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The
Black Keys in Medicine.

John D. Jackson.

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Charles F. Cox.
New York.

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The
Black Arts in Medicine

WITH

ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS

BY

JOHN D. JACKSON, A.M., M.D

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EDITED BY

L. S. McMURTRY, A.M., M.D

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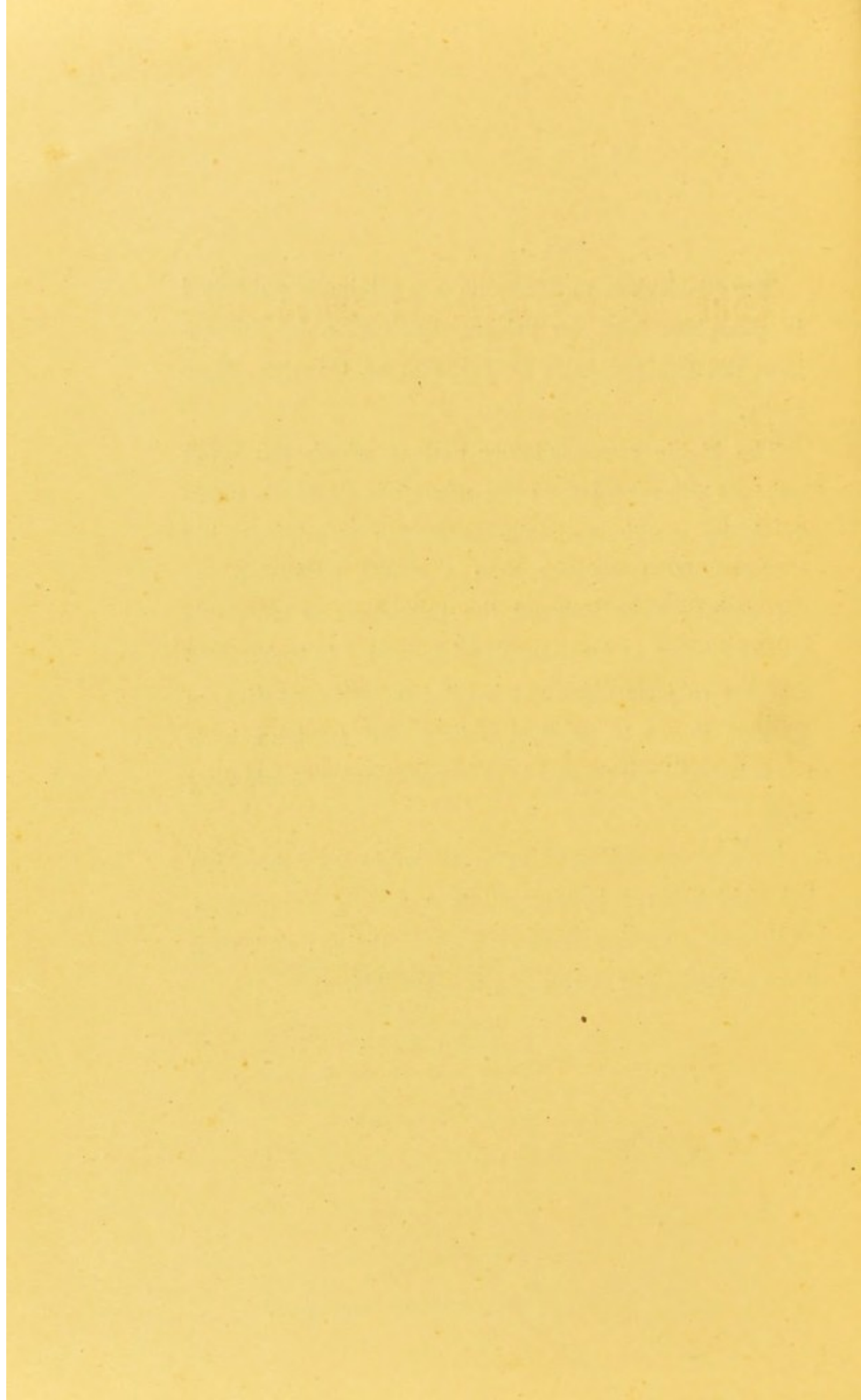
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The Black Arts in Medicine was originally published in pamphlet form for private distribution by the author, the late Dr. John D. Jackson, of Danville, Kentucky.

The highly commendatory notices which the work received from the press; the numerous demands made for it by members of the profession throughout the United States; together with a valued friendship for the author, have induced the publishers to issue this second edition in more substantial form. It is believed that the subjects discussed herein, though furnishing a familiar theme to medical writers and teachers, have never before been treated in such attractive and pleasing style.

An address delivered upon an anniversary occasion has been deemed by the editor a worthy companion of the essay on the Black Arts in Medicine; and, with some unimportant alterations, is appended.



The Black Arts in Medicine.

Probably, there is no triter axiom in our language than, that "self-preservation is the first law of our nature." Probably, there has never been a nation whose civilization advanced to the construction of even a rude form of philosophic thought among its people, but has had current in its society, an adage embodying under some form, the same idea. One of the most powerful and beautiful arguments of antiquity endeavoring to prove the existence of a supreme intelligence in the creation of man, which has come down to us, is in one of those Socratic dialogues, in which the different members of the body are considered with reference to their respective functions, each being shown to be so admirably adapted to the preservation of the integrity of the entire being. This primal law is so plainly delineated on the face of nature, that it would be wonderful had it not been so commonly seen. But, while we all admit this prime fact, the whole world does

not so clearly see its corollaries. There are a thousand streams of human action, meandering through the shadowy coverts of the social life of the world, which when traced up to their fountain, are seen to spring from this principle.

The great struggle for life, is indeed not that of the present living world alone, but in the ages of the past, as revealed to us through geological discoveries, traces of a universal war for existence, are as plainly marked, as in the living world of to-day.

This instinct in man, as the highest reasoning animal, exhibits itself under a somewhat different phase, to the form of it developed in the brutes; for after exhausting all natural aids, the principle of preservation causes him to appeal to the supernatural for assistance. That carter of classical fable, who when his horses failed him, appealed to Hercules for help, is but a type of the actual man of the world of all ages, past and present.

To this principle, we owe the superstition of our nature, a superstition, which at one time or another, has infused itself into all three of the learned professions, and more particularly into our own, in which to-day, a close scrutiny will show a few lingering traces.

Until a few centuries ago, the *Black Arts* were

intimately interwoven into the fabric of medical practice, so that it would have been perfectly in accordance with the spirit of truth, to have paraphrased the inscription common over the doorways of the Pythagorean Schools of Philosophy in ancient Greece, which read, "LET NO ONE IGNORANT OF GEOMETRY ENTER HERE," and have inscribed over the archway opening into the Temple of Medicine, LET NO ONE IGNORANT OF ASTROLOGY ENTER HERE.

The doctor of the period, commenced his prescription with an invocation to Jupiter, and the "split-foot R," with which we of to-day commence ours, is but the astronomical sign of that planet somewhat distorted in its journey down to us through ages, as any one can ascertain for himself, who will take the trouble of consulting a modern quack almanac, for the original sign. Then, the apothecary gathered his simples according to rule, by the waning and fulling of the moon; then, the physician consulted the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and prescribed and prognosticated as Taurus, Gemini or Cancer, were in the ascendant; it was then, that having failed to cure by the use of such disgusting farragoes, as would certainly require some ingenuity in a physician of now-a-days to conceive, that the doctor would resort to prayers, charms, and

verses. If any one will consult the **Rosa Anglica** of John of Gaddesden, an authority of repute in the 14th century, he will find him full of these charming verses. If he will turn to his chapter *De Passionibus Aurium*,* he will find that after recommending "*Urina tauri et capri inveterata*," and centaury, wormwood, rue, ants, earth-worms, and eels' blood boiled in wine, which he says is without an equal in the cure of deafness, he will find him concluding by giving him a string of verses, which he declares are frequently the very best cure. It was in these times that amulets and charms were worn, and philters and phylacteries prescribed, and the saints appealed to as presiding over special diseases, e. g., St. Anthony over inflammation, and particularly the Erysipelas, which, as we know, is called St. Anthony's-fire to this day; St. Vitus against madness and poisons, and at present we know Chorea as his dance, in the cure of which he was especially appealed to; St. Erasmus was called upon for the cure of colic; St. Martin invoked against the itch; St. Phaire against hæmorrhoids; St. Quentin, coughs; St. Benedict, the stone; St. John against Epilepsy, and so on through the calendar.

* ROSA ANGLICA—Imprint of Bonetus Locatellus. Venici, 1516, p. 115.

It was then that Bezoars were sought after, and that moss from the skulls of dead men was prescribed, and the thigh bone of a criminal powdered, was as a remedy, held in high repute; and then it was, that the blood of vipers, the expressed juice of millipedes, the white end of peacock's dung, and other such delicate things were daily prescribed.

