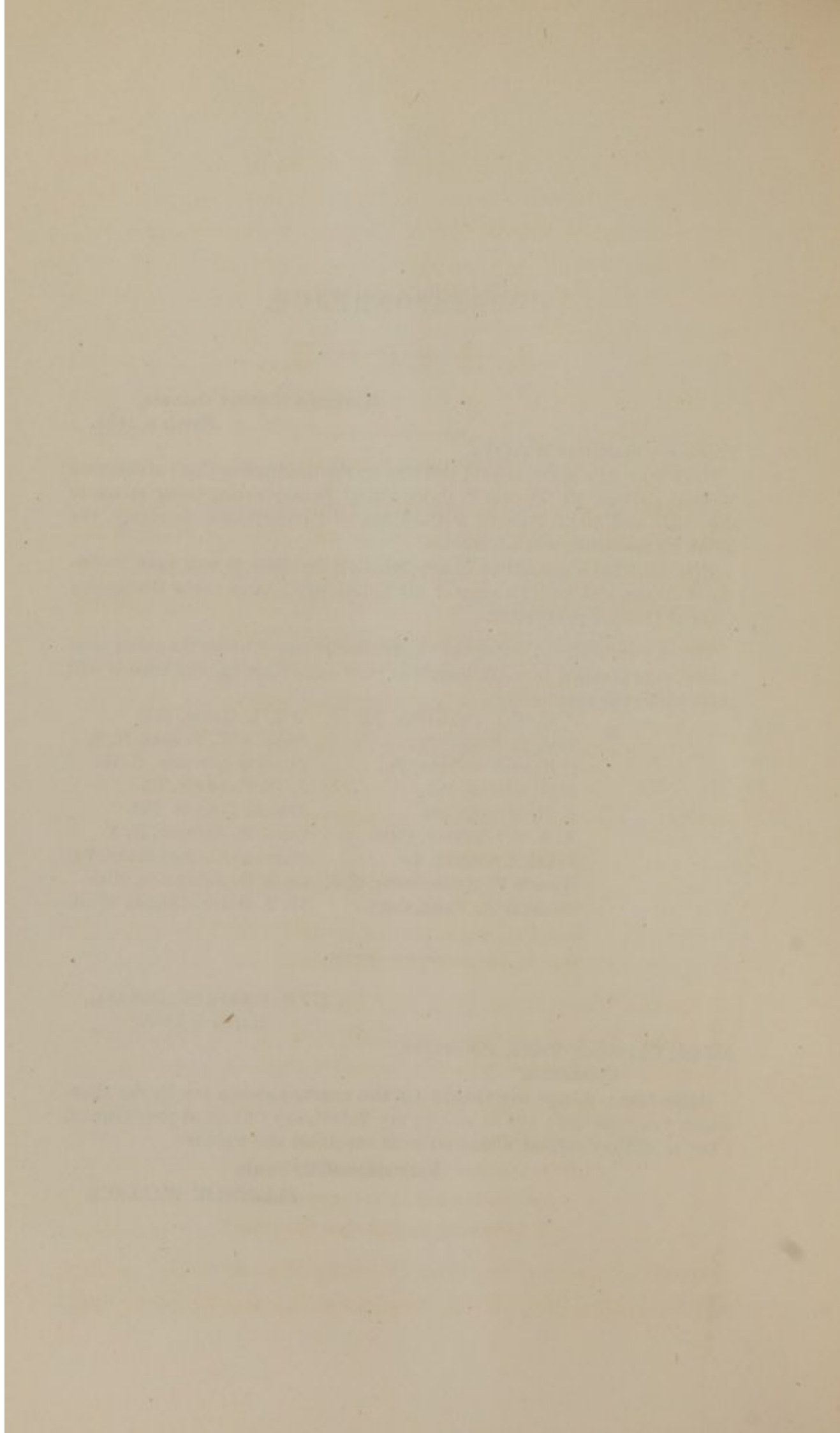
277 S. FOURTH ST., PHILADA.,
March 6, 1863.

MESSRS. CRAWFORD, REBER, AND OTHERS,
Committee.

GENTLEMEN: Accept my thanks for the courtesy shown me by the Class which you represent; and in placing my Valedictory Charge at your disposal I beg to add my earnest wishes for your happiness and welfare.

Very respectfully yours,

ELLERSLIE WALLACE.



