

**Memoir of Robley Dunglison, M.D., LL.D. : read before the College of Physicians at a special meeting held October 20, 1869 / by S. D. Gross.**

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**Publication/Creation**

Philadelphia : Collins, printer, 1869.

**Persistent URL**

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# MEMOIR

OF

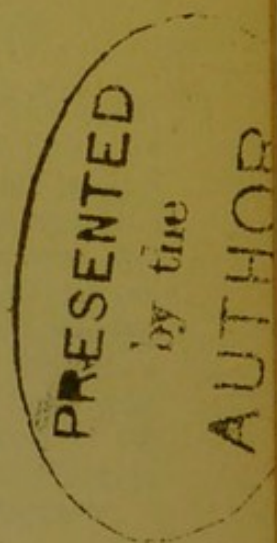
## ROBLEY DUNGLISON, M. D., LL. D.

READ BEFORE THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AT A SPECIAL  
MEETING HELD OCTOBER 20, 1869.



BY

S. D. GROSS, M. D., LL. D.



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"Qui omnium rerum atque artium rationem naturamque comprehenderit."

CICERO.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.  
1869.

1874

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

ROMNEY DEWEYSON, M. P. 1874

RECEIVED  
JAN 10 1874  
The Secretary of the Interior  
Washington, D. C.  
Dear Sir,  
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the application of the 10th section of the Act of March 3, 1873, in relation to the land of the United States in the Territory of Utah, and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.  
Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
J. M. Smith, Secretary of the Interior.



# MEMOIR

OF

ROBLEY DUNGLISON, M.D., LL.D.

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To write an appreciative and faithful biography of any man is confessedly a difficult task; but the embarrassment is vastly increased when, as in the present instance, the subject is an intensely earnest, self-reliant, highly-cultured, broad-minded, many-sided individual, who, for upwards of a third of a century, occupied a conspicuous place in professional and public esteem. Dr. Dunglison was no ordinary man; indeed, in more than one sense of the term, he was an illustrious man; a great scholar, an accomplished teacher, a profound physiologist, an acute thinker, a facile writer, a lucid, erudite, and abundant author. In all these relations he excelled, jutting out prominently above and beyond most of his contemporaries, both in the New World and in the Old, and forming, in the language of Fitz-Greene Halleck, in his poem of Marco Bozzaris,

"One of the few, the immortal names  
That were not born to die."

There was hardly a respectable medical man in this country, during the last third of a century, that was not indebted to him, in a greater or less degree, for some of his professional information, derived either from his works or from his oral instruction. The number of pupils, taught by him in the different schools with which he was connected, was perhaps as great as that of any lecturer that ever lived. His signature is affixed to nearly five thousand diplomas. No physician on this continent has surpassed him in the extent of his erudition, in the variety of his information, or in the magnitude of his labors.

ROBLEY DUNGLISON was born on the 4th of January, 1798. His parents were William and Elizabeth Dunglison, the latter of whom was remarkable for her intellectual powers, and for the great care which she bestowed upon the education and moral training of her promising son. The place of his nativity was Keswick, a small town in Cumberland, England, on the south bank of the Greta, celebrated chiefly for its manufactures of linsey-



woolsey stuffs, cutlery, and black-lead pencils. The valley in which it is situated has long been distinguished for its beautiful lakes and picturesque scenery, and is the constant summer resort of thousands of tourists from all parts of the world. Greta Hall, for many years the residence of the poet Southey, is near the town, and serves to impart additional interest to the locality.

It was here, in this beautiful and romantic spot, so well calculated to inspire the mind with grand and noble ideas, that the boy received the rudiments of his education, and laid the foundation of his future usefulness and distinction. The original intention was to prepare him for the mercantile profession, and then to send him to the West Indies, to his uncle, Mr. Joseph Robley, an opulent planter, whose design it was to give him an interest in his estate. Before this plan, however, could be matured, his kinsman died; and, whether from his own natural proclivities or through the influence of his friends, he determined to study medicine. For this purpose he went to Green Row Academy, a celebrated classical institution, where he made himself thorough master of the Greek and Latin languages and of the higher branches of an English education. He had previously, while a pupil at Brisco Hill, near Wigton, in Cumberland, paid great attention to mathematics and English composition, and there are still extant several MS. volumes of his exercises which show with what care and neatness he performed his daily scholastic labours. No one can examine these exercises without being struck with the remarkable order and system which characterize them, and which formed such distinguished traits in his subsequent career. They were unquestionably innate qualities of his mind; and it is equally certain that to them much of his brilliant success, as an author and teacher, was due.

He commenced the study of medicine in his seventeenth year. His early pupilage was spent at his native town, in all likelihood as an apprentice to some obscure practitioner, whose name long since passed away. He afterwards went to London, where he served as an assistant to Mr. Charles T. Haden, the obstetrician, and personal friend of Sir Astley Cooper. During his connection with this gentleman, he attended a course of lectures in the University of Edinburgh; but returned at the close of the session to London, where, after having visited the École de Médecine of Paris, and received instruction in certain specialties, he completed his studies, and passed his examination at the Royal College of Surgeons and at the Society of Apothecaries. He commenced the practice of his profession in 1819. In 1824, he graduated, by examination, in the University of Erlangen, the subject of his thesis being Neuralgia. It was about this time that he determined to confine himself exclusively to medical and obstetrical practice, especially the latter, for which he seems, in his early youth, to have had a peculiar fondness. He was appointed physician-accoucheur to the Eastern Dispensary; and in May, 1824, announced a course of lectures on practical midwifery for the following autumn. Before the time, however, arrived, a circumstance occurred which completely changed, not only his plans as a metropolitan teacher, but the tenor of his whole future life. The immediate cause of this occurrence was an invitation from Thomas Jefferson, ex-President of the United States, the founder of the University of Virginia, to one of the chairs in its medical department. It is well known that most of the original members of the different faculties in the new institution were foreigners, selected, at the request of the Board of Visitors, by Francis Walker



Gilmer, Esq., who was sent to England for this express purpose. Of all the appointments that were thus made none proved eventually so advantageous to the country as that of Dr. Dunglison; and it reflects no little credit upon the sagacity of the agent of the University that his choice fell upon a mere youth, hardly twenty-six years of age, who, however, had already given great promise of distinction by the publication of a monograph on the "Stomach and Bowel Complaints of Children," and by various contributions to the periodical press, as well as by the display of extraordinary energy and unbounded ambition.

Dr. Dunglison left London with his family on the 27th of October, 1824, for the United States; but, owing to adverse winds and tides, he was detained six weeks in the British Channel, and did not reach Charlottesville until near the middle of the following February, a period almost of three months. During this protracted voyage, unusually long even at that day for a sailing vessel to cross the Atlantic, he lost no time in preparing himself more fully, by a course of reading, writing and reflection, for his approaching labours in his new field of duty.