But if we of modern times, living in an age, a characteristic of which is, that it is essentially material, can congratulate ourselves that necromancy is no longer a part of regular medicine, that the doctor of to-day is not expected to be a magician, that familiarity with the Black Arts is not an integral part of the knowledge of scientific medicine, yet must we in solemnity and shame contemplate the fact, that we have still to-day existing in our profession as *Black Arts* as any of a past age. It is true that they are not considered to belong to medicine proper—it is true that their practice is not considered characteristic of the true representation of modern medical science, and it is also true, that the practitioners of said arts, are held in supreme contempt and loathing, by all true disciples of the heaven-born calling; but it is nevertheless as true, that at this day and hour, there are not a few who manage to have themselves classed with the true disciples, who in secret league with the spirits of

darkness, cultivate the modern *Black Arts* under cover, with the greatest assiduity and skill. And finally, it is furthermore true, that with such, members of the goodly company whom I now address, are in daily intercourse, and are compelled to meet as equals and honorable rivals nominally, certain devotees whose astute skill, whose dexterous practice, and successful manipulations in the line indicated, render them worthy of high positions in this dark department of medicine.

The overcrowded state of our profession, the easy admission without proper preparatory learning, or inquiry into their moral fitness, of all desiring to enter our ranks, has much increased the numbers of those who are least fitted by mental and moral training to resist the temptations which beset all of us in our professional rivalry, in our efforts at self-preservation, in our struggle for existence, in fulfillment of the first law of our nature; and thus it is, that the land lies fallowed, favoring this luxuriant crop of tares.

In a sentence, the spirit of materialism which rules the age, has destroyed reliance on divinations, incantations and charms, but the same gross spirit, has inspired a reliance on certain ingenious devices for gaining notoriety, and certain modes of acquiring the patronage of the world, which while of an

entirely different character, are infinitely more revolting. It must have been from a contemplation of this phase of medical life, that a malicious Moliere of a fellow named Saxby, in a dispute with Dr. Mark Akenside on the dignity of medicine, is said to have replied to him : “ Doctor, after all you have said, my opinion of the profession is this : the ancients endeavored to make it a science and failed ; and the moderns to make it a trade, and succeeded.”

While traveling the past winter, there fell in our hands a somewhat curious document, which since it well paints some of the modern phases of the Black Arts in Medicine, we will not apologize for presenting. How it came into our possession, and the true names of the parties, is nobody’s business but our own, sufficient is it for our purpose to read you the following :

*Letter of Dr. Solomon Machiavelli
Sharpe, A. B., A. M., M. D., &c.,
&c., to John Charlatan Greene,
M. D.*

MY DEAR JOHN:

Your epistle of recent date, has been lying before me 'till now, unanswered. You tell me that to the time of writing, you look on yourself as having been rather unfortunate in the profession which you have chosen; the world, you say, does not seem to recognize your merits, and that you are neglected, while you see around you men, whom you deem far your inferiors, not only patronized, but in some instances, taken up and much ado made over them. About all of which, you seem much discouraged, and ask now for some advice, as to the means to pursue, by which most certainly to secure you business, appealing to me, as "a successful doctor, retired after a forty years practice," to

give you the benefit of my experienced observations.

Now, my dear John, I must say to you, that I look upon your failure as in a great measure attributable to the defects of your professional education, though that as my sister's son, and therefore a genuine chip of the family block, I doubt not, but that time is all that is necessary, to see you of your own innate instinctive developments, after a while "flourish like a green Bay," if not like a "Cedar of Lebanon." I could predict this with certainty, were it not that I know that the blood of the Sharpes has been crossed by that of the Greenes, which, though it may hinder the development of your sharpness, yet I do n't think it will prevent the final, though it may possibly be a little slow, maturation of the peculiar characteristics of the maternal side of your house. I have never yet known a true Sharpe fail from lack of shrewdness, or from neglecting to make the most of an opportunity, or to be hindered by a weak modesty from boldly pushing his way on every occasion offering. Now, the Greene's I know to have always been more slow to appreciate their own merits, and I suspect that you inherit something of their nature, but I have but little doubt but that after awhile, the opposite traits which you by right inherit, will finally assert themselves,

and I know of nothing more calculated to bring them to the surface than to be pushed to the wall, to see as you say you do, others around you flourishing, while you are starving. Necessity, I have observed, is not only the mother of invention, but among her offspring, we may certainly place the development of those deeply hidden traits of character, which prosperity does not always bring to the surface.

As I have said before, I attribute your failure to the deficiencies of your medical education. Now, on this point, I hold some views, which are entirely my own, and these are they :

The shorter catechism of our church declares that "The chief end of man, is to glorify God." If I were to make a medical catechism, I should write first that—the chief end of the doctor is to get practice. Well, in spite of this cardinal fact staring everybody in the face, yet I do n't know of a single medical school in the world, bold enough to come out and acknowledge it. What I mean is this, that all the medical colleges, among the numerous chairs founded by them, and their name is getting to be legion now, for at some places they will have a professor to lecture to you on the eye, another on the ear, another on the throat, another on the skin, another on the kidneys, and even a

separate lecturer for the pox and clap ; but I do n't know a single college, which among all this array has had the good sense to appoint a man to teach the callow brood, whom they are turning from their doors, with their tender pinions ready to beat the rude blasts of the world for the first time, the noble art of getting practice ; and if asked for a text-book or monograph on this important subject, the one for which all the others were created—why I could n't give you one.

Now there are two stand-points from which to consider the subject, or rather on a consideration of it, there are two phases presented to view.

Firstly, a man can acquire the confidence of his professional brethren and the patronage of the populace, by the possession of a thorough knowledge of his calling, by being a really learned man in his profession, knowing, and capable of applying, his knowledge. Some by such possession, though lacking every thing exterior and beyond this, which might be deemed inclined to promote success, yet succeed. Their success may be looked upon as truly meritorious, for they seem to succeed as it were by the mere force or gravity. Others there are, and I must say that my observation makes them outnumber the former far, who succeed from just the opposite direction. Destitute of

all truly scientific knowledge, mere smatterers, and possessing no great powers at best, they however make up for lack of all real attainments, by the cultivation of those little principles of their nature, which to a certain point seem to serve them a good part instead. The same thing you can observe, if you look around you, in politics. You may frequently see the man of true statesmanship and dignity, beaten by the shallowest of politicians, but who has cultivated to perfection his bushwhacking powers of shaking hands, and *honeyfugling* "the dear public."

I believe that the class I have first mentioned, has really an easier time in reaching the goal, than the latter—and this reminds me of an observation I once, in my school-boy-days, heard a fellow make, who was on the eve of graduating. Said he in talking to some of us junior striplings: "Boys, I am about graduating—I have passed my last examination, and am now certain of my Diploma, but I will confess to you all, that I don't know a d—d thing about what I have gone over. You fellows, doubtless, wonder how I have managed to get through; well, I will say to you, that it has required, I think, about as much study and sharpness to do so by fooling the professors, as would have been requisite to have thoroughly mastered the college

course." As all animals are not endowed by nature with the same means of self-protection, while some, as the lion and tiger, openly and boldly seize their prey, and attack and defend themselves, others, as the jackal and jaguar, generally do so sneakingly and by stealth; while others still less blessed with attacking and defensive powers, seem to have *all* their capacity concentrated in cunning and deception. So have I observed it in mankind, where nature has not done much for a fellow in the ordinary way, he seems to sometimes pretty much make it up, by cultivating all the little shrewdnesses of his nature, which then stand him entirely instead, and it is sometimes a wonder how far the intelligent of the public are ready to receive such transparently base *counters* for genuine coin. Indeed, this weakness of the public, I have known sometimes to so overwhelm professional men of merit, that they have yielded to the temptation to utter themselves the readily received counterfeit, rather than continue the painful labors of the strictly professional workshop.

Quackery does not owe its spread throughout the world, to the defects of medicine as a science, one tithe so much as to the innate weakness of mankind. Man is certainly one of the most gullible of animals; though at times straining at gnats, yet

at others he readily swallows great camels. It is not in medicine simply, that popular credulity lies, it is equally great with reference to the other professional callings. Do n't you recollect that classical observation of Wallenstein to his son, when doubting his fitness for some mission imposed upon him? He took him into the council-chamber, and having him look and listen for awhile at certain shallow representatives of the nation's greatness, exclaimed: Observe my son, "*quam pauca sapientia regit mundum.*" Ever keep this saying in mind, my dear John, a remembrance of it will frequently serve you a good purpose, in emboldening you when hesitating—do n't forget the weakness of your enemies, or rather friends, the *οἱ πολλοί*.

There's an old story, which in some form or other, has long been current, telling of a London quack, who was upbraided by a doctor, for his charlatanry, but who justified himself by asking the doctor, of the thousand men who daily passed his office, how many he supposed were really intelligent and of sound well balanced judgment; and upon being answered, probably one in the hundred, replied, "You may have those ten, but I will take the nine hundred and ninety fools for my patients, who for their folly, probably deserve to be quacked upon."