C H A R G E.

WHEN first we came together, gentlemen, now near half a year ago, we were in the midst of "the melancholy days, the saddest of the year;" the foliage showed the changing season, by varying hues of red and yellow, "the hectic flushes of disease, the jaundice that foretokens death." Then

"Autumn sighed,
And all the withered world looked drearily."

A little time passed on, and the trees had bared their arms, the better to grapple with the "storm-blast, tyrannous and strong." Then winter closed around us, with his

"Keener tempests;
From all the livid East, or piercing North,
Thick clouds ascending;
Giving the fields and trees so old
Their beards of icicles and snow."

And so, through the short, and dark, and often dreary days, we have passed on together, until, now, spring has opened upon us, stimulating all things around us to a renewed activity, and bearing in her hand bright hope and cheerful promise;

"And Time throws off his cloak again
Of ermined frost, and cold, and rain,
And clothes him in the embroidery
Of glittering sun, and clear blue sky."

Gentlemen, the spring-time of manly life—of active, earnest, self-dependent life; of life brightened by the glittering sun,

and cheered by the clear blue sky, of hope and promise, opens upon you to-day. And the good old custom, at whose bidding I address you this morning, is one which is to be respected, not only for ancient usage, but for its own intrinsic propriety. For it is most fitting, that we who have tried the life that you must live, should speak to you a little word of welcome, as you step in among us; a word of encouragement also, as we receive your reinforcements within our ranks, and if we should drop an advising hint to you, as you fall in with us to-day, surely you will, as younger brothers from their seniors, accept the same in kindness.

Especially is it meet and right that those under whose auspices, and that those by whose daily care and continued efforts, you have been assisted and guided to the goal which you now have won, should be the first, of all the world, to greet you in your new position.

And so, in the name of the Trustees of the Jefferson Medical College, I do most earnestly congratulate you on the honors which you have this day accomplished, and, on the part of my colleagues of the faculty, as for myself, and in behalf of our profession at large, I would add to congratulation a warm and cheerful welcome into that corps, whose mission it is to go out to battle against the great enemy of mankind—to go on “conquering and to conquer.”

You, gentlemen, will fill our places when we are relieved from duty; and let it not be a vain or misplaced hope that we indulge, when we look confidently forward to improvements which you shall make in the art and science of our warfare—to the honor of our calling, to the pride of your country, to your own undying fame, and to the best interests of humanity.

I said that an *active* life opened on you to-day. Some men lead lives of mental inactivity, though their physical powers may be under the fullest exercise; and others have their intellectual capacities called into play in their daily avocations, while their bodies rest at sluggish ease upon the cushioned

chair. The great majority can enjoy the seasons of "glad meetings round the joyous hearth," and, undisturbed at night, "the dreams of sleep." The common laborers in our cities cease their toil, under the burning heat of a July noonday sun, and the poor settlers of our forests, and of our prairies, will smoke their pipes, in quiet peace, beside the cheerful fire within their cabins, during the fierce and driving tempests of the "hurtful days" of January. On Sundays the world at large may bow the knee and bend the spirit in the house of prayer; and on Christmas and thanksgiving days, and on all other holidays, the world may all go pleasuring. But it is not so to be with you. By day and night; in face of winter storm, and under heat of summer sun; on the holy day, when others do no manner of work, and on those occasions when custom or executive power proclaim rest from labor, you must be "instant," aye, though it be "out of season." *Instant and active* must you be, in mind and body both; no tardy, dilatory movement now, when he that is sick, and ready to perish, cries to you in his extremity; remember—

"Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set; but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!"

And, as the destroyer has all seasons for his own, so must you, who are chosen—you, who have this day received your commission to lead our forces against him, have all seasons for your own, to go out to meet him in the way.

I further said that your life must be *earnest*; no heedless listening to the plaint of pain and of infirmity; no careless passing by the simplest symptom of disease; no hurried leaping to a conclusion of a condition; no empirical or stereotyped treatment of a malady. Think you! will a man be justified if, under any pressure of time or circumstance, he order a mere placebo for a fever, for a pleurisy, or for a mangled limb? In serious and in patient thoughtfulness you must seat yourselves

beside the sick bed; investigate your cases all at length; study closely every morbid sign, and having first perceived, and then duly appreciated every symptom, reason back from these expressions of disease, to ascertain existing lesion; sit in judgment at every visit upon your preconceived opinions; test the accuracy of your diagnosis of yesterday, by renewed exploration to-day; and thus, judging philosophically, you will act, so far as lies within human power, correctly. You must be earnest, not in clinical observation only, but in faithful study of the works, which good and able members of our profession have executed for your improvement.