It had been covenanted with him, prior to his departure from Europe, to teach in the University of Virginia anatomy, physiology, surgery, materia medica, pharmacy, and the history of medicine; a task which could only be performed by a man of extraordinary ability, industry, and attainments, and which carries one back to the days of Nathan Smith, who, for many years, taught nearly all the branches of medicine at Yale and Dartmouth Colleges. It was, in truth, a Herculean task, much too varied, extensive, and onerous for any man, however learned or industrious. That Prof. Dunglison did it all the justice which it was possible for any human being to bestow upon it, it is safe to assert, from what is known of his character for honesty and fidelity, and of the reputation which he earned during his connection with the University as a successful and popular teacher.

Young as he was when he left his home in the Old World, deep and heartfelt regret was expressed at his departure, not only by his professional friends and admirers, but by the London Medical and Hunterian Societies, of which he was at the time the foreign secretary, and which complimented him by the passage of a series of resolutions, full of sympathy and cordial good wishes.

His residence at the University of Virginia extended over a period of nine years, during which he not only delivered, with never-failing punctuality, his various courses of lectures, but laid the foundation of a solid and enduring reputation as a great author. His industry was boundless. The first fruits of his labours were, his Human Physiology in two portly octavo volumes, and his well-known Medical Dictionary. The composition of these works, doubtless greatly facilitated by the conveniences afforded by the splendid library of the University, rich in the medical lore of ancient and contemporary literature, was a wonderful achievement for one so young. The motto of his Physiology, adopted from Haller, showed the purpose of the author, although the scope of the work reached far beyond its meaning: "*Vastissimi studii primas quasi lineas circumscripsi.*" His home at Charlottesville was, in every respect, a most charming one, graced by all the elegancies that can adorn private life—a refined and highly cultivated circle of friends, mostly members of the different professorial staffs of the University; a refined and luxurious ease, even in the midst of the most arduous labours, and



the society of books and periodicals, which always lay scattered in profusion upon his tables, and served, along with music and conversation, to beguile his leisure moments. He became the intimate friend and professional adviser of the "Sage of Monticello," and of James Madison, to the latter of whom he dedicated his *Human Physiology*, and whom he attended in his last illness, in 1836, having been expressly summoned from Baltimore, where he then resided, the venerable ex-President refusing to take any medicine unless prescribed or sanctioned by him. A number of interesting mementos, the result of this genial intercourse, are still preserved in the family.

In 1833, he accepted the chair of *Materia Medica*, *Therapeutics*, *Hygiene*, and *Medical Jurisprudence* in the University of Maryland; and accordingly, in the autumn of that year, he transferred his residence to Baltimore. Although he was surrounded by every comfort, and had troops of friends and admirers at Charlottesville, he had long panted for a larger field for the exercise of his powers as a medical teacher. He was like one whose talents were hidden under a bushel. The medical department of the University of Virginia was then, as it is now, an elementary school, with no material advantages except the learning, the fidelity, and the indomitable industry of its professors. It is, unquestionably, the best rudimentary institution of the kind on this continent; but it is, unfortunately, like all kindred inland seminaries, destitute of anatomical and clinical facilities, justly considered as of such paramount importance in a course of collegiate education in this and other countries. These considerations could not fail to have their influence with a man so ambitious as Dr. Dunglison. His reception at his new home was all that could have been desired, and he entered upon his new labours with increased life and alacrity. The session opened with a respectable class of students, with whom, as with his colleagues, he soon, as usual, became a great favourite. He remained at Baltimore, however, only three years, but they were years of great industry and of augmenting fame.

During this time he composed his work on *General Therapeutics*, the title of which was afterwards changed to *General Therapeutics and Materia Medica*, and his *Elements of Hygiene*; brought out a new and much enlarged edition of his *Human Physiology*, and contributed various papers to the medical press. In addition to all his labours as a lecturer and a writer, he had charge, for a part of every year, of the medical wards of the Baltimore Infirmary, an institution under the immediate supervision of the Medical Faculty of the University of Maryland; and attended to more or less private practice, chiefly in consultation in obscure cases. His residence in Baltimore was eminently pleasant; for long before he left it he had drawn around him a delightful and genial coterie of friends, who deeply regretted his removal. The number of students in the University had materially increased during his connection with it.

In June, 1836, he was appointed Professor of the Institutes of Medicine in the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, a chair expressly created for him; and he left Baltimore in the following September, filled with bright anticipations of further usefulness and renown in his new home. Owing, however, to various causes, over which he had no control, and which it is unnecessary here to specify, the school did not flourish to the extent that had been prognosticated, and it was therefore reorganized in the spring of 1841, the change being so thorough as to amount almost to a complete revolution, inasmuch as only three of the original faculty—



Dunglison, Huston, and Pancoast—were retained. The College now entered upon a career of prosperity and reputation unequalled in the annals of medical teaching. At the outbreak of the war six hundred and thirty students, the largest class ever assembled on this continent, graced its ample halls. Dr. Dunglison remained at his post, steadily and faithfully working for the interests of the school, until the spring of 1868, when ill health compelled him to vacate the chair which he had so long and so worthily occupied. The Trustees, in accepting his resignation, immediately conferred upon him the well-merited title of Emeritus Professor, and accompanied the announcement with a letter expressive of their deep regret at the necessity which had led to his withdrawal from the Institution.

Dr. Dunglison was one of the most copious writers of his day in this country. To some of his productions allusion has already been made. While yet a mere youth he published his "Commentaries on the Diseases of the Stomach and Bowels of Children," a small octavo volume, which, although it never reached a second edition, was quoted in a complimentary manner only a short time before the death of its author, thus showing that it must have possessed considerable, if not marked, merit. He had translated Baron Larrey's Memoir on the Moxa, and Magendie's Formulary of New Remedies, edited Hooper's Surgical Vade-Mecum, and contributed largely to various periodicals, medical, literary, and scientific. During the early part of his residence in this city other works followed in rapid succession. In 1837 appeared the "Medical Student," or Aids to the Study of Medicine, of which a new edition, much enlarged, was issued in 1844. His "New Remedies" was published in 1839, originally in the American Medical Library, and subsequently in a separate form. It ran through seven editions, the last having left the press in 1856, as an octavo of 750 closely-printed pages. The "Practice of Medicine" was issued in 1842, in two volumes. It passed through three editions, the last of which, six years after, attained the size of nearly 1500 pages. The next work was a Dictionary for the Blind, in raised type, on the basis of Worcester's English Dictionary, in three huge folio volumes, the joint production of himself and Mr. W. Chapin, Principal of the Blind Asylum of Philadelphia. In 1837 he established the American Medical Library and Intelligencer, a monthly periodical devoted to the republication of foreign medical and surgical works, and the dissemination of medical news. It was discontinued in 1842. The portion contributed by him, as editor and collator, comprised five volumes. In addition to all this vast labour, he edited, with notes and valuable additions, Roget's Physiology, Traill's Lectures on Medical Jurisprudence, and Forbes's Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine, the latter in four large octavo volumes, thoroughly revised and brought down to the existing state of the science. He published numerous addresses, introductory and valedictory, delivered before his classes; appeals to the people of Pennsylvania on the subject of an asylum for the insane poor; views on cleansing the city of Philadelphia in cholera times; letters on the blind in Europe; and biographical notices of Peter S. Duponceau, Prof. Tucker, Judge Kane, and Rev. Dr. Bethune, besides numerous other papers which it is needless to mention.