It is related of a certain Scotch yeoman, that he always got such good prices for his cattle on taking them to market, that his neighbors were totally at a loss to account for it, but one day, on fuddling him with liquor, after much cajoling, he finally yielded them up the secret by saying: "On going to sell my beasties, I first finds a *fool*, and then I shoves 'em on to him."

It is well for you to hold in remembrance the general fact, that the world is largely made up of fools, John.

"*Mais nous revenons à nos moutons*," which is the way to get a practice.

Did you ever read the celebrated letter to Timothy Van Bustle, which appeared more than an hundred years ago, and was at the time attributed to Dr. Mead? Knowing that it is most probable that you have not, I herewith transcribe a part of it for your consideration, for though it is more than an hundred years old, the men of to-day, are descended from those of a century ago.

"That which gives me great hopes of you (Dr. Timothy Van Bustle, M. D.), is your resolution to go on, and to push into practice at all hazards. Monsieur De Rochf observes, that there is nothing impossible, if we have but the resolution to take the right way to it. Besides, you know *audaces*

fortuna juvat; and therefore above all things let me as a friend advise you to take care of studying, or endeavoring to know much in this way, since that will render you timorous and cautious, and consequently keep you back in your practice; besides that, the more you search the less you will be satisfied; and when arrived at the top of all, you may with Solon conclude that all your wisdom (comparatively with real knowledge) is in knowing nothing. Whereas, if you only *skim* the surface, you will go boldly on and fancy your knowledge ten times more than what it really is. Thus, then, the great and principal thing you ought to be qualified with, is the *formula prescribendi*, for form is now the main chance, whether in law or physic; and without that, there is nothing to be done; this is the business, the Alpha and Omega, the all in all; some will succeed, and some won't; 't is hit or miss, luck's all; you are paid, go which way you will. And now, just having arrived in town, without having had the benefit of establishing an acquaintance at Oxford or Cambridge, among the nobility, clergy, etc., and an absolute stranger here, without the assistance of dissenting teachers, relations, old women, nurses, children or apothecaries, the first thing I advise you to do, is to make all the noise and bustle you can, to make the town

ring of you if possible ; so that every one in it may know there is such a being, and in town too, such a physician. It signifies little which way it be, so it be done, and that your name be known and heard of, for that is half in half, since no one sends to consult him they have not heard of, that being a crime sufficient not to have been talked of ; whereas, if accustomed to your name, you are a fit person to be called to the sick. Thus the famous R. F., 't is said, on his first arrival, had half the porters in town, employed to call for him at all the coffee-houses and public places, so that his name might be known. A very famous oculist has likewise freely told me, that he must starve did he not frequently put himself in the public prints ; but this is not so fashionable with physicians, ready to their company, or that while they think their company understands the best, or are otherwise so complaisant, as to talk to their friends of their interest ; for I would suppose you have insinuated yourself into their friendship. Besides that, the very seeing you now and then, might put them in mind of that which they might otherwise forget. The old and the simple, the riotous, the whimsical, and the fearful, are your most proper company, and who will provide you with most business ; there being far less to be got by the wise and sober, who are much

more rarely ailing. But then you will perhaps tell me that such like physicians will be the most proper to please, and keep company with such, since *similis simili gaudet*. If so, then I can only say, those will probably stand the fairest for business; and if you are so wise or unwise as not to ply, bend or truckle to their humors, I doubt not you will be in danger of having less business; or, otherwise, if you would still continue, and be esteemed very wise, sober and grave, you should learn most obsequiously to fawn and soothe man, woman and child, since few else will thrive well, unless blessed with wit, in which case, they may be allowed a little more liberty. To make yourself known, the making friends for some public lectureship, is not amiss, which serves for a feather in your cap, by which you become known, and so taken notice of for a fine fellow; and then you have an opportunity of haranguing your auditory, which, though it should be snobbish, or trifling, you gain your point. As to what you read or say, it matters not much; if from the more musty and ancient authors, the better; if from the more modern, the more fashionable it will be; and thus, consequently, you will either be esteemed a very learned, or at least a very ingenious man. If you can be introduced to a hospital, your business is

done for life, be your success what it will. If your wife should happen to mind business in her way, it will certainly also increase yours, for many good reasons, as increasing your friends and acquaintances. It will not be amiss to set up an equipage, to purchase a mountain of books, and add any thing by which you will acquire the reputation of being a learned and ingenious gentleman. Let your religious and political opinions swim with the tide, especially when fashionable. * * * Don Quvedo is of opinion, that the best way to run into business, is to run into debt, because your creditor will employ you, to get paid—as to putting this experiment into practice, I shall rather choose to leave it to your own natural genius to direct you therein, than much to persuade you thereto, since there may be danger, should it not succeed.

“To these hints, I must observe to you, that dancing and dressing well, are not such slight accomplishments to introduce a young physician into practice, as you may imagine, because it makes him acceptable to the ladies and the *beau monde*: his fashionable gesture, and gentle manner of feeling a pulse agreeably, is half the business.

“I could mention you some who got into business, in physic, by writing poetry, some by divinity, others by politics, etc. But should you have an

itching to make your name known by writing a book on physic, yet so customary, I would advise you to choose the subject by which you think you will get most money, or that which will bring you the most general business, as fevers, small-pox, etc.

“And next, then, I would advise you, whatever the subject be, you write upon (if uncommon the better), rather to write so that no man can make any thing of it, so as neither to make downright sense or nonsense thereof, than otherwise; because thus none of the physicians can well lay hold of you for any particular part; or if they should, there is room for you to defend it, being as easy to be understood one way as the other. This is that method I commend, which Mr. Locke observes to be possible enough, for one to write a tolerable discourse of well chosen and well joined words, which nevertheless, on the whole, makes not up any real sense, or intelligent meaning. Thus I will suppose a man to write of sleep; now if I wrote in this manner, it is ten to one but that it will make all who read it fall asleep, and, consequently, what can be better said on the subject?

“The last thing I advise you to do, is to get acquainted and cheerfully to keep company with all old women, midwives, nurses and apothecaries, since these will still be entertaining you in the way

of your business, and as the old ladies, etc., are the most subject to ailings, so they will still be acquainting you with the same; and consequently, you are to make the most of it, and never to neglect or make slight of the least complaint. And thus you will gain the reputation of being both careful and skillful; whereas, otherwise your care and skill may be suspected, as well as your affections.”*

Now, my dear John, this was all written probably one hundred and fifty years ago, but when we reflect on the fact that men of one hundred and fifty years ago, are the fathers of those living one hundred and fifty years after them, it is not astonishing that the letter is nearly as applicable to this generation as it was to that to which it was addressed; and hence, I have reproduced it for your benefit. Excepting that we are living in a country of somewhat different surroundings, it indeed sounds as if addressed to us of the present time and place, and I might not inappropriately go on to comment upon it, as Van Swieten did upon the aphorisms of Boërhaave.

As the writer then said, so I would say now, let

* Though ascribed to Mead, the truth is, that he could never have written it, save in the spirit of irony. It is not in accord with the noble character of Mead.

your first care be to let yourself be known, let the town ring of you, let it be known that there is such a physician. Living as you do in but a village, of course the expedients you will have to resort to will differ from those alluded to in the letter.

One of the common stock ways among the pushing fellows of the cities of nowadays, is to be in league with certain newspapers, and to, by skillful management, frequently have their names in their local and personal columns; for instance, if you were called to an accident, you would manage to get it in the next days paper, have it reported how the very skillful and popular Dr. J. Charlatan Greene was called in, and how much he seemed to sympathise with the poor sufferer, and with what skill he dressed the wounds, and what he said about the case; and here, if you throw in as many high sounding technical phrases as possible, it will tell, for the less the public understand them, the more will they give you credit for wisdom and learning. *Commendant quod non intelligunt.*

“For the dull world must honors pay to those,
Who, on their understandings, most impose.”

This principle of human nature was well illustrated in the comments of a certain old lady upon a sermon of the celebrated Bascom. Oh, said she,

“what a fine sermon we had to-day, and what a smart man is brother Bascom, I couldn’t understand a word of it.” But in the whirl and turmoil of a great city, once will not do to be spoken of, but keep your name before the public, until like that of Hembold, John Bull, and other quack advertisers, the people will at last get it imprinted on their minds, simply for the much seeing of it. I have known an instance or two where doctors were supposed to have driven over children in the streets, in order to get their names in the papers in connection with the accident. I have heard it said of one very sharp fellow, that when his name had been too long absent from the public gaze as he thought, he would lose his dog, and then advertise his dog in connection with his own name in large capitals.