Every member of our calling should spend some time of every day in seeking for the treasures to be found in our medical literature, even though he rob his body of its natural rest, thus to improve his knowledge. But, in your study, do not take for granted truth, everything that every man may put down in print; judge a most careful judgment of all that you may read; as I mentioned that you should be *self-dependent*, even here you should so be; weighing with unbiased mind, all that may be propounded for your consideration; yes, and all that has been laid before you as instruction, will legitimately fall under your censorship, as experience shall improve your perception and as observation shall mature your judgment. Bear in mind the old maxim "Nullius in verba magistri jurare." Let not the name or standing of teacher or of writer blind the eyes of your judgment, be the name of great or little note, and be the standing what it may. For "humanum est errare," and great men are but human, and some most curious blunders have had a very exalted parentage; and remember that younger heads have sometimes discovered and accomplished that which was too deeply hidden, or too difficult for the "frosty brow" to bring to light or to master. Therefore, while we may not consent "cum Galeno errare," we must be equally cautious never to pass by, in slight, the opinions or suggestions of those who are, in years or in professional position, our juniors.

Being well informed, you can readily afford to be self-dependent. And so, imitate no man, lest you fail and blunder as the Celestials did, who—as a distinguished traveller and writer tells us—built a steam ship, not many years ago, using a British vessel as their model. In every detail of hull, of engine and of rigging, as in every point of ornamental finish, the observer could detect no difference whatever; yet there was a difference; for when they came to try the two creations side by side upon the water, the British ship would go, while the Chinese copy remained “as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean.”

Gentlemen, I alluded to the fact that the profession looks to you for improvement in our Art and Science. Consider; the knowledge which graces your minds to-day, has not been acquired by your own unassisted selves: “Other men have labored and you have entered upon their labors;” “freely have you received” of the treasures which have been garnered by the able and the wise who have lived before you or who yet remain; bright examples for you to emulate. The mental wealth that has come down to you, from them, is *an entailed estate*, and it may not stop with you; you may not impoverish or destroy it; it is your privilege to use it, to enjoy it, but it is your duty to improve it, for the sake of those who shall come after you, as the only acknowledgment, the only recompense that you can make to those whom you succeed.

The medical journals of the day afford you a ready and convenient repository for fragmentary contributions by which you may add to professional literature; and by careful observation, and equally accurate record of curious and singular disorders, with all their manifestations and their consequences, you can do a fair share of the work of advancing Medical Science. Years, which bring wisdom and experience, will, we trust, enable some of you, at least, to increase our libraries by more voluminous productions.

If we raise our eyes and look around us, we cannot fail to see that all the world is in rapid pace beside us. Other arts

and sciences are being hurried on with speed of steam or lightning, and may a votary of our calling, of one which is second to none in importance to the human family, be a laggard in the race? He had better take a nap of twenty years with Rip Van Winkle on the Hudson hills, and wake to find himself a laughing-stock, than, living on in wakeful idleness, grow into contempt.

To give you the idea of another, we may not leave to institutions of learning the task of advancing any department of human knowledge; such is not the purpose for which they are created. They are rather to be considered as exponents of the past, for they teach that which is already known—they do not investigate regions unexplored. The advancement of arts and sciences thus far has been, as it ever will continue to be, due to individual exertion almost exclusively, not only unassisted by learned bodies, but sometimes even opposed by them.

You will sometimes hear the charges of vacillation and uncertainty laid against the profession of medicine, on the ground that our opinions of disease and modes of treatment are, from time to time, undergoing alteration; and because we do not believe all that our forefathers held to, and because our action now is not identical with that of years gone by, it is sometimes charged that medicine has no fixed laws, and that our reasoning is but hypothesis, and our practice no more than experiment. Why, gentlemen, progress necessarily implies change; and our science would be unworthy of the name if it knew no advancement. Fixed laws do exist for its control and management, and it is no evidence, no argument, indeed, against their existence, that we may not understand them all: the curious laws of galvanism have held place since "the morning stars sang together," though it was but as yesterday, that the accident of the metallic plates revealed the mystery to man. And from the day on which Adam was created to the time of Harvey, the blood rolled on in its gentle, steady, course through vein, and heart, and artery, though no man held one idea of

truth upon the subject : it was reserved for one who lived but a little more than a hundred years ago to point out that law, under whose silent bidding apples had fallen on men's heads for scores of centuries.