The first contribution he ever published was an article in the London Monthly Magazine for 1817, on a Floating Island in Derwentwater Lake, Cumberland. This was followed by a paper, in the same journal, on the Wind of a Ball, one on Anthropophagi, and one on Collectanea Dietetica,



under the signature of "Philos." In 1822, he published in the *Annals of Philosophy* an article on the Phenomena of Vision produced by dilating the Pupil by Belladonna; and in the following year, in the *London Quarterly*, an elaborate paper on Malaria. During his residence at the University of Virginia he published, conjointly with George Long, Esq., "An Introduction to the Study of Grecian and Roman Geography."

He was one of the founders and editors of the *Virginia Literary Museum and Journal of Belles-Lettres, Arts, and Sciences*, a weekly periodical, issued at Charlottesville, in the interest of the University. Although it was conducted with marked ability, and had many readers, it was suspended at the end of the first year for the want, it would seem, of proper aid from the contributors. Dr. Dunglison furnished many of the leading and more elaborate articles, the material thus supplied amounting to several hundred pages. Most of the articles were of a non-professional character, and displayed unusual learning and research—as *Fashions in Dress in England at the commencement of the Seventeenth Century*; *Onomatopœia*; *Modern Improved System of Road-making*; *Certain Ceremonies connected with the Dead*; *Anthropology*; *Blondel and Richard Lion-Heart*; *English Provincialisms*; *Penitentiary Discipline*; *Universities*; *Legends of the English Lakes*; *Superstition*; *Americanisms*; *Early German Poetry*; *Etymological History*; *Sanscrit Language*; *Ancient and Modern Gymnasia*; *Cradle of Mankind*; *English Orthoepey*; *Canals of the Ancients*, and *Jeffersoniana*. Quite a number of these papers were of an exhaustive character.

This catalogue of his literary labours, which might, if space permitted, be much extended, shows that Dr. Dunglison was not only a very copious writer, but a writer upon a great variety of subjects, both professional and miscellaneous. "Occasionally," says one of the most charming of modern authors, "the life of the intellect seems to run itself out in one effort. All the fine juice of the vine flows into a single grape." It was not thus with Dunglison. Few men have been more gifted in this respect than he was. He wrote with immense rapidity, literally as if his pen had been impelled by steam. It was nothing for him, in his riper years, to dash off from ten to fifteen pages of printed matter of a morning. It is reported of the late Mr. Raymond, of the *New York Times*, that he often wrote a dozen columns for that paper at a single sitting; and our great medical scholar frequently accomplished similar exploits. There was, however, this noteworthy difference between the two men that, while the pen of the one ran smoothly and uninterruptedly over his paper, that of the other was constantly arrested by the necessity of marginal references; a labour which greatly impedes a writer's progress, and of which a public journalist is, in great degree, if not wholly, ignorant.

Dunglison wrote not only rapidly but well, possessing singular facility of diction and power of utterance. His style was clear and classical, the construction of his sentences harmonious, the arrangement of his matter orderly and systematic. Always perfect master of his subject, and thoroughly versed in the art of composition, it was no labour for him to adapt his language to the comprehension of the dullest intellect.

It has been said that he was a mere compiler of other men's thoughts and language, and that such books as he produced might have been written by any one, even much less learned and industrious than himself. I cannot share this opinion. Originality is many-sided, and may exhibit itself in a great variety of ways. Thus, for instance, a man may confine



himself entirely to experimental investigations, and so reach results previously unknown, or at least very imperfectly ascertained; or he may make himself master of facts long recognized and accredited, the property of the world, or of a particular sect, class, or individual, and be quite original in the manner in which he arranges, groups, or presents them to his reader, and in the significance which he attaches to them. Facts long known may be differently interpreted, or applied to new purposes, and so assume an original character. Steam was known from the earliest ages, but the fact that it is capable of propelling an engine, and thus completely changing the aspect of navigation, commerce, manufactures, and human intercourse, was first distinctly demonstrated by Watt and Fulton less than three-quarters of a century ago. The author of any work, exhaustive of the subject of which it treats, must, to a great extent, from the very nature of the case, be a compiler; that is, he must avail himself of what is known, and he must so elaborate his material as to exhibit it in the most advantageous light. A system, as remarked by the great Lexicographer, must necessarily be built upon the labours and discoveries of many minds. It is thus with the physiologist, the physician, and the surgeon, not less than with the historian and the scientist. Hume, Gibbon, Macaulay, Milman, Bancroft, Motley, and a hundred others are all compilers, as it respects their facts, and original only in regard to their interpretation and appreciation. Captious critics, in reading the works of Dunglison, give him no credit for his erudition and his honesty. They see in his marginal references an evidence, as they suppose, not of his desire to acknowledge his indebtedness to the more important sources from which he derived assistance, but a demonstration that he was simply a copyist of the products of other men's brains. His writings everywhere bear the impress of a strong, vigorous, and discriminative intellectuality, a potential masculinity, utterly incompatible with such a narrow-minded conclusion. There is in all his works, especially in his luminous treatise on Physiology, a strong infusion of the dignity of self-respect, and of that independence in the expression of opinions so characteristic of a great author. It has been well remarked by a sagacious and voluminous writer, Sir Egerton Brydges, "that he who sets things in a light in which they have not been set before, adds to human knowledge."

It is a well-known, and, at the same time, a melancholy fact that most professional works, however able or learned, have a very ephemeral existence. Few survive their authors, especially if the authors themselves attain to anything like a respectable age, and many die out almost before the printer's ink is fairly dried upon their pages. Like the sickly fruit of summer, which drops off prematurely, and is unfit for use, they fall still-born from the press; or, if read at all, are soon laid ignominiously upon the shelf, to be consulted only at long intervals in the hope, perhaps, of extracting from them the little kernel from the thick shell that incloses it. Popular as most of Dr. Dunglison's works have been, they have not been exempt from the general fate of such productions. At least three of them, long and extensively employed as text-books in the schools of this country, rest from their labours. Not one of them will ever be reproduced, and yet, as they respectively reflect the existing state of the sciences at the period at which they flourished, they will often be referred to by the learned and the curious, interested in watching the progress of the healing art. The Human Physiology, which passed altogether through eight editions, the last in 1856, is an imperishable work,



to which physiologists, in all time to come, will appeal for an account, at once full and reliable, of the facts, true and spurious, which marked the state of the science during the lifetime of its illustrious author. It will be the mile-stone in after ages in regard to the history of the physiological science of the nineteenth century that the great work of Albert von Haller is in regard to that of the eighteenth. I know of no treatises which, in point of systematic arrangement, minuteness of detail, scrupulous accuracy, clearness of style and just criticism, are at all comparable to these productions, both destined to stand as beacon-lights in the World's Great Library. The Dictionary, Dunglison's other great work, under the supervision of a judicious editor, will maintain its place, as a book of daily reference, for an indefinite time. Such a labour, as its composition implies, will probably never again be attempted by any single writer, however learned, patient, or industrious. It is worthy of notice that Dr. Worcester, in his great American Dictionary of the English language, gives Dr. Dunglison as an authority whenever a medical term is employed, a compliment gracefully acknowledged in the preface of the work. Dr. Webster also frequently quotes him.