But in country practice, such as you are a candidate for, there are an hundred other little ways, which may be adopted. In the first place, you might ride or drive a peculiar horse, a “calico horse” or piebald mare, or a buggy with an excessive deal of red or green paint upon it, would be sure to make people stare and talk, and that whether they at first said any thing good or bad of you, is all you want. As Geo. Francis Train once telegraphed to his business manager prior to fulfilling an engagement to lecture in a western city: “Make them” (the peo-

ple) "say any thing about me they please, abuse me if they will, but for God's sake do n't let them forget me."

You must determine on the cultivation of some particular style or manner. You may be either remarkable for your rude, rough manner, or on the other side for extreme civility. Better either extreme than the intermediate. Strange to say mankind seem to like a certain amount of ill usage. Radcliffe used to say that the secret of his hold on mankind was, that he abused them well. However, here I might say to you, that to keep your place in public esteem, and to be of this type, requires that it should be backed by some real merit. I think it was probably harder for an Abernethy or a Chapman to win his way, than a Cooper or a Watson. If you assume the urbane, run it into the ground,—almost, but not quite. I have seen a fellow, so extremely would-be polite, as to thank his patient for putting out his tongue to him every time he asked him. That was playing it somewhat too fine, for it was a little nauseous to the bystanders.

In learning, you may go to either extreme, affect to despise learning, and set yourself up as one relying entirely on your strong common-sense and great experience, or pretend to be very learned. If you affect the former, you will be inclined to win over

a certain number of the hard-fisted yeomanry and half educated, who so generally pride themselves on their *common sense*, which so frequently proves to be *nonsense*. To be generally known as a common-sense doctor, among this class,—and they are quite numerous, is to put you in repute. To illustrate what I mean, I give you the following little episode :

“ I had just finished my supper, and was quietly enjoying my cigar on the deck (of the boat), when I heard an individual declaiming in a loud tone of voice to some two or three attentive listeners (but evidently intended for the benefit of whomsoever it might concern) on pathology. Being as it were thus invited, I also became a listener to something like the following : ‘ *There it is now!* Well, some people talk about *seated* fevers ; I don’t know any thing about *seated* fever. A musquito-bite is a fever ; cure the bite and the fever leaves you. So with a *bile*, just the same thing ; there a’nt no *such thing* as a seated fever, I tell you. The fact is, your regular doctor practizes according to books, I practize according to common sense. Now there was Dr. Rugg of our village, the SAMPSON of *materia medica*. Well, *he* treats fevers according to the books ; consequence is I get all the patients ; and he says

to me one day, says he, 'why,' said he, 'how is it you get all the fever cases!' And I told him exactly how it was, and it *is* so. 'Well doctor,' interrupted one of the listeners, 'how *do* you treat fevers! *Well, there it is*; you ask me how I treat fevers! If you had asked me when I first commenced practizing, I could ha' told you; I can't tell you now. I treat cases just as I find 'em, according to common sense. And *there it is*; now there was Mrs. SCUTTLE, she was taken sick; all the folks said she had the consumption; had two doctors to her; didn't do her a single mossel o' good. They sent for *me*. Well, as I went into the house, I see a lot o' tansy and a lot o' chickens by the door; felt her pulse, says I Mrs. SCUTTLE, you a'int no more got the consumption than I've got it. Two weeks and I cured her! 'Well, doctor, how did you cure her?' *How* did I cure her? *There* it is again! I told you I saw a lot of tansy and a flock of chickens growing at the door. I gave her some of the tansy, and a fresh laid egg, brought her right up. Its *kill* or *cure* with me! In fact, I call myself an officer; my saddle-bags is my soldiers, and my disease my inimy. I rush at him, and ither he or me is got to conquer. I never give in!'

“ My cigar was out, and while lighting another, the doctor vanished.”*

If you wish to play the opposite role, however, you will not find it very hard to get up a cheap reputation with a certain class of the public, for learning and progressiveness. In the first place, you might get two or three diplomas ; the article is very cheap nowadays, and easily attainable for a little money and less knowledge. If you do n't frame them and hang them in your office for public inspection, which might look a *little* vulgar, you could easily let the fact of your having so many be generally circulated. You might also make a parade of some new books, and several medical journals, and if among them you could put one or two French, German or Italian, it would be well. It does not much matter, whether you can half way read them or not ; the people who come into your office, will be apt to presume you can, and that is sufficient. I would advise you, however, to be a little sly when those come about who can read them, lest you unwittingly expose yourself. You might also make a good deal out of a few medical or surgical instruments, for in this world it is quite possible to make a great flourish over a little thing ;

*Knickerbocker Magazine, Editor's Table, Dec., 1859.

for instance, I have known a fellow totally ignorant of the grand principles of physical diagnosis, who could n't tell *heart disease* from *phthisick*, and who could n't have given the distinction between a *bruit* and a *souffle*, if perdition had been staring him in the face, as a penalty for his ignorance, yet acquire some reputation as a practitioner in diseases of the chest, by a grand flourish of Cammann's stethoscope on proper occasions. A great deal, indeed, might be made out of as simple an instrument as the clinical thermometer, in neighborhoods where the instrument has not come into common use with the profession, for I have seen some people ignorant and credulous enough to suppose you could tell by it, what they had eaten for dinner the day before. I have known a good deal of reputation gained by the hypodermic syringe, when it first came into use in this country.

On giving a new remedy, if it has a good effect, always tell your patient that you were the first to use it. These things are for the public to recollect, but if you have to meet any of your professional brethren, who as you think, know more than you do about such things, you will then have to be on the look out, and try and open your mouth as seldom as possible. Then it would be best for you to look as grave as "an owl in an ivy bush," or an

“ape in a house porch,” but to deport yourself with a silence becoming your gravity, lest like Æsop’s crow, by opening your mouth the cheese should depart from you.

The use of very high sounding technical terms, may sometimes be played off to advantage, but you should always study your company here. People of much sense are usually disgusted by such display. I knew of an instance, in which a doctor after a consultation, gravely announced to the family that they had agreed to pursue with the patient “the *cataplastic, sinapistic, and enematic mode of treatment.*” Immediately a buzz of admiration passed around the group of old ladies in the room, composing the auditory, but blankness, succeeded by contempt, soon overspread their faces, when the doctor in consultation, a little maliciously interpreted to the old crones, that in other words, they expected to apply *poultices and plasters and give injections* to poor Mr. Smith.

A step far forward in the way of increasing one’s business, is to take a wife. I have known many to marry with this end in view. A married doctor, all things being equal, has advantages over the single one, not only in being able to bring to bear in his favor increased family influence, but the public are readier to trust him with family practice, and espec-

ially in obstetrics and ailments peculiar to females. Why, God only knows, but I have long observed it as a fact, that the public seem to think the possession of a wife adds greatly to a doctor's stock of morals and knowledge, and hence the taking of a wife, may in a certain light be looked upon as an investment—the taking of so much stock in trade.

Joining some church or other, is another investment frequently made. Should you do this, pick out the most popular one, with the fewest doctors in it. I have known some before now to change their church once or twice, hunting for the one, attachment to which would pay best. The old trick of being called out of church in the midst of service, is a very good one, and one which you might have repeated tolerably frequently,—the old ladies will always notice it, and talk some about it after meeting, and will be the more apt to recollect you when they have sickness at home. Always go into church late when everybody else is seated, you will thus be sure to be noticed by the congregation, and if you do n't have a confederate to call you out during preaching, you can leave yourself, just at its conclusion as if compelled to hurry away on account of the urgency of your business. Standing in the doorway of the church, or just outside, and bowing to, and shaking hands with as many of the con-

gregation who pass out as you can, is also very profitable in its way. It's a gentle intimation to the congregation, that you are their representative in physic, and that it is their doctrinal duty to employ you, especially if there is no other medical man in the fold. I advise you, however, to be more discreet, than was a certain medico, in a certain city west. He joined a church, and something like a year passing, and but little grist coming to mill from that quarter, his indignation one Sunday so got the better of his discretion, that on the retirement of the congregation, he fiercely saluted the sexton :

“ Well, sir, I have been a member of this church ten months, and have never gotten a patient from it yet,—I want to know, sir, what it means?”

The sexton indignant, and also in doubt about the doctor's perfect sanity, unfortunately collared him, and thereupon ensued a scramble and a scene, which attracting the passers-by and the police, resulted in the bruiting of the thing over the whole town, and getting a recital of it into the public prints.

Freemasonry, Oddfellowship, Teetotalism and membership with all kinds of clubs and societies, may with some address, be turned to good account and be made to pay.