The rule is true of all departments of all sciences that fixed laws do govern them ; such ordinances are of God's creation, not of man's devising ; human power may discover them or may fail to trace them out, but their perfection is unchangeable and absolute.

If we compare the practice of present times with that of by gone centuries we shall find a beauty of simplicity pervading it, which philosophical inquiry and enlightened pathology have drawn out, by patient care and studious effort, from a tangled mesh, in which it was long concealed by false doctrine, mystery, and superstition. Let me, for example, quote from the writings of one who adorned our profession in the 16th century : Would that you and I might ever attain to the wisdom and the goodness of Ambrose Paré ! He tells us that in his day it was universally conceded that wounds made by fire-arms were of a highly poisonous character, in consequence of the effect of the powder ; and that it was deemed necessary for their cure, "that they be cauterized with boiling oil, applied on tents and setons." Upon one occasion when many wounded were under his care his oil was exhausted before all had been dressed, and, he says, "I was obliged to resort to an ointment composed of the yolk of eggs, oil of roses, and turpentine. During the night I could not sleep at my ease, fearing that in consequence of not having cauterized I should find the wounded on whom I had failed to apply the oil dead, poisoned. This compelled me to rise early to visit them, when, beyond my hope, I found those on whom I had put my digestive ointment feeling but little pain ; their wounds without swelling and inflammation, and that they had slept well during the night ; while those on whom I had applied the oil were feverish and in great pain, with swelling." He then speaks of a surgeon at Turin "who

had a reputation, above all others, of well treating wounds from fire-arms, and I paid court to him for two years to draw his recipe from him, and finally, after many gifts and presents, he gave it, which was to boil earth worms and puppies, newly-born, in oil of lilies, and afterward to add some Venice turpentine." In our time a piece of lint dipped in cold water supersedes the torture of the boiling oil, and the simple cerate of our pharmacopœia replaces the disgusting digest of earth worms and of puppies.

The record above quoted may serve to teach us a lesson which we may lay to heart for our profit, a lesson of consideration for the sufferings of the afflicted. Paré "could not sleep at his ease," so great was his anxiety for those committed to his care.

Physicians, surgeons more particularly, have sometimes the reputation of want of feeling, of actual hard-heartedness; this need never be; *it never should be*; we are so happily constructed by Infinite Wisdom that we can, to great degree, resist the impressions excited by scenes of terror, and it is an obligation resting on us to exercise such control over our natural impulses that the head may be clear and the hand may be strong; but while duty calls us to nerve the arm, pity, with equal voice, forbids to steel the heart. We may sympathize with him who suffers, even though our own hand cause the pain, and by our sympathy we do not lose one jot of our decision or of our manliness; and he who cannot and who does not feel for his patient's woes is wanting in one grand stimulus to exertion in his behalf.

A story is told of good old Dr. Wistar, which runs thus: Being about to operate in the rotunda of the Pennsylvania Hospital, in presence of the class, on a case where the tissues were in a state of fearful inflammation, he closed his lecture on the subject with these words: "Know the anatomy of the parts concerned in your operations; then cut boldly." He made his incision; his patient shrieked with agony, and as Wistar raised

his knife from out the wound a tear fell from his eye upon its point, and washed away a drop of blood.

Gentlemen, cultivate the kindly feelings of your nature; those gentle graces which God has placed within your hearts; guard them in your intercourse with the world, that their lustre be not sullied by its polluting touch, and increase their brightness by constant exercise of thought, and word, and work of charity; and while thus you act for others' sake the blessing shall not rest with them alone, but, sweet as the echo of a melody, shall return to refine and purify your own souls.

"He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man, and bird, and beast;
He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

I would now say somewhat as to the encouragement, the incentives which are offered you. Some there are limited by time; others passing on from that which now is to eternity.

