

Address delivered at the opening of the new Medical College in North Grove Street, Boston, November 6, 1846 / by Edward Everett ; introductory lecture by George Hayward.

Contributors

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PRESIDENT EVERETT'S ADDRESS

AND

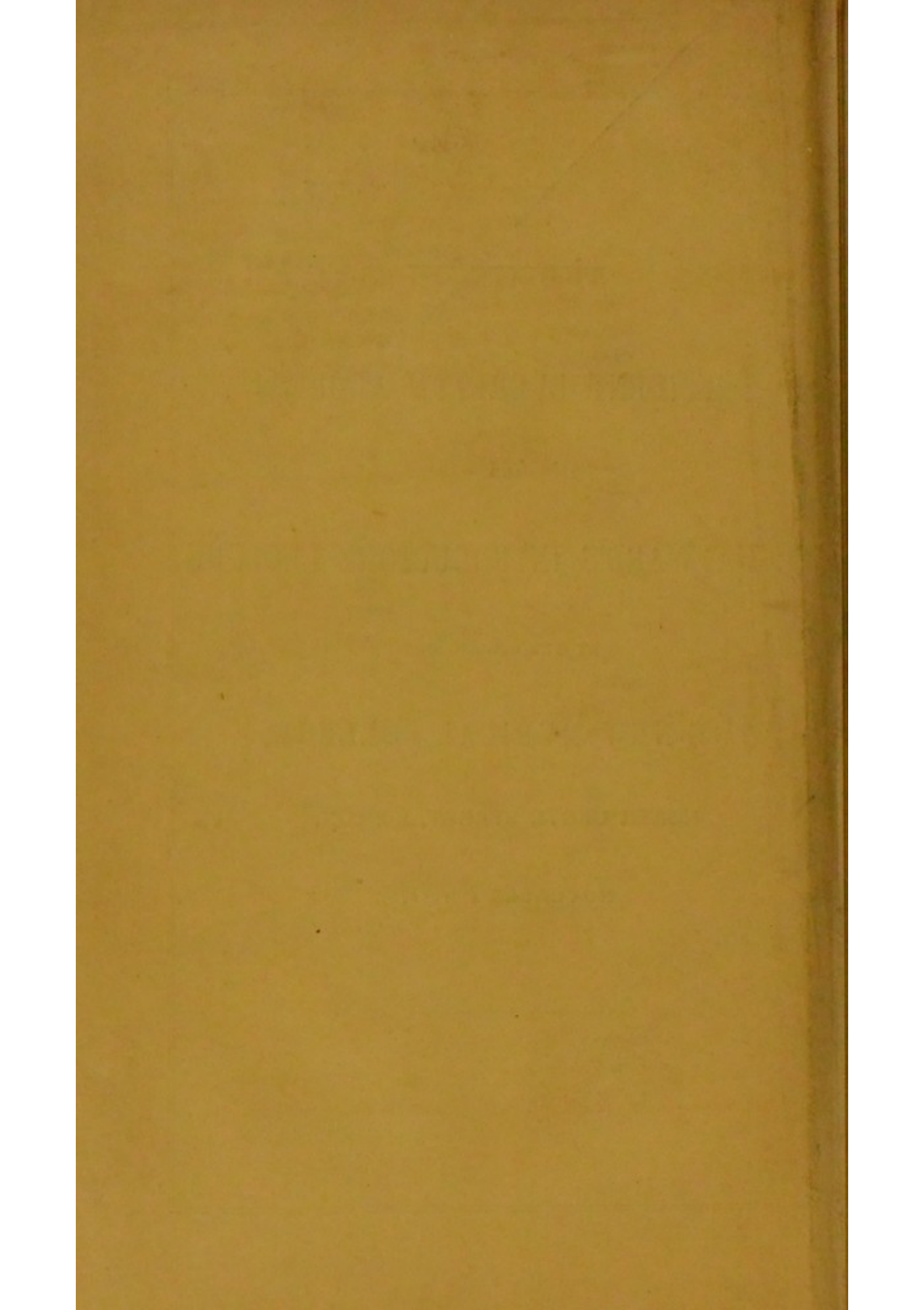
DR. HAYWARD'S INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

AT THE OPENING OF

THE NEW MEDICAL COLLEGE,

NORTH GROVE STREET, BOSTON,

NOVEMBER 6, 1846.



ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

OPENING OF THE NEW MEDICAL COLLEGE

IN NORTH GROVE STREET, BOSTON,

NOVEMBER 6, 1846,

BY HON. EDWARD EVERETT, LL.D.

AND THE

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE

BY GEORGE HAYWARD, M.D.

BOSTON:

WILLIAM D. TICKNOR & COMPANY,

MEDICAL BOOKSELLERS, CORNER OF WASHINGTON AND SCHOOL STREETS.

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OPENING
OF
THE NEW MEDICAL COLLEGE
IN NORTH GROVE STREET, BOSTON.

THE dedication of the new Medical College in North Grove Street, November 4th, 1846, forms an important era in the history of the Medical Department of the University at Cambridge.

The old Medical College, in Mason Street, was opened in 1816. It was built by funds appropriated out of a grant of the legislature to Harvard University. The Faculty of Medicine was composed, at that time, of the following persons:

REV. JOHN THORNTON KIRKLAND, President of the University.

JAMES JACKSON, M. D., Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine.

JOHN COLLINS WARREN, M. D., Professor of Anatomy and Surgery.

JOHN GORHAM, M. D., Professor of Chemistry.

WALTER CHANNING, M. D., Lecturer on the Principles and Practice of Midwifery.