Your politics you may make equally subservient to your ends as your religion; these are the days when men trade in both. As in the selection of your religion, so in the formation of your political principles, select the strongest side and the winning candidate, if you only can foresee it. Changes here should always be made with the changing tide of popular opinion. Such changes, will readily be taken as patriotic convictions, and will not be so closely scrutinized, or so readily attacked by your enemies, as changes in your religion,—always, as I have said, so change as to be on the popular side, since it pays. An activity at primary elections and ward meetings, sometimes may be made to pay well. Give your favorite to understand that you expect a *quid pro quo*, that to electioneer for him, you expect him to electioneer for you, a thing you have a right to expect, since it will cost him nothing. In electioneering for others, furthermore, you are becoming perfected in the accomplishments of the art for yourself. Of Saturday evenings and court days, when the country people most do congregate in town, you can station yourself in front of your office door, and bob your head to every fellow who passes, and shake hands with every one whose name you can pronounce, and it will be very well to hold the hands of each a long time, and take

him by both hands indeed. It will show a very friendly spirit which may ultimately tell for you. I recollect once, a man's coming to employ me, and he told me that he had wished to do so for a long time, but that he had found it impossible to get rid of his previous doctor, for says he,

“He is *so mighty friendly*, and shakes hands with me so warmly every time he meets me, that I really could n't have the heart to get any other doctor, until my failing health compelled me.”

When you have ever attended a case, and it has recovered by virtue of your treatment, or in spite of it, do n't omit any opportunity of reminding your late patient, and his friends of the fact, enjoining upon them the propriety of always remembering the bridge which has once carried him over safely.

When a man employs you once, try to impress him with the idea that you have personal property in him, and that you shall be justly incensed, if ever he shall change you, for anybody else. On at any time learning of his having another doctor, go to him, and ask him why he has ceased to employ you, and tell him that your feelings are hurt. If he has not gotten totally out with you, by this you may probably whip him back into traces.

If you are called to a case which ultimately

proves fatal under your charge, assert that you were called in too late. This may produce some painful regrets on the part of the friends of the sick who may never forgive themselves after what you have said, but it excuses yourself for its termination, and is besides inclined to increase business, by making them always send for you in future for the most trifling ailments. It is also a good maneuver where another doctor has been dismissed, and you have succeeded in the case. I know of one instance where a young doctor in the first year of his practice, was attending a child with *tubercular meningitis*, the parents concluded to substitute a gray beard for youth, and sent for "a man of experience." Though of course an essentially fatal case, the old doctor gravely told the family that if he had but been sent for in time, he would have cured the little patient. The immediate consequence was that the young man was damned, while experience held its ground; the ultimate result was, that the young man disgusted with the arts of acquiring practice, retired from the field, but is to-day, one of the most distinguished cultivators of the natural sciences in America.

Sometimes people get tired of the progress of a case, although it may be toward recovery, and dismiss the attending physician. The doctor called

to succeed him, now always has the advantage, if he will take it, of giving an overwhelming blow to his rival. Under such circumstances do any thing but what the doctor before you may have done, and as nearly as you can, just the opposite. Indeed, if the case is one safely to leave to nature, yet to make a profound impression, you must n't do it. Puke, purge, sweat, blister and scarify, and thus your impression will surely be profound, and though the poor devil slowly emerges from bed in spite of your treatment, yet you are thereafter, pretty sure to have a big name in the family, and the shadow of your brother practitioner, just as sure, never again to darken your pathway toward that house.

Another art of value is, in certain cases where the opportunity presents, to substitute a grave affection for a simple one in your diagnosis; thus, an ephemeral fever might easily become a typhoidal one, a sore throat a diphtheria, hemicrania, spotted-fever, and so on to the end of the chapter. Thus you may by a little art, acquire the reputation of being a good typhoid fever doctor, or great on diphtheria, or that you cure cases of spotted fever, where the other doctors fail, etc.

I have known some doctors who never let an opportunity slip, of magnifying the value of their

services ; they gravely inform their patients, that it was lucky they sent for them just when they did, for it was by their timely arrival and puissant intervention, that a mighty fever was prevented, if they had not gotten there just when they did, and done the very peculiar things which they did do, the bellyache would soon have run into a *typhlo-enteritis with intussusception*, and the child's stumped-toe would probably soon have become the worst kind of a case of *sphacelated mortification*. It is a little curious, but patients seem to love to think they have escaped great dangers, and when they learn from the doctor how great is the danger from stumped-toes, cut fingers, pin scratches and every "bad cold" and bellyache, if at all timid, of course the doctor is much sought after.

But it is time to stop, I have given you an outline of the "art," sketched the field, and it remains for you to fill in the details. "There are a hundred ways to kill a dog besides choking him to death on butter." "The devil may always be whipped around the stump." The ways and means to be adopted will depend upon your individual ingenuity and mother wit. A man who by a dexterous application of the arts which have been my text, can't succeed in getting practice, and yet retain his place within the fold of the regular profes-

sion—if he is so hard put to it, that he has to resort to open quackery, or stoop so low as to brazen his cheek, and ask a man directly for his practice, why he is n't worthy of the blood of the Sharpes, and that strain of the Charlatan's flowing through your veins.

Now I do n't tell you to “fight it out on this line,” indeed, as I have said above, I think the doctor who relies purely upon what he considers his scientific merits, and devotes all his energies to the endeavor to make himself truly meritorious, disregarding *entirely* the “arts,” has the easiest time of it in attaining a successful business, for he is certainly freed from all those burning fears and harassing anxieties, lest the scepter should depart from him, which must always, more or less, be the portion of those building reputations on any other foundation. But the majority of those following professions, will not make up their minds to the adoption of this policy, or if they do, they too soon get tired of pursuing the tedious and often difficult paths through which it leads.

If you have it in you, John, to pursue the straight and narrow path, and climb the rugged heights, then I advise you to ignore all this which I have written. But if not, then the hints above given, may prove useful to you, in piling up pelf.

In our struggle for existence, in our efforts at self-preservation, in accordance with the law of our nature, let us pray for deliverance from temptation, and let us look to it, that our Societies are kept from all dark practices, our watchword being—*Down with the **Black Arts of Medicine**, and confusion to all practitioners of them.*

Anniversary Address

BEFORE THE

BOYLE COUNTY (KY.) MEDICAL SOCIETY.

DELIVERED JANUARY 5, 1869.

Gentlemen:—We meet to-night, on this, the third anniversary of our Society's existence. Three years ago, our association was organized; since then we have met nearly an hundred times, and as often engaged in the discussion of questions pertaining to our profession. Fortnightly, for three years, have we continued to assemble, despite all hindrances, and now, on this triennial anniversary occasion, and especially at this season, so suggestive of reflection—when the old year has died out, and we stand on the threshold of the new one, with its vista of fresh hopes and fair budding promises opening out before us—we may naturally ask, *cui bono*, what profiteth it? Have we, by our organization, advantaged ourselves beyond what would

have been were we unorganized! What is our present status compared with our past, and what are our prospects for the future?

These natural questions, so pertinent to the time and the occasion, we stand here to-night, to endeavor to answer.

Sometime since, in conversing with an old friend, a retired member of the profession, living adjacent to a town not a hundred miles from here, we asked him: What tidings of the sons of *Æsculapius* of your place, and, tell me, especially, whether they have yet organized a society? He replied, "The sons of *Æsculapius*, as you are pleased to call them, but rather sons of *Ishmael*, one from my stand-point of vision, would call them, have not, and I assert, never will organize a society." I asked him, why. He replied, that there were so many varying interests and so much discord among the doctors, that, to a looker-on, it seemed impossible to ever sufficiently harmonize them to organize a society, founded on mutual concessions, though the object might be for a common benefit.

Upon my asking him to be more explicit, and give me some idea of the state of things, individually, he proceeded in the following strain: "We have some eight or ten doctors in our midst, a sufficient number, it is true, to form a society, but, when

I tell you, that instead of seeming to be a band of brethren, engaged in a common cause, they seem to feel that they are a band of Ishmaelites, common enemies, every man's hand naturally raised against his neighbor's, you will at once see the foundation upon which I rest my opinion." But, said I, perhaps you judge them too severely, you know that we are all naturally rivals, that most of us are dependent upon our profession for a support, and that what has been called the first law of our nature—*self-preservation*, leads every man to prefer himself to his neighbor. Tell me, said I, what are the rules governing them in their intercourse with one another, upon what grounds do they rely for advancing themselves or to get practice. Though a rivalry must exist, yet there is such a thing as an honorable, indeed a *generous* rivalry. He then continued: "I believe I am correct when I say, that no three of the doctors speak. Let a new member of the faculty come to town to settle, and they instantly view him as an interloper, trespassing on their own rightful domains, and treat him accordingly. Woe be unto any of their number who may commit a mistake, or have any evil to befall him in his practice, for he at once becomes common prey for the balance, who look upon the weakness of the rival as so much strength lent to themselves. As to their code or

rules governing them in advancing themselves—the prime one seems to be the old primitive one of ‘every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost.’ Another cardinal one, I think, is—‘get practice, honestly, if you can, but anyhow, get practice.’ The means adopted to get practice are multitudinous, and the pre-severance with which they are followed and the astuteness with which they are applied by some, would do honor to any cross-roads’ politician. Marriage, the church, masonry, odd-fellowship, teetotalism, democracy, radicalism, the kukluk klan and the loyal league, are all impressed for aid, and the way in which court days and Saturday evenings are spent in the shaking of hands and *palaver*, a spectator would think the next week an important election was to come off, and the doctor was the candidate for office. Indeed he would sometimes think the vote was surely to take place on Monday, judging from certain scenes on certain church steps on Sundays. To sum up the matter,” said he, “though I blush to tell it, I have heard a doctor, without circumlocution and with unmantled cheek, ask a citizen directly for his patronage.”