His Elements of Hygiene was, like the Physiology, a pioneer work. Until its publication, in 1835, no comprehensive and exhaustive treatise had appeared upon the subject in the English language. The department of hygiene was introduced into the University of Maryland, as a part of the duties of the chair of *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics, which he then held in that Institution. At the time when the work appeared, the subject of hygiene had never been systematically taught in our schools, and even now, after the lapse of a third of a century, it is most shamefully and unaccountably neglected. In France, since the days of the illustrious Hallé, it has been a branch of the regular course of instruction in all the medical colleges, as well as in those of Germany and Italy.

It is difficult, so soon after the death of Dr. Dunglison, to form anything like an accurate estimate of the influence of his writings upon his own and upon succeeding ages. Considering them as a whole, it is safe to assert that his works were more widely disseminated and more extensively read than those of any medical man in the present century. The Physiology passed through eight, the Practice of Medicine through three, the *Materia Medica* through six, the New Remedies through seven, the Hygiene through two, and the Dictionary through more than twenty editions; of the latter work alone, over fifty thousand copies have been sold. Their sale, in fact, was immense, and they were distributed, far and wide, through the length and breadth of the country, thus assisting in conveying information and moulding the opinions and practice of all classes of physicians. The Dictionary has always had numerous readers in Great Britain, and the only surprise is that it has never been translated into some of the more important languages of Europe, as it is incomparably superior to any work of the kind ever produced on the other side of the Atlantic.

He commenced his career as an author in the infancy of American medical literature. The works of Thacher, Wistar, Coxe, Dorsey, Chapman, Beck, Dewees, Eberle, were the only native systematic productions, of any note, that had yet appeared. Our students had relied for their text-books, for the most part, upon foreign reprints, in nearly every branch of medical education. When the Human Physiology appeared,



the only treatise upon the subject in the English language was that of Dr. Bostock, a system full of errors and imperfections, which was at once replaced by its more elaborate, accurate and philosophical rival. Hooper's Dictionary, so long the popular lexicon of the American student, was speedily thrown aside after the publication of the "Dictionary of Medical Science." His other works, as already stated, had a wide circulation. The one entitled *New Remedies* filled an important void in medical literature, and, by successive editions, became a volume of immense labour and erudition, thoroughly reflecting the rapid strides of the *Materia Medica* during the last thirty years.

It will thus be perceived that Dunglison came upon the active stage of life at a most opportune period; at a period when there was an urgent need of just such a man, of a man who, by his ample learning, his refined scholarship, and his untiring industry, could enrich and ennoble medical literature, and thus diffuse a taste for literary pursuits, until then little cultivated on this side of the Atlantic.

As a lecturer and a teacher he enjoyed a world-wide reputation. Few physicians visited Philadelphia without making it a special object to hear him. "When does Dunglison lecture?" was the common inquiry of the stranger on his arrival in the city. He was remarkable for his fluency, the choice of his language, his mellifluous voice, the ease and grace of his manner. It was the possession of these qualities, superadded to a thorough mastery of the subject of his discourse, that rendered him such an attractive teacher, and caused him to be sought for, far and wide, as a professor in different American medical schools. Such were his fluency, and his wonderful command of language, that it was often said of him that he lectured as if he had been wound up, although no one ever accused him of being a mere machine. His great animation, his vivacity, his bonhomie, his captivating manner, discountenanced such a conclusion, and impressed the hearer with the conviction that he sat in the presence of an extraordinary man, decidedly the most able and popular teacher of physiology of his day in this country. If he had any fault as a lecturer, it was that he spoke too much in a monotone, and that he did not make enough points, as he proceeded from topic to topic, an expression which all teachers know how to appreciate. He never failed to enchain the attention of his class. As a disciplinarian he was a perfect model. There was no whispering, no lounging, no disorderly conduct in his room; every student was in his place, and the hour always passed rapidly and pleasantly, every one feeling how much he had been instructed and edified by the discourse. He was proud of his position as a professor. He loved to appear before his pupils, and to unfold before them the treasures of his knowledge. "What," asked a pupil of his master, Thales—"What recompense can I make to show my gratitude to you for your excellent lessons?" "Teach others," was the philosopher's reply. Many of Dunglison's pupils occupy high positions as professors in our medical schools.

It is a remarkable fact, as he himself repeatedly informed me, that, long as he had lectured, he never went before his class without a certain amount of preparation. Not less than two hours were generally spent in this manner. No man could have been more faithful or more conscientious in this respect than he was. To be thoroughly prepared, and up to the level of his department, was with him a matter not only of pride but of solemn duty. None of his lectures, save that on *Death*, the last of his



course, were written. A few heads, denotive of the more prominent topics of what he purposed to discuss, was all he required during the hour.

Dr. Dunglison never had recourse to vivisections as a means of illustrating his physiological prelections in the presence of his class, so fashionable in some of the schools in this and other countries, especially continental Europe. He had witnessed so many of these disgusting and revolting experiments during his sojourn, as a student, at Paris, in the hands of Magendie and Orfila, that he had contracted a positive aversion to them; and, although he readily acknowledged their value when performed with a view of clearing up some new or obscure point in his favourite branch of study, his sensitive nature shrank so entirely from the infliction of pain upon the dumb, helpless creatures usually selected for the purpose, that he rarely engaged in such exercises even in his younger days. I often invited him to the operations at my clinics, but he could never be induced to be present, evidently dreading the cries and excitement of the poor patients. Like his illustrious prototype, Albert Von Haller, he could not bear the sight of blood.

The case of Alexis St. Martin, in whose stomach there existed a fistulous opening, the result of a gunshot injury, greatly excited his curiosity, and he not only actively assisted in but suggested many of the experiments performed upon that celebrated person by Dr. Beaumont with the view of elucidating the process of digestion, and of ascertaining the digestibility of different articles of food.

As a physician, thoroughly versed in the minute and intricate details of the routinist, it is difficult to form a correct estimate of him. He was too much of a closet man, too much shut up in his library, and too much given to authorship, to be a great practitioner. He was a medical philosopher, a savant, rather than a physician. A large practice would have been irksome to him; it would have interfered too much with his studies, and he was naturally too sensitive to encounter its responsibilities. At the bedside, however, where it was my good fortune occasionally to meet him, he was always most judicious, ready in diagnosis, and prompt and decided in his therapeutic resources. He had no respect for, or faith in, the heroic; he believed in the powers of nature, and considered it his duty to aid her efforts at cure when she was in distress. He despised meddling medication, and was unsparing in his denunciation of it. It has been said, again and again, by his pupils and intimate friends, that he was a skeptic; that he had no confidence in the healing art; that practice was a blind and uncertain art, a matter simply of chance and luck. I do not think that such a view fairly represents the facts of the case. If he gave little medicine, and thus lent currency to the idea that he was an unbeliever in its efficacy, it was because of the great evils which he had witnessed from the exhibition of large and frequently-repeated doses, so much in vogue during the early part of his professional life, and so well calculated to disgust a man of a rational and philosophical mind. During his residence in London, and at the University of Virginia, he had little opportunity of acquiring practice. In Baltimore, although he was one of the professional attendants of the Infirmary of that name, his patients were, like angels' visits, few and far between. And the same was true of Philadelphia, where he spent the greater portion of his riper years. He was for a time connected with the Philadelphia Hospital, the duties of which he discharged with signal fidelity and punctuality. As a clinical



teacher at the Jefferson Medical College, an office which he held for a number of years, he was always eminently happy in the examination and diagnosis of his cases, but rarely prescribed much medicine, trusting rather to the powers of Nature than to his own efforts in controlling morbid action.