Some men toil for wealth, and who shall deny it to be a legitimate object of pursuit? What is wealth? It is the "open sesame" to the world's treasures; in addition to mere physical luxuries, it can furnish its possessor with the choicest gems of literature, and the stores of the recorded wisdom of all past time; it can provide him with the services and the society of the great, and the wise, and the good; it can transport him, at his will, at almost magic speed, to the confines of the earth, opening before him fields of observation, of pleasure, and of improvement, that must be forever closed against one oppressed by the "res angusta domi." It gives him the power to become a benefactor to those around him, enables him to relieve their wants and soothe their sorrows, and places in his hand the means of shedding the light of civilization and the benefits of Christianity over regions of the world, where dark superstition holds her sway.

Again, some rejoice in popularity, and labor after fame. It is a kindly social feeling that leads us to a due regard for the opinions and good-will of our fellows, and it is the physician's duty to let his whole course be so true and honorable, that those who know, must likewise commend him; and to exhibit, at all times, the example of a gentle courtesy; remembering that, as a man of science and a scholar, he becomes one of the leaders of society; he should so conduct himself towards all, as to bring them to admire and love those graces which adorn the gentleman. A physician who is beloved and respected, cannot fail to exalt, in the eyes of a community, the profession to which he belongs; and while confidence will follow his steps, efficiency will, in no small degree, be added to his exertions. Seek then for popularity as worthy of attainment, when worthily pursued.

And is it not a thought which may warm one's heart and add vigor to his effort, to feel that his may be "One of the immortal names not born to die?" that those of his blood, whom his heart holds dear, shall be through his own deeds, ennobled? That his countrymen shall rejoice over him, and that all men shall honor him in life, and, after death, venerate his memory?

I hold that wealth, and popularity, and fame, and all good things of time, are so many desiderata, laid before us by Him who placed us here, to lead us on in the path of active usefulness.

But yet there is need of a stronger stimulus than all these, and one whose application may be universal, for there are those who are so constituted or so circumstanced, that riches and distinction have no charm for them; or a man may fail in their pursuit and so lose heart by disappointment; for every earthly

"path

By many a cloud is darkened and unblest,
And, daily, as we downward glide
Life's ebbing stream, on either side
Shows, at each turn, some mouldering hope or joy;
The man seems following still the funeral of the boy."

Or let the full round of earthly blessings be gained by one who seeks them, and while they will, or at least while they ought to, add to the enjoyment of present life, they cannot, in their best estate, fill the void and satisfy the craving of a spirit, which, in this world, is but in "the bud of being, the dim dawn, the twilight of its day;" their enjoyment is but transitory;

"The glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armor against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on Kings.
All heads must come
To the cold tomb:
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust."

One of the sacred writers has ranked faithfulness in business as a part of our religious obligation; and here we have the truest, and the best, and the only universal incentive to exertion. It is one that holds out its claim to every living man alike, and rests its call upon the promise of reward that knows no limit. The joys of time that throw a light on our pathway, may burn dim in lapse of years, or may fade out from around us as we journey on, but their loss should only serve to reveal, more brightly, the dawning beams of our coming day. Gentlemen, we do not pass through life unassisted or unadvised; there is a monitor allowed us, which men call conscience; let no man resist its warning voice, but ever lend a ready ear to its counsel; for it is a messenger from God; a messenger of guidance and reproof; it is an angel by the way-side, to check us in the time of error, to turn us back to the path of virtue:

"So when Vice, to lure her slave,
Woos him down the shining track,
Spirit-hands are stretched to save,
Spirit voices warn him back,
Erring man, to evil prone,
Though the paths seem pleasant, stay!
On the instant pause! There stands
An angel in the way."

And now, gentlemen, go out upon your mission ; be strong and resolute in the strength which God has granted you ; bear with you our earnest wishes for your social happiness, for your professional success, for your usefulness in your day, and after your generation ; and so, my friends, fare you well.

GRADUATES

OF

JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA.

MARCH, 1863.

At a Public Commencement, held on the 10th of March, 1863, the degree of DOCTOR OF MEDICINE was conferred on the following gentlemen by the Hon. EDWARD KING, LL. D., President of the Institution; after which a Valedictory Address to the Graduates was delivered by Prof. WALLACE.