These, and some other things, he said of the art of acquiring practice adopted by the physicians of his locality, which I thought would have formed a

worthy appendix to the celebrated letter of Mead * to Dr. Timothy Van Bustle on the same subject. Though my friend is rather hypercritical, and withal naturally something of a cynic, and therefore probably drew the scene with rather too heavy a hand, yet we can all recognize some lines which, alas! are but too commonly visible, in any but well-organized communities.

Though in localities in which no organization of the medical body exists, the large number of medical men may act in the true spirit of the profession, and while admitting that if there was no written code, that yet the true physician would carry out its spirit, just as the true gentleman would always be found acting in accordance with the spirit of the civil law, if even it was not the law of the land, yet, just as the necessities of society at large demand organic laws, so, on precisely the same principle, is organization and a written code demanded by every profession. With the clergy, as with the military, it is indeed the fundamental rule of existence.

The truth is, that owing to human depravity, we are all naturally a little mean, and are instinctively predisposed to be a little jealous each of the other. This is, when we analyze it, but an extension of the

natural law of *self-preservation* beyond proper limits. Now, I think I may truthfully say, that there is no more effectual way of repressing this evil phase of our nature, in its multifarious disgusting forms, as we see it cropping out within the folds of our profession, than by the accepted public acknowledgment on the part of the better portion of our profession of a written code. Let the public at large once be fully cognizant of our standard, and half the incentives to self-abasement have been taken away; for they, the audience before whom we play our respective parts, can at once measure each of us by our own rules, and the most respectable part of society learns soon to look with disgust upon the tricks of the tradesman in the professional man. Sir Benjamin Brodie once said that medicine is a most noble profession, but a miserable trade. Fully imbue society with this idea, and any over-pushing, grasping desire for the world's patronage, at the expense of honorable independence and the nobler feelings, or at the sacrifice of the rights of others, and the violator will, by the public as by ourselves, be viewed with profound scorn.

The foundation of all pure ethical precepts is in the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would

have them do unto you," and its spirit has ever been breathed into all the established rules for professional intercourse with which we are acquainted. It is infused into the grand old Hippocratic oath of fifty ages ago. It permeates the noble precepts of that prince of surgeons of five hundred years ago, Guy of Chauliac, who summed up the character of the true surgeon by saying that "He should be courteous and condescending, bold in security, cautious in time of danger, avoiding impracticabilities, compassionate to the infirm, benevolent to his associates, circumspect in prognostication, chaste, sober, pious, and merciful, not greedy of gain, no extortioner, but looking for his fee in moderation, according to the extent of his services, the ability of his patient, the result of his treatment, and a proper sense of his own dignity." And now, in our own Code of Ethics, as written by the ever-to-be-honored Percival, and adopted by the American Medical Association, we have as perfect a system of rules for our government, founded on as pure a system of morality as the most rigid moralist could ever wish for—a code which, from its essential nature, must always purify and ennoble those living in accordance with its precepts.

How men of our profession, of good sense and

good intentions, can ever live and practice their vocation in the same community without being on good terms with each other, is not easily explicable; for there is certainly no other profession, the inherent nature of the practice of which so inevitably and so repeatedly demands co-operation, and mutual kindly services. As has been said by one of eminence in our profession: "If society does treat the medical man harshly and unkindly, is it any worse than medical men treat each other? Many of the worst things ever said of a physician, originally came from another physician's tongue; society is often merely the whispering gallery, which echoes back these utterances. Were we more charitable toward each other, we would silence half the reproaches which are brought upon the profession."* It would always be well for that man who should be ready to rejoice at the mishaps of his neighbor, and dishonorably profit by his misfortunes, to reflect that, being human, we are all thereby fallible, and that the day may not be far distant when he himself may stand in sore need of, and most wistfully crave, all human sympathy; and, furthermore, that he who does injustice to one of his peers, directly wounds his profession, and, reflectively, himself.

* Dr. Theophilus Parvin.

How different was the noble conduct of Dr. Mead! He and Dr. Freind were at the head of the profession in London, and were rivals in practice, as well as opposed to each other in politics—Mead being a Whig, and possessing great influence with the heads of the party then in power, while the latter was a Tory, and a member of Parliament for Launceston. Dr. Freind, being suspected of some connection with the Atterbury plot, was arrested and committed to the Tower, where he was confined for nearly a half year. Mead was about this time called to attend Sir Robert Walpole, and during his professional attendance, pleaded so eloquently with the Prime Minister as to effect Dr. Freind's discharge on bail, he himself becoming one of his sureties. Not only this, but he took Freind aside, after his release, and presented him with a purse containing 5,000 guineas, the sum of all the fees he had received from the patients of his Jacobite rival during his imprisonment, enforcing its acceptance by saying: "I can not profit by the misfortunes of a rival." What a worthy example of magnanimity was the course of Dr. Paul F. Eve, who, appointed Professor of Surgery in the University of Louisville on Dr. Gross' leaving the chair, to occupy a similar position in New York, when the latter returned to Louisville, after a year

or two, at once resigned, telling the trustees to reappoint Dr. Gross—that he was the ablest man for the position to be found in the West, and that the honor of the school and the good of the profession demanded his reappointment!

The practice of our profession in the proper spirit, tends, of its very self, to ennoble us, and this tribute was paid to medicine more than a thousand years ago, by no less a personage than Cicero, when he said, “*Homines ad Deos nulla re proprius accedunt, quam salutem hominibus dando.*”

But, as the organization of individuals into communities is greatly auxiliary to individual effort, whether it be for the furtherance of material interests, or the practice of the moral virtues, so is our profession benefited by the formation of Societies. Certainly one of the most powerful levers impelling the advance of medical science during the past half century, has been the establishment of the numerous medical Societies which during that time have grown up in the capital towns of Europe.

Before these, every alleged discovery with any pretensions to importance, is brought up, and undergoes the ordeal of scientific discussion by the ablest minds of our profession. Before these, a thousand pretentious theories which would have lived some time in the world, have promptly re-

ceived their quietus; and it has been, on the other hand, through its ventilation here, that many an opinion or method which would otherwise have been very slow of development, has at once obtained its proper standing with the profession. The great medical Societies of the world are the winnowing machines of the profession, serving the most useful purpose of sifting the good from the bad, the true from the false. Let the Academy of Medicine, or the Imperial Academy of Surgery, of Paris, alone be blotted out to-day, and the loss would soon be sensibly felt by the profession throughout the world.

Is there a member of the Boyle County Medical Society present to-night, but will agree with me in affirming that, as an individual practitioner, he has been instructed and elevated morally as well as mentally from our united association? And, furthermore, I believe I speak the truth when I say, that as the result of the Society's organization and operations, our profession as a body, and as a consequence, we, as individual practitioners, have been elevated an hundred per cent. in the eyes of this community in whose midst we belong.

There may be mentioned—not in the spirit of egotism, but for self-encouragement, and to demonstrate the claim that our organization has not been

in vain—the effects of our Society abroad. I believe that the profession throughout the State, who are informed as to the history of the reorganization of the Kentucky State Medical Society, with one accord give the credit of its revival to us, and certainly that the plan for its resurrection originated here. I am aware of three societies within the State, which, encouraged by our example, have been organized, adopting in the main, the constitution, by-laws, and form of business governing this body, and I have reason to believe that more than one other association, antedating us in age, has been awakened from its state of suspended animation and had new vitality infused into it, by the example of our prosperity.

What, gentlemen, are our prospects for the future? Has our Society reached its acme of efficiency, and is it unreasonable to expect the fruits of the year just before us to excel the products of the one just ended?

While acknowledging that our *organization*, simple as it is, is yet remarkably well adapted for effecting its object, and while I think I can say without reflecting egotism, that we have done well in the past, yet truth demands that I should say that there yet remains a wide margin for improvement.

Wherein we are yet lacking, and the direction in which I think improvement can be effected, it becomes my duty to endeavor to point out.

It has been justly said by an eminent observer in our profession, "A very large class enter the learned professions with no higher motives than such as characterize commercial enterprises, pursuing them as a business, and more anxious to erect monuments like that of Nebuchadnezzar in the plain of Dura, than such as fill the niches of fame."*

"Make sordid wealth the object and sole end
Of their industrious aims."

But, gentlemen, though we know that while we have our own, with perhaps many other hungry mouths to fill, we must ever instinctively feel, that to derive an income from our professional labors must be one of our first objects—an object the worthiness of which we have sanctioned by the inspired authority, which tells us that "he who provideth not for his household is worse than an infidel"—yet we should never forget that we have it from the same authority, that "man shall not live by bread alone."