As a scholar, using that term in its more exalted sense, he was without a rival in the medical profession of the United States. Indeed, it is questionable whether he had any superior anywhere. His classical attainments were profound: he read Greek and Latin as easily as English. His knowledge of modern languages, especially of the French, Italian, and German, was extensive, and was of immeasurable service to him in the composition of his numerous works, every one of which, with the exception of the Commentaries on the Diseases of the Stomach and Bowels of Children, bears the impress of vast research and profound erudition. It is difficult fully to realize the extent and variety of his knowledge. "*Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit.*" Ages will elapse before our profession will produce another member so learned and, in all respects, so accomplished as Dr. Dunglison. The only man abroad at all comparable to him in scholarship and medical attainments, is Dr. James Copland, author of the Dictionary of Medicine, a work of stupendous labour and research, with whose literary pursuits, if he had remained in Europe, Dunglison would have become associated, arrangements having already been entered into to that effect prior to his departure to America. Francis Adams, the translator of Hippocrates and of Paul of Ægineta, probably had a more profound acquaintance with Greek and Latin than either, but in variety and extent of knowledge he was greatly their inferior.

As a journalist and a reviewer, a position which he occupied for six years, he was analytical rather than critical, learned rather than controversial. Assailed by his opponents, he knew how to direct his pen without steeping it in bitterness. He never forgot the courtesy due the editorial tripod.

If we descend to his private life, it will be found that Dr. Dunglison was a delightful companion, a fond and loving husband, a devoted father, a faithful citizen, true to the best interest of his adopted country, with a warm sympathy for the oppressed of all nations. He adorned the domestic circle, and imparted a healthful charm to all who came within his influence. Born to grace society, he was the idol of his home, and the cherished object of attention wherever business or pleasure called him. His conversational powers were of a very high order; he possessed great general information, and there was no subject, professional or non-professional, upon which he could not talk intelligently, if not exhaustively. He had a remarkable fund of anecdotes, and often interspersed his remarks with an apt quotation from the classics, agreeing with Dr. Johnson that it was a good thing, inasmuch as there is a community of mind in it, and that it is the parole of literary men all over the world. Although an Englishman by birth, he loved his adopted country with all the ardour of a genuine patriot, and rejoiced in every measure designed to advance its welfare and prosperity. As a medical teacher, engaged in the active exercise of his professional duties for upwards of forty years, he had an opportunity of studying the imperfections of our systems of medical education, and would gladly have afforded his aid in remedying them, if it had been possible to obtain the general co-operation of the



schools; without which, as every one acquainted with the subject knows, all efforts of the kind must prove unavailing.

Dr. Duglison never took any active part in politics, although he seldom, if ever, omitted to vote on election-day, generally for the men whom he supposed to be the best qualified to fill the offices for which they were candidates, irrespective of party bias, prejudice, or influence. He had, like most right-thinking men, a contempt for physicians who dabble in politics, and make themselves noisy and conspicuous on the stump.

He was for nearly thirty years connected with the Institution for the Blind in this city, having for a considerable period served as Vice-President of the Board of Managers and Chairman of the Committee of Instruction. No one, probably, ever took a more active part than he in promoting the welfare and happiness of its inmates, who were all warmly attached to him, not a few looking upon him in the light of a devoted father. It was for them, more especially, that he prepared, jointly with Mr. Chapin, the Dictionary with raised letters already referred to. He loved to scatter flowers around their family altar, to ask them questions, and to give them advice in regard to their health, education, and mental improvement. One of his greatest regrets, during his last cruel illness, was that he could no longer visit the Institution; regrets somewhat mitigated by the frequent and anxious inquiries which the children made at his own door, respecting his condition, during that long and sad period.

The poor insane, too, engaged his especial sympathy and attention; and, as already stated, he made several appeals in their behalf to the people of Pennsylvania, pointing out the importance of providing them with better homes, and a more rational and philosophical mode of management than then existed.

His world-wide reputation secured him many testimonials—altogether about one hundred—of respect and esteem from medical, literary and scientific associations and institutions, both at home and abroad. Some of these were showered upon him before he left Europe, thus showing the regard in which he was held by his professional brethren even at that early age. Yale College, in 1825, conferred upon him the degree of M. D.; and in 1852 he received that of LL.D. from Jefferson College at Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, a similar degree being bestowed upon him nearly at the same time by the Jefferson Medical College of this city. He was Vice-President of the American Philosophical Society, Vice-President of the Training School for Idiots, President of the Musical Fund Society, Vice-President of the Institution for the Blind, Chairman of the Faculty of the University of Virginia, and for a number of years Dean of the Faculty of the Jefferson Medical College.

He enjoyed the acquaintance and friendship of many of the most distinguished medical men at home and abroad; and the correspondence growing out of these relations would, if published, fill several large volumes. Few important appointments occurred in the medical schools of this country concerning which his opinion was not solicited, such was the confidence reposed in his judgment and honesty.

Dr. Duglison died at his residence in this city on the 1st of April last, at the age of seventy-one years. He fell "like as a shock of corn fully ripe in his season." His health for some years past had been slowly but surely declining. He had long suffered from attacks of gout, which had latterly, in a great degree, disabled him from active exercise.



In the winter of 1866 and '67, he was almost constantly obliged, by his increasing infirmities, to ride to and from the College, although the distance from his house was only a few squares, so difficult and painful was it for him to walk. After, however, the labours of the session were over, he rallied considerably, passed the vacation in comparative comfort, and was able to discharge with his accustomed ability the duties of his two offices of professor and dean during the following winter. It was truly marvellous how, amidst the ravages of disease, racked with pains and dyspnœa from valvular obstruction of the heart, he held out so long and so manfully. I listened to his last lecture, rendered doubly sad by the fact that it was upon death—always the closing lecture of his course—which, it was certain, must soon overtake himself. His voice was throughout solemn, yet most clear and distinct, and he controlled his feelings in a wonderful degree, while many of his young auditors, conscious that they were hearing him for the last time, sat mute and melancholy. Profound silence prevailed, and soon the large hall, which the venerable professor had graced with his presence for nearly a third of a century, knew him no more forever.