NAME.	STATE OR COUNTRY.	SUBJECT OF THESIS.
Albert, David	Pennsylvania.	Acute Dysentery.
Applegate, Frederick C.	Ohio.	Pustule Maligne.
Barndt, Solomon K.	Pennsylvania.	Fever.
Bauduy, Jerome Keating	Pennsylvania.	{ Erysipelas as connected with Gunshot Wounds.
Beach, William T.	Pennsylvania.	Fractures.
Boyd, George B.	Pennsylvania.	Report of Hospital Cases.
Boughman, George W.	Delaware.	Anatomy of the Eye.
Bradley, John	Pennsylvania.	Fractures.
Brittain, Richard James	Pennsylvania.	{ The Requisites and True Aims of an M. D.
Brown, Richard E.	New Jersey.	Chronic Rheumatism.
Cadwell, Joseph W.	Illinois.	Gunshot Wounds.
Campbell, Thomas F.	Pennsylvania.	Puerperal Fever.
Canfield, Ira D., Jr.	Pennsylvania.	Hydrops.
Clark, Vachal M.	Tennessee.	Typhoid Fever.
Carroll, William	Pennsylvania.	Gonorrhœa.
Clarke, George W.	Nova Scotia.	Medical Physiognomy.
Coles, John W.	New Jersey.	Scorbutus.
Coover, Joseph H.	Pennsylvania.	Phrenology.
Corbit, William B.	Delaware.	Hybridism of Diseases.
Crawford, Cornelius C. V. A.	Pennsylvania.	{ Ovulation the True Sexuality of Woman.
Crosby, James A.	Kentucky.	Typhoid Fever.
Dayton, Samuel W.	Pennsylvania.	Functions of the Spleen.
De Witt, John Wilson	Pennsylvania.	Intermittent Fever.
Donor, William J.	Canada West.	Intermittent Fever.
Dougherty, Matthew C.	Virginia.	{ Typhoid Fever of Mountainous Regions.

NAME.	STATE OR COUNTRY.	SUBJECT OF THESIS.
Eagleson, David S.	Pennsylvania.	Typhoid Fever.
Etter, D. Frank	Pennsylvania.	Gunshot Wounds.
Fawcett, Charles L.	Ohio.	The Doctor.
Foote, Herschel	Pennsylvania.	Enteric Fever.
Ford, William H.	Pennsylvania.	Gunshot Wounds of the Chest.
Free, Jared	Pennsylvania.	Placenta Prævia.
Gale, John Witten	Ohio.	Sporadic Cholera.
Gerry, James, Jr.	Pennsylvania.	Diphtheria.
Griffith, David S.	Pennsylvania.	Diphtheria.
Handrick, Edgar L.	Pennsylvania.	Pneumonia.
Hays, William L.	Maryland.	{ Fever the Result of Perversion of Function.
Huff, Isaac	Pennsylvania.	Typhoid Fever.
Huston, John M.	Pennsylvania.	Diphtheria.
Johnson, Charles M.	Pennsylvania.	Diphtheria.
Kelly, William R.	Ohio.	Hospital Gangrene.
Lehr, George Y.	Pennsylvania.	Dysentery.
Lightner, Samuel B.	Pennsylvania.	Phthisis Pulmonalis.
Loller, William B.	Ohio.	Scarlatina.
Longwill, Robert L.	Pennsylvania.	Gunshot Wounds.
Loper, William F.	New Jersey.	Pyæmia.
Mackey, James W.	Pennsylvania.	Rubeola.
Maines, Robert G.	New Jersey.	Dysentery.
Marshall, Robert C.	Pennsylvania.	Opium.
McCandless, Jas. Newton	Pennsylvania.	Scarlet Fever.
McCandless, Josiah G.	Pennsylvania.	Enteric Fever.
McDonough, James	Pennsylvania.	Inflammation.
Miller, Oliver L.	Pennsylvania.	{ Anatomical Structure of Adam and Eve.
Murphy, Samuel M.	Pennsylvania.	Scarlatina.
Pigott, Charles J.	Pennsylvania.	Enteric Fever.
Pulsifer, Horatio B.	Pennsylvania.	Variola.
Reber, William M.	Pennsylvania.	Typhoid Pneumonia.
Richards, Daniel W.	Pennsylvania.	Inguinal Hernia.
Rittenhouse, George W.	New Jersey.	Inguinal Hernia.
Robinson, Charles	Canada West.	Phthisis.
Sackrider, Charles H. (M. D.)	Michigan.	Extracting Teeth.
Say, Eli J.	Pennsylvania.	Alcoholic Liquors.
Seiler, Robert H.	Pennsylvania.	Gunshot Wounds.