Dr. George B. Wood once declared that "He

* Dr. D. Hayes Agnew.

who enters the medical profession with a mercenary spirit, will almost necessarily come short of its highest requirements. Aiming at the appearance, rather than the reality of skill, he will think more of the impression he may make on others, than of a proper understanding and treatment of the disease. When nothing is to be gained but the consciousness of duty fulfilled, he will be little apt to spend time and labor which might yield him more if applied elsewhere, or at least would be abstracted from his pleasures. For the frequent self-denial, the steady devotion of thought and energy, the unwavering guard over his precious charge, as well when unseen as when seen of men, which characterize the right spirited practitioner, he has no sufficient inducement. He will be, almost necessarily, more or less superficial. He never can be the true model physician. Just in proportion as medicine is cultivated in the mercenary, or in the poor professional spirit, will be its decay or advancement in efficiency, zeal, dignity and acceptance with God and man. * * Get the true professional spirit, and all that is needful or desirable will be added unto it."

The English Hippocrates, Sydenham, used to say: "I have thought it a greater happiness to discover a certain method of curing the slightest dis-

ease, than to accumulate the largest fortune." And the illustrious Dr. Fothergill once said: "My only wish was to do what little business might fall to my share as well as possible, and to banish all thoughts of practicing physic as a money-getting trade, with the same solicitude as I would the suggestions of vice or intemperance. * * * I endeavor to follow my business because it is my duty, rather than my interest; *the last is inseparable from a just discharge of duty.*"

Lord Bacon has said "that every man is a debtor to his profession, from the which, as men do of course seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto." Our code makes the same acknowledgment in the paragraph which declares that "Every individual, on entering the profession, as he becomes thereby entitled to all its privileges and immunities, incurs an obligation to the extent of his best abilities to maintain its dignity and honor, to exalt its standing, and to extend the bounds of its usefulness;" and further on enjoins that he "should, by unwearied diligence, resort to every honorable means of enriching the science."

Now, gentlemen, let us ask ourselves the question direct, and let each answer it honestly for him-

self, whether during the year just closed, he thinks he has been perfectly imbued with the "pure professional spirit," or whether he does not think we all yet have rather too much of the "mercenary sort." Have we always attended our society meetings, when it was possible? Have we always prepared ourselves as thoroughly as we could for our debates? Have we always done what we could in the way of prepared papers, and written records of cases, to be read before our Society? Have we, in every instance possible, demanded and held a *post mortem*, when we had a fatal case? Have we taken advantage of the opportunities we have had of cultivating anatomical science, the very groundwork of our profession? Have we all kept case books, and carefully recorded the progress and results of each case in our practice? Have we kept as many journals on our tables as we could afford to take and had time to read, and purchased every new work, the perusal of which was necessary to keep us abreast in the present rapid march of our profession? Have we provided ourselves with all instruments which the exigencies of our profession and the urgency of certain cases which are liable to fall into our hands at any day, will not give us time to send abroad for, when the occasion arises for their use, and the

want of which, under certain circumstance, might make us morally criminal, on the death of a fellow-being? And have we always kept ourselves so pure and unspotted from the world of quackery, that by a refusal of private social recognition of its practitioners, we take away from the public all occasion of confounding them with us? To make application of an expression of St. Paul, "Have we all done what we could to *magnify* our profession?"

But methinks I hear some one present say, We have no time for most of these things; the toils of our practice, and the domestic duties—with those of us having families—so engross our time as to leave us insufficient leisure for the cultivation of medicine as a science. Besides, some of us are growing old, and we must leave every thing of that sort to the younger generation, following after.

But I would ask any so objecting, to think for a few moments, and tell me, if he can, of any great work which we acknowledge as of much authority in our profession, which has not been prepared amid just such, or more onerous duties than any by which the busiest of us is now harassed. Let him reflect that some of the most valuable of all the works for which to-day our profession is indebted to Sir Astley Cooper were composed in the midst of

one of the largest private practices of any man who ever lived, and at the time, too, when he was an hospital surgeon, and daily lecturer in a medical school. Let him look at those eighteen volumes of Gerard Van Swieten's "Commentaries on Boerhaave," the great text-book of the medical world a century ago, and reflect that they were written by a court physician of Joseph II., in the midst of one of the heaviest and most responsible of private practices, and that he still found time to originate a medical school, give clinical lectures, create a botanical garden, and to exert his influence sufficiently to found a university. Let him read the lives of Boerhaave and Haller and Hoffman, the bare titles of the latter of whose works fill thirty-eight quarto pages, and see if they had learned leisure in which to do nothing else than write. Does not every one know that Hippocrates, the father of medicine, wrote those immortal records which all acknowledge as the foundation of our science while engaged in what must have been almost constant practical professional engagements. Or let him come down to the present year and hour, and know that the living, shining lights of our own day and generation, are also the busiest privately occupied. Let him know that Sir Thomas Watson, and George B. Wood, and Austin Flint, and Sir Will-

iam Ferguson, and Erichsen, and Gross, and Sir James Y. Simpson, and Hodge, and Meigs, each wrote the works which we, and generations after us, shall be indebted to them for, while busier than the busiest of us in this presence. No, gentlemen, when we recollect that Dr. John Mason Good found time to translate Lucretius' "*De Natura Rerum*," with his book in hand as he drove or walked his daily rounds, engaged in one of the largest practices in London, and when we read in the preface to Dr. Willis' Biography of Harvey, together with a complete translation of his works from the Latin, what he says in speaking of the biographical part: "This portion of my work I have only achieved with an effort, and at something like disadvantage. Incessantly engaged, by night and by day, in the laborious and responsible duties of a country practice, enjoying nothing of learned leisure, but snatching from the hours that should rightfully be given to rest, the time that was necessary to composition, remote, too, from means of information which I must nevertheless send for and consult"—recalling these, and an hundred similar examples if we might, for one I think that there is not one of us but should feel humiliated when reflecting on our wasted time, time which we have let slip from us, never, nevermore to be repossessed.

But, I imagine I again hear it objected, that we are but unpretentious country doctors, not aspiring to lead the profession, and even if we were all aflame with ambitious hopes to do so, that our narrow sphere would make their realization an impossibility—that the village doctor must, from the very nature of things, ever be the passive follower of the hospital physician of the city.

But, I would answer, gentlemen, that this is not the point. I am not speaking of ambition, though if we each had a little more of it in us, it would probably be better for ourselves and our patients; the question is one regarding the fulfillment of that injunction of that code which says that we are morally bound to exalt the standing of our profession, and by “unwearied diligence, resort to every honorable means of enriching the science.” Because the hospital presents a wider and more easily cultivated field than ours, does it follow that ours must be totally barren? No, the material in each case is just the same, poor suffering humanity, and while the concentration of a large number of sick within a small space, and the regulations of hospitals, are such that the observer can study disease more readily, have his directions carried out more effectually, and record and tabulate the results more easily, yet the antecedents, the surroundings,

and the very concentration of patients within eleemosynary institutions, are so different from those of the patients of private life, that the uncorrected conclusions of experience drawn from the former source alone, are not perfectly applicable, in every respect, to those whom we attend.

I can not recollect any evidence that either Hippocrates or Sydenham, was ever connected with a hospital, and it would be well for those who would despise our narrow sphere, to recall the fact, that the greatest boon which our profession has yet conferred upon humanity (vaccination), came at the hands of a modest country physician, who made his daily rounds just as we are doing; and let him also know, that the physician of America now receiving the most honors at home and in Europe, is doing so because of an operation conceived, executed, and perfected while laboring in precisely the same character of field as our own. Why, gentlemen, an operation which has made the name of its originator famous throughout the world, and will send it down honored to coming generations, an operation by which thousands of lovely women have been, and many more shall be rescued from otherwise inevitable death, was first planned and performed right here in this, our own little field.

Let us all use the opportunities at command, to

the extent of our abilities, and although our Society may never be honored by one to whom the world shall owe so much as it does to a Jenner, a Sims, or a McDowell, yet of one thing we may feel assured, that we will all become better practitioners, and our patients, to whom we shall be called to minister, be proportionately benefited.

The plain truth is, that those who intrust themselves to our care, have the right to require of us a knowledge of our profession fully up to the advances of the day, and for the lack of the possession of such knowledge, involving human life and health as it does, we stand responsible before God and in the presence of the law. Ours is not an exact science, but is making regular and rapid progress toward a position in which it may be ranked with the fixed sciences. While this rapid march continues, to cease to advance is to retrograde, and the day the practitioner of medicine ceases to be a student, that day should see him, if a conscientious man, ready to retire from the ranks of the profession. Unremitting study and labor will ever constitute our only reliable motive power, so long as we continue members of that great army, in the interests of medical science, warring with disease.