His dyspnœa and difficulty of progression rapidly increased, and he was at length obliged to retire to his bed, not to stretch himself out to rest his sick and wearied body, but to sit up with his swollen and painful limbs hanging upon the floor, as the only posture in which he could find ease and comfort, a posture almost as irksome and distressing as the self-imposed one of St. Simeon Stylites. In this sad manner he spent the last seven months of his precious life, and yet no sigh or groan or complaint ever escaped his lips. He was thoroughly resigned to his destiny, and often alluded with the most perfect composure to his approaching end. He knew that his case was hopeless, and therefore positively refused everything in the form of medication, except the occasional use of a little morphia, to relieve pain and promote sleep. Fortunately the dyspnœa, which had all along been so prominent a symptom, left him several months before his demise. Crippled as he was in body and limb, he was sound in intellect, and conscious of no decay in the faculties of his soul. He conversed, almost to the last day of his existence, with his wonted powers and elegance of diction. Always cheerful, amiable, and courteous, he was full of sympathy and good humour, making constant inquiries after his friends, and expressing a deep interest in everything relating to the outer world. No cloud overshadowed his brain, although his body was frightfully emaciated. The physical machine was completely worn out. His last words were, "A shade better," and, soon after he had uttered them, he sank back and instantly expired, apparently unconscious that he was so near his end. The sufferings attendant upon his protracted illness were solaced by the unremitting kindness of his family and friends.

The dying words of Dunglison forcibly remind one of those of Keats. Asked by one who stood at his bedside, just before he expired, how he felt, he replied in a feeble voice, "Better, my friend. I feel the daisies growing over me." Haller, the illustrious Swiss physiologist, Dunglison's great exemplar, died feeling his pulse. Turning to his brother physician, he said, "My friend, the artery ceases to beat," and expired.

An autopsy, performed at his own desire, a few days after death, revealed an astonishing amount of disease. The semilunar valves at the mouth of the aorta were converted into dense, rigid membranes, the coronary arteries were ossified, the heart was considerably hypertrophied, and the aorta



was one sheet of disease, being thickened, calcified, atheromatous, and in many places fissured. The gall-bladder contained a large concretion, the stomach exhibited evidence of chronic structural lesion, and the kidneys were studded with serous cysts. The brain was sound, and weighed 55 ounces. The funeral took place at St. Stephen's church, of which he had long been an attendant, the coffin being followed from his late residence by his family, intimate friends, and late colleagues. The body was deposited by the side of her whom he had so long and so tenderly loved, at Laurel Hill Cemetery, where a suitable monument will, in due time, be erected to mark the spot—not to commemorate his memory, which needs no such device.

In October, 1824, Dr. Dunglison married Harriette, daughter of John Leadam, Esq., a medical practitioner of London, a lovely and estimable lady, by whom he had seven children, five sons and two daughters, of whom five survive. Two of the sons are in the medical profession, one is a merchant, and the other, J. Robley, has, for a number of years, been connected with the public press. Dr. Richard J. Dunglison is engaged upon a biographical memoir of his father, which cannot fail to afford a new insight into the character of a man who occupied such a high social, literary, and scientific character. His diary, continued through many years of his life, will, if it should ever be published, form a most valuable contribution to the literature of the country. Mrs. Dunglison died of cardiac disease in March, 1853.

In his personal appearance, Dr. Dunglison was decidedly fortunate. When I first saw him, in 1845, he impressed me as a very handsome man. Later in life his countenance had somewhat of a careworn expression. He had a fine bluish-gray eye, regular features, a well-formed mouth, and a lofty forehead, denotive of intellect and intelligence. As he advanced in age, his hair, black in early and middle life, became somewhat gray, and the top of the head slightly bald. He was about the medium height, with a well-proportioned frame and limbs, a dignified mien, graceful manners, and genial disposition. No one could be in his company, even for a few minutes, without feeling that he was in the presence of an uncommon man. There was a personal magnetism in him which no one who approached him could resist. His features are perpetuated in several portraits, one of the most recent of which is that by Sully, painted only a short time before his death for the Musical Fund Society, whose hall it now graces.

In his habits he was eminently orderly and systematic. He knew how to take care of the minutes, and how to occupy his time to the best advantage. Although his life was one of unwearied activity and indefatigable industry, "*incredibili industriâ, diligentia singulari*," I never saw him that he did not seem to have leisure. All his engagements were so happily arranged that he had time for everything. He did daily the day's work. No hours were ever "stolen from his meat and sleep," seldom any from his ordinary enjoyments, pleasures, or amusements. Whatever he had to do he did at once without delay. This promptness was one of the great secrets of his success in life's great struggle. In eating and drinking he was remarkably temperate, although, like most men, he occasionally took his glass of wine, and perhaps no one ever knew better than he how to appreciate a good dinner. At our Wistar parties, those charming reunions of the medical, scientific, and literary men of Philadelphia, he was always particularly joyous and attractive by his anecdotes



and bonhommie. His house was for many years the abode of an elegant hospitality. He retired habitually at half past ten o'clock, generally pulling out his watch and waiting almost to the minute. During his latter years, he invariably, while engaged upon the new editions of his Dictionary, strapped up his two interleaved volumes and carried them to his bed-room, lest some accident should befall them. He was always dressed by seven o'clock in the morning, and breakfasted by a quarter of eight, after which he retired to his study, where he spent the next three or four hours in earnest work. He then generally took a walk, or attended to business, dined at two, and passed the remainder of the afternoon among his books. His evenings were spent with his family, or at some place of amusement, as the opera, theatre, or concert, of all of which he was very fond. In his dress he was scrupulously neat. He filled all the spare moments from his graver occupations in reading or writing; the latter generally being in the form of correspondence, or in some addition to his works, with a view to new editions. He was particularly fond of magazines, books of travels, and works of fiction, among which his favourite authors were Thackeray, Lever, and Miss Braddon. He hardly ever took up a scientific work for mere study; on the contrary, he rather avoided such productions, preferring to read a careful review of them by some competent writer in the best magazines, as the *Edinburgh*, or *London Quarterly*, after which, his interest being awakened, he would either buy the book, or get it from the public library. Among the last works he ever perused were Humboldt's *Cosmos*, Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, and the *Pickwick Papers*. He was a rapid reader, skimming with hasty glances the cream of literature. In his earlier days, while actively engaged as a systematic writer, he had a rotatory book-stand in his study, filled with works of reference, which he could thus reach at any time without rising from his chair. His study had an air of comfort and convenience about it, befitting so elegant a scholar, and such a devoted lover of books.

In fact, everything was in harmony with his well-ordered mind. His library, numbering upwards of 4000 volumes, comprised all the more important medical and scientific works in the principal languages of Europe, and was particularly rich in monographs, in dictionaries, medical and non-medical, and in treatises on physiology and the cognate branches of science. About one-third of it was miscellaneous. He spared no money in the purchase of books, the companionship of which afforded him so much happiness, and such substantial aid in the establishment of his reputation as a great scholar and accomplished author.

It is pleasant to know that this rare collection of books has not been desecrated by the auctioneer's hammer; but that it remains as a precious memorial in the possession of a member of the family, who, appreciating its value, will not fail to employ it for the good of others. If there be any one thing more painful than another in the death of a literary or scientific man, it is to see his books scattered, like so much chaff, to the winds of heaven, as soon as he is cold in the grave. The libraries of great men are household gods, not to be lightly shivered by the touch of the profane.

Great men have been celebrated the world over for their bad chirography. That of Dunglison was peculiarly perverse, as angular and zigzag as a worm fence on a Pennsylvania farm. The letters were so singularly incurvated and distorted that, when linked together into words, it was ex-



tremely difficult for one unaccustomed to his hand to decipher them. Rufus Choate was often unable to read his own writing, and our author, I dare say, was occasionally in a similar predicament. As for myself, it was long before I could read any of his letters understandingly at the first effort. For years it was my habit, when I received any communication from him, to run my eye leisurely over it at the first convenient moment, and then to put it by for more careful study the next day.

His religious views breathed a broad catholic spirit. He was too much of a physiologist, and too intimately acquainted with the laws of the Universe, to trouble himself about doctrinal matters. Like Luther, he knew that the gospel was not written in the Bible alone, but on trees and flowers, and clouds and stars. The truly religious man sees God everywhere, in all that is sublime and beautiful in nature and in art, and is utterly indifferent to the narrow-minded creeds of sectarianism. Up to within a short period of his death, he seldom failed to attend divine service on the Sabbath. He was for a long time a vestryman in St. Stephen's Church, with whose former rector, the late Rev. Dr. Ducachet, himself in early life a promising member of the medical profession, he was on the most intimate terms.

Another of his familiar friends, a man for whose character he cherished a very warm regard, was the late Rev. Dr. Bethune. They were often together, and greatly enjoyed each other's genial humour. Bethune was a genuine disciple of Izaak Walton; and, like Dunglison, possessed an inexhaustible fund of anecdote, extending over a wide range of topics, and told with irresistible effect. After his removal to Brooklyn, he always made the house of his friend his home during his visits to Philadelphia. Their last interview occurred only a short time before the death of Bethune, when the latter was already labouring under the premonitory symptoms of the disease which so suddenly carried him off. A beautiful tribute, one of the last published productions of his pen, and written, in touching terms, soon after the death of his friend, attests the warm regard which Dunglison had entertained for him.

In his friendship he was cautious but sincere and steadfast. I do not know that he ever had an enemy. He was free from malice, which, to use an expression of Lord Bacon, "he never bred nor fed." His manners were always dignified; and, although he was fond of talking, he was never arrogant, ostentatious, or dictatorial; "neither was he one," to employ the quaint language of another old writer, Dr. Rawley, "that would appropriate the speech wholly to himself, or delight to outvie others, but leave a liberty to the co-assessors to take their turns. Wherein he would draw a man on, and allure him to speak upon such a subject, as wherein he was peculiarly skilful, and would delight to speak. And for himself he contemned no man's observations, but would light his torch at every man's candle."

Dunglison never indulged, even as a boy, in the ordinary sports and pastimes of youth. He loved study and books better than the outer world. I doubt whether he ever shot a bird, although he was fond of fishing, and occasionally tore himself away from his books to cast a hook. In early life he was a good pedestrian, and often took long walks, chiefly as a means of healthy recreation; but as he grew old, owing to his gouty suffering, exercise became burdensome to him, and he led a strictly sedentary life. For many years he was in the constant habit, at a certain hour of the day, of visiting his publishers, at the southeast corner of Fourth



and Chestnut Streets, long known as the business house, first, as far as his interests were concerned, of Carey & Lea, then Carey, Lea & Blanchard, then Lea & Blanchard, then Blanchard & Lea, and; finally, Henry C. Lea. He loved to chat there for half an hour about men and books, or whatever might at the moment be of general interest, when he would walk leisurely back, to resume the labours of his study. The different firms here alluded to seldom, during his long residence in this city, reprinted a foreign medical work without first obtaining his judgment of its merits. This confidence in the value of his opinion continued down almost to the latest day of his last illness.

Passionately fond of music, he had a highly appreciative ear, and was himself, especially in his younger days, a tolerably good performer on the piano and the flute. He took for a long time an active part in the management of the Musical Fund Society, of which, as previously stated, he was for a number of years President. Music, in his opinion, was a divine emanation, a gift of God, tending to elevate the soul, to purify the heart, and to refine the manners. In its more exalted flights, it inspired his mind with solemn and religious feeling, and, with Pythagoras, made him dream of the music of the spheres. It was deeply rooted in his affections. During his last illness the use of the piano was often invoked to soothe his pains and to beguile his thoughts.

The last systematic work which Dr. Dunglison wrote was his *Practice of Medicine*, issued in 1842. After that time his leisure was fully occupied in bringing out new editions of his *Physiology*, *Dictionary*, *Materia Medica*, and *New Remedies*, which underwent so many and such marked changes, that it was difficult to recognize them, in their new forms, as the same productions. The labour spent in this way was immense, and can only be appreciated by one who is himself an extensive author. Most of his works were thus literally duplicated, if not triplicated and quadrupled.

After the retirement of the late Dr. Robert M. Huston from the Jefferson Medical College, Dr. Dunglison became his successor in the office of Dean, and he acted in this capacity until he himself was obliged to leave the school. The amount of labour which this new office devolved upon him was immense, and doubtless materially contributed to undermine his already failing health. He was obliged to carry on a most onerous correspondence; and, during the sessions of the College, his rest and comfort were constantly interrupted by his intercourse with the students. Fortunately he was accustomed to work, as well as to systematize his time, and he was thus enabled, notwithstanding his declining health, to manage the affairs of the Institution with consummate ability. As Dean, he was exceedingly popular. The students looked upon him as a warm, trust-worthy friend, whose advice they never hesitated to seek when they stood in need of it. His colleagues, with whom he was always on the most pleasant terms, will not soon forget the *petits soupers* which for many years graced his table at the annual faculty meeting. It was the custom on such occasions to audit the Dean's accounts, and to talk informally over the affairs of the school. At half past 9 o'clock the door of the dining-room usually flew open, and for the next three hours all was merriment and good humour amidst "the feast of reason and the flow of soul," enlivened by the agreeable conversation of the host, generally coruscating with the happiest anecdotes.

Dunglison, like most professional men, was compelled, in his younger



days, to labour for his support, and it was not until after he had reached his fortieth year that his pecuniary circumstances became easy. His income in the University of Virginia was barely sufficient for the maintenance of his growing family. An annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars, with the proceeds from a small class, and a dwelling rent free, constituted his chief revenue; for, as yet, his books had not been pecuniarily productive. The University of Maryland, in which he remained only three sessions, was equally unremunerative; and his chair in the Jefferson Medical College, until the reorganization of the Institution in 1841, afforded him no substantial emolument. From that time on, however, his pecuniary matters assumed a more imposing form. The number of students rapidly augmented, and for years the income of the Faculty was without a parallel in the history of medical schools. For many sessions, the proceeds of each chair ranged from six to seven thousand dollars, and this sum, added to the receipts from his works, now largely sought after as text books, placed him not only in very easy and independent circumstances but enabled him to lay the foundation of what, in this country at least, may be regarded as a respectable fortune for a medical man. Probably no medical author ever reaped so much from the sale of his works. Edition after edition was called for, and thus made him rich. Of the Dictionary alone upwards of 55,000 copies were issued during his lifetime, and of all his works 125,000 copies, equal to between 150,000 and 160,000 volumes. What medical author ever had so many readers?