In the introduction to one of his anatomico-physiological treatises, Galen calls his work "A

Hymn to the Deity," declaring that, to his mind, such an offering was more acceptable in the eyes of the gods, than the sacrifices of whole hecatombs of oxen, or incense from the most costly perfumes. Galen was but a pagan, yet the spirit of his language was worthy of these most Christian times, since every effort properly directed toward the advancement of medicine, tends to alleviate the sufferings of our race. I believe the true physician can, of all men, most truly say—"laborare est orare."

If we believe in the sentiment, there is one resolve which I think we should make in common here to-night, that we should each of us keep a *case book* and in it faithfully record the phenomena, treatment and results of every case of any importance falling to our lot during the present year. The keeping of an intelligible and conscientious record, must necessarily improve every individual keeping it, but let a dozen men in country practice each keep one and the combined experience is about equivalent to a large ward in a hospital. Should the members of every country district in the State, keep accurate records, for the next three years, there would be data of the most valuable character, and such as our profession stands greatly in need of, data from which the statistics of

modern country practice separate from hospital practice could reliably be made out. Let us keep accurate records of our practice, and we will gradually lose a phase in our debates which has been entirely too familiar with us, and one which does not look well in a scientific body, when seen too often. I allude to the common expression of opinion, without a reason for the faith in us, and which is a frequent source of controversy without practical benefit; *e. g.*—Dr. A. says that he thinks a certain disease less common than formerly, while Dr. B. arises and declares that he thinks it more common, to be followed by Dr. C., who probably thinks it about as common as it has always been. Or, let the question be one regarding the presence of certain phenomena in disease, or the results of the administration of a certain remedy, and it is the same thing. But if we could all draw upon the *written records* of our experience, instead of our unconfirmed recollections, which are too often but “vain imaginings,” our opinions would be more nearly demonstrable. “*Litera scripta manet.*” We should not forget that simple opinions are not experience, let them be asserted ever so boldly, but that, as Liston has said, “The greatest number of well-assorted facts, on a particular subject, con-

stitute experience, whether these facts have been culled in five years or fifty."

Next in importance with us to the subject just under discussion is, I think, *the making of post-mortems and anatomical dissections.*

The first has always been deemed necessary to the intelligent practice of our profession, and absolutely essential to the advancement of medicine toward a perfect science. Without it, nearly one-half the fruits of what we are accustomed to call experience is lost; for otherwise we have no means of confirming the correctness, or correcting the errors of judgment, regarding pathological conditions supposed to exist during life, and toward which our therapeutics have been directed. It is true, that I have sometimes heard it objected, that practitioners in the country are so unaccustomed to examining the dead, that whenever they do so, their opinions are worth but little from their inability to clearly discern and distinguish normal from abnormal appearances. But this is the most futile of objections, being, indeed, one of the strongest arguments in behalf of their being more frequently held. It has been remarked that one of the most correct indices of the true standing of our profession in any locality is the frequency of *post-mortems.*

As to the latter—*practical anatomy*—I don't

know that I can adduce any arguments, or the opinions of any, entitled to more authority concerning the necessity of its cultivation by us, than have been adduced by Sir Astley Cooper and Sir Benjamin Brodie. The former has said: "Let it always be remembered, that operations can not be *safely* undertaken by any man, without his possessing a thorough knowledge of anatomy. This is the real ground-work of all surgical science. It has ever been found that half anatomists are bungling practitioners; ignorance here, as it always does, gives confidence without power. * * * With us the march of improvement has been most rapid; and it has principally arisen from the assiduity with which the modern surgeons have pursued their dissecting-room avocations." The latter, when once conversing in private with a young American who had just taken his degree in medicine, said: "If you wish, my young friend, to give breadth to your medical conceptions and confidence to your hand, if you wish, indeed, to make yourself a great surgeon, let me say to you, as I would to all with whom I have influence, never for a moment cease the cultivation of anatomical science." Now it will not do to excuse ourselves by saying that, being country doctors, we make no special pretensions to surgery, and that the remarks quoted were

intended to apply alone to those practicing surgery purely, and that when a surgical operation is necessary, they are the ones to whom we send our patients for its performance. The truth is that the advice is in a great measure as applicable to the pure physician as to the surgeon; and, furthermore, the accomplishments demanded at the hands of practitioners in the country are really much greater than those of the city practitioner, who can devote himself to medicine alone, or to surgery exclusively. For we, from the nature of our situation, must be physicians, surgeons and obstetricians—all. I admit that it is true that in probably the majority of our cases we can send our patients with surgical affections abroad for operations, but we must recollect, gentlemen, that in many instances we can not. Every country doctor must be his own bleeder, cupper and leecher; every country doctor is in any hour liable to be called upon to reduce a dislocation, or amputate a mangled member, or set a fracture, or trephine, or operate for inguinal or femoral hernia, or perform tracheotomy, or extract a bullet, or cut down upon and take up an artery—operations sometimes requiring no little degree of anatomical knowledge, and which make the operator sigh for an opportunity of resorting to the cadaver to revive his recollections. I am ready to

admit that the difficulties and dangers of dissection are not small, to say nothing of its disagreeableness, and that we are placed in the very unpleasant and anomalous condition of being compelled to be law-breakers to enable ourselves to obey the law ; but I think it has already been satisfactorily demonstrated that the good sense of this community, and its respect for our profession, are such that we have no just grounds for fearing outside interference with dissections, when made with discretion, as, indeed, they always should be. “ *We must dissect the dead, or mangle the living.*”

What shall I say of the hated monster Quackery, which like a hideous hydra-headed shadow, ever stalks abroad accompanying our profession? As the louse, the flea, and tick are the constant companions of the canine tribe, so it would seem the body-politic is destined always to be preyed upon by the quack. Though the crop of medicastors, charlatans, quacksalvers, nostrum-mountebanks, liniment-rubbers, wind-pumpers, electric-humbuggers, *et id omne genus*, has been as plentiful as usual during the past three years, yet I don't think they have flourished in this vicinity, as much as was their wont in former days.

One prime source of the evil rests in the bosom

of our own profession, for as has been said by another: "The quackery which is practiced among medical men is a much greater evil than that which is abroad in the community. When the rules of an honorable professional intercourse shall come to be understood by the public, as well also as many of the tricks and maneuvers which are employed by those physicians who, pursuing medicine as a *trade* instead of a profession, study the science of patient-getting, to the neglect of the science of patient-curing, one of the great sources of the success of quackery will be removed." * Let us see to it that our own escutcheon shall be kept clean, if we wish to avoid all danger of its being confounded with the dirty banner of the enemy. As I once heard a very eloquent divine say, in a revival sermon, from the pulpit: "If we had but a revival within the fold of the church, a great and blessed revival indeed would it be." So might we paraphrase him and declare that if the profession proper, were perfectly purged of quackery, what a riddance there would be. In proportion to the high and trusted stand, which our profession takes in a community as a scientific and ethical body, is the difficulty of quackery's obtaining a foothold, but when torn with dissensions among

* Dr. Worthington Hooker.

ourselves, chaos prepares a rich field for its prolific growth.

Our code declares it to be our duty as "physicians who are frequent witnesses of the enormities committed by quackery, and the injury to health, and even destruction of life, caused by the use of quack medicines, to enlighten the public on these subjects, and to expose the injuries sustained by the unwary from the devices and pretensions of artful empirics and impostors." To this end, I think that it is the duty of each of us, on every proper occasion, to endeavor to reason and explain away the prejudices and misconceptions of the more intelligent portion of society, for it is this part, after all, which furnishes the main pillar of its support. I think that not infrequently the mistake is made of treating the subject with some simple ejaculation of contempt, which proves ineffectual, when, if we took the trouble of reasoning a little with those who are intelligent and honest, though misinformed, our efforts to eradicate error would more frequently prove successful.

If legislation could be brought properly to bear upon the evil, much would be done toward its repression. With this object in view, one of our legislators has promised, during the coming session, to introduce a bill into the Legislature similar to

the medical act recently passed in the neighboring State of Ohio.

In conclusion, gentlemen, we ought always to remember that "of unity cometh strength;" and that, as whatever of individual honors come to us are reflected upon our Society, so as individual members composing the Society, whatever of honors or glory cometh to her is reflected back upon us. Let us never forget that the preamble of our constitution declares a prime object of this organization to be "the cultivation of amity among us;" recalling which, let us foster toleration, charity, forbearance, the spirit of forgiveness, and all the kindlier feelings, which I think, considering every thing, have pre-eminently characterized our association in the past; and, as greatly promotive of this end, I would suggest that we meet more frequently around the social board.

And now, may I say, in the name of every member here present to-night, that whatever of joy or sorrow the future may bring us, nerved to a triple resolve by the recollections of the three years just expired, may the coming three always find us true and worthy worshipers at the altar of science, ever

lending the best powers of head, heart and hand toward adorning and keeping clean the little niche in the great Temple of Medicine which has fallen to the lot of the Boyle County Medical Society.



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