It is singular how, apparently, an insignificant circumstance may overrule a man's destiny. Dr. Dunglison had long felt a desire to visit Europe; but no favourable opportunity for carrying out his wishes occurred until April, 1854, nearly a third of a century since his immigration, when he sailed from New York on the Pacific, on which he returned in the following September. He had intended to remain a few weeks later, and had therefore engaged his passage on the Arctic, which was lost on that trip with nearly all on board of her. He had been induced to return earlier at the earnest solicitation of one of his colleagues, and was thus probably saved from a watery grave. He received much attention while abroad; and his health, impaired by incessant labour, was greatly invigorated.

In summing up the character of Dr. Dunglison biography must accord to him extraordinary talents, untiring industry, towering ambition, a definite aim in life, vast erudition, undeviating fidelity to his profession, and an unblemished character. He was a shrewd observer of men and things, an able thinker, and, without any exalted genius, he had a clear logical mind, capable of vast and varied labour. The extent and variety of his knowledge were prodigious. He was the most voluminous writer of his day on this continent, both in and out of the medical profession, and one of its greatest and most accomplished authors. In point of bulk and vast erudition the works of all his American contemporaries—Noah Webster, Worcester, Cooper, Irving, Bancroft—sink into insignificance. His life was a succession of literary triumphs.

It is not easy to determine how such a man accomplished such a vast amount of labour without an intimate knowledge of his character. None but a superficial, ignorant person will pretend to affirm that it was the result simply of industry, or of industry combined with order and system. These, undoubtedly, had their effect; for without their aid he would have worked in vain. He was, as has already been seen, a many-sided man,



with a rare blending of mental qualities, an admirable symmetry of mind and character, a delicate and discriminative judgment, a capacious memory, a fervent love of truth, a keen insight into human nature, an amazing coolness and self-control, great powers of endurance, and a remarkable freedom from prejudice, eccentricity, and exaggeration. These it was which fitted him for his peculiar stations in life, and made him what he was, a beacon light in the world of medical literature, and one of the foremost writers and teachers of his day.

No human character is, or can be, entirely perfect. That of Dunglison had its defects, but they were so trivial as in no material degree to impair its symmetry. His failings, as they impressed me during a close observation of thirteen years of official connection with him, were timidity and a spirit of conservatism, which, I sometimes thought, were at variance with the requirements of the age in regard to the true interests of medical education. Inactivity is not always masterly; conservatism not always wisdom. It was a maxim with him to let well alone. He saw no necessity for any change in the curriculum of instruction in our schools. He always thought that seven chairs were quite enough, that it was unwise to reduce the number of didactic lectures, and that an independent board of examiners, so common in the British schools, and attended with such salutary results in regard to the best interests of humanity and of medical science, was not adapted to the wants of this country. But justice demands that I should add that, although he might have warmly opposed a measure of reform, he never failed, when carried by the majority, to lend it the influence of his name and example, with a grace and dignity so characteristic of a true gentleman.

It will not be without interest in this connection with his mental organization to recall attention to his cerebral developments. His head was large and well formed, although the brain weighed only 55 ounces, 2 ounces more than the ordinary average, as ascertained by Sims, Clendinning, Tiedemann, and Reid, and 11 ounces less than Cuvier's, 8 than Dr. Abercrombie's, and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  than Dupuytren's. It was generally supposed, until recently, that great cerebral bulk was a measure of mental power; but it would seem from the researches of the two Wagners, father and son, that more depends, in this respect, upon the number, size, and depth of the convolutions of the brain than upon its absolute weight and bulk, and that superiority of size cannot, in the existing state of our knowledge, be regarded as a constant accompaniment of superiority of intellect. Indeed, it is a matter of daily observation that men of enormous heads have often very obtuse minds, utterly incapable of any great performances; and, on the other hand, that many persons of extraordinary talent and mental vigour have uncommonly small heads; in other and more comprehensive terms, a large brain may be very sluggish, a small one very active. The brain does not differ from other organs. It is susceptible of the highest improvement by study and persistent culture. A muscular man is not necessarily strong because of his muscular development, or a non-muscular one necessarily weak. In either case, quality, aided by exercise and training, determines the degree of power. In Dunglison, the brain, though not unusually large, was composed of the noblest material, arranged, like the columns of a Corinthian dome, in the most admirable proportions. The harmony and symmetry of his mind were perfect, a circumstance which could not have happened if the cerebral organs had not been cast in the finest mould.



Dunglison was born an author. His tendencies as a writer showed themselves in his early youth. "As the morning cloud," as some one has beautifully expressed it, "often foreshadows the nature of the approaching storm, so the nature of the boyish taste often foreshadows the life of the man. In some way or other the man is tracked in the footsteps of the child."

"———The childhood shows the man,  
As morning shows the day."

A feeling of internal power had come early upon him, and he never for a moment allowed it to elude his grasp. He buckled himself to his life's work with a full faith in his ability to vanquish obstacles, and to earn enduring fame.

He was the pioneer in physiology in the United States, the first who taught the science systematically in our lecture-rooms, and who gave it a proper impetus among professional men. Prior to his time it was a confused mass, without system or order, little understood, and considered as of comparatively little importance as a branch of medical education. His work, composed before he had attained his thirty-second year, created a new era in the study of this country, and justly earned for him the honourable title of "Father of American Physiology." He had chosen a noble theme for his life-long labours and contemplations—the progress of man from his mother's womb, through all the varying and intricate changes of his being down to the moment of his dissolution by natural and adventitious causes—and how nobly and thoroughly he performed his self-imposed mission needs no mention here. If he did not greatly enrich the domain of Physiology with new facts, the results of tedious experiments and of torturing confessions—experiments from which his refined and sensitive nature recoiled with horror and disgust—he enlarged it by his vast erudition, his patient research, and his masterly criticism, thus winnowing the grain from the chaff, and placing it in a simple and attractive form before the profession and the public. "Though a man cannot," says Ben Johnson, "invent new things after so many, he may do a welcome work yet, to help posterity to judge rightly of the old."

Physiology was his first and last love. He taught it publicly for upwards of forty years, and the last lecture which he ever delivered was devoted to its elucidation. Such constancy is as rare as it is sublime.

Great discoveries are as uncommon in our profession as they are in other pursuits. Dr. Dunglison never rent the veil which conceals the mysteries of science; nor was he the founder of any school in medicine or of any sect in philosophy. His mission was a more humble yet not a less noble one. He was a reformer of the prejudices of his age, and powerfully aided not only in emancipating the professional mind from the errors of false experience, so common in our day, but in laying a solid and enduring foundation of a medical literature destined to exalt the national character, and to rival at no distant period, in depth and vigour, that of the Old World. Well may the biographer exclaim with the poet—

"A life well spent, whose early care it was  
His riper years should not upbraid his green;  
By unperceived degrees he wears away;  
Yet, like the sun, seems larger at his setting."