JACOB BIGELOW, M. D., Lecturer on Materia Medica.

JOHN C. WARREN, Dean.

The class of that year was about 30; the graduates 13.

The subsequent increase of the class made it exceedingly difficult, in the lecture term of 1845-6, to accommodate it in the Mason street building, and it was determined by the Corporation, upon a statement to them of the facts by the medical faculty, to erect a new College. The number of the class at that time was 159, the graduates of the same year being 47.

Arrangements were made to carry this plan into execution. The erection of the new college was begun in the spring of the present year. The funds for this purpose were derived from the sale of the old college, and from subscriptions of several individuals, who generously aided in the promotion of this important public object. The land upon which the new college stands was the gift of Dr. GEORGE PARKMAN, a graduate of the Massachusetts Medical College in 1813, and who by this act of munificence has become associated with the distinguished patrons of the University.

The present Faculty of medicine are:

HON. EDWARD EVERETT, LL. D., President of the University.

JOHN COLLINS WARREN, Professor of Anatomy and Operative Surgery.

WALTER CHANNING, M. D., Professor of Midwifery and Medical Jurisprudence.

JACOB BIGELOW, M. D., Professor of Materia Medica and Clinical Medicine.

GEORGE HAYWARD, M. D., Professor of Principles of Surgery and Clinical Surgery.

JOHN W. WEBSTER, M. D., Professor of Chemistry.

JOHN WARE, M. D., Professor of Theory and Practice of Medicine.

W. CHANNING, Dean.

The officers of the University, the President, Corporation, members of the several Faculties, and those specially invited to attend the dedication of

the New College, were received by the Dean, Prof. Channing, in the library room. At precisely twelve the company proceeded to the Medical Lecture Room. Hon. Edward Everett, President of the University, and of the Medical Faculty, presided. On his right hand sat the venerable Judge Davis, formerly Treasurer of the University, and now the oldest survivor of those who have belonged to the Board of the Corporation; Ex-President Quincy sat on the left hand of the President. Among those present were noticed Chief Justice Shaw, Josiah Quincy, Jr. Mayor of the city of Boston, Hon. Samuel A. Eliot, Robert G. Shaw, Esq. Dr. George Parkman, and many other distinguished citizens, and friends of the University.

President Everett pronounced the Dedicatory Address, after which Professor Hayward delivered the Introductory Lecture to the course.

At a meeting of the Medical Class of Harvard University, November 6, 1846, it was voted that copies of the Addresses of President Everett and of Dr. Hayward, at the opening of the New Medical College, be requested for publication, and a committee of three was chosen to coöperate with the President and Secretary of the meeting, in making the necessary arrangements.

WILLIAM OTIS JOHNSON, *President.*

JOHN G. SEWALL, *Secretary.*

The Committee addressed to Mr. Everett the following letter :

PRESIDENT EVERETT,

Dear Sir,

We take pleasure in communicating to you the above vote, in the hope that you will not be unwilling to comply with the unanimous request of the class.

Very respectfully, sir, we remain,

Your obedient servants,

WM. OTIS JOHNSON,
JOHN G. SEWALL,
THOMAS ANDREWS, JR.,
WM. H. THORNDIKE.
ROBERT C. REES.

To which President Everett returned the following reply :

Cambridge, November 12, 1846.

GENTLEMEN,

In compliance with the wish of the Medical Class, as expressed in their vote of the 6th instant, I transmit herewith a copy of the Remarks made by me at the opening of the New Building.

I am, gentlemen, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

EDWARD EVERETT.

MESSRS. WM. OTIS JOHNSON,
JOHN G. SEWALL,
THOMAS ANDREWS, JR.
WM. H. THORNDIKE,
ROBERT C. REES.

A similar request was transmitted to Dr. Hayward, and was answered as follows :

Boston, November 12, 1846.

GENTLEMEN,

I cheerfully comply with your request to furnish you with a copy of my address at the opening of the new Medical College in Grove Street, merely remarking that it was not prepared with a view to publication.

With my best wishes for your health and prosperity,

I remain, very truly, your friend,

GEORGE HAYWARD.

MESSRS. W. O. JOHNSON, and others.

ADDRESS.

BY PRESIDENT EVERETT.

It is probably understood by most of those present, that by our academical organization, the President of the University is the head of each of the professional faculties attached to the institution ; and a wish has been expressed, on behalf of the medical faculty, that I should address a few words to the company assembled at this time. It will readily occur to every one that my participation in the affairs of the medical school can only be that of official form ; but the occasion which has called us together is certainly one deserving the public notice of the academic authorities. It arises from the growth of this department of the university to such a degree, as to require the abandonment of the edifice which thirty years ago was erected, not only for the immediate accommodation of the school, but with due reference to its prospective increase. Such a circumstance affords sufficient evidence of the skill and success, with which this branch of the university is administered. It adds the strongest confirmation of that which is apparent from other indications not less satisfactory, that our Medical School has sustained its reputation under the competition of rival institutions, and the steady elevation of the standard of professional merit throughout the country. I should but be repeating the statistics, contained in the circular lately put forth by the Medical Faculty, if I were to lay before you the facts which authorize this statement. There

can certainly be no occasion — no place — where it is less necessary than now and here, to produce an array of documentary evidence, to illustrate the growth and prosperity of the Medical School.

It would be ungrateful not to acknowledge the public and private liberality, which has come in aid of the resources of the University, and enabled us thus to enlarge this part of our institution. The expense of the edifice in Mason Street, now lately abandoned, was principally defrayed from a grant of the legislature of the commonwealth, which appropriated the proceeds of the tax on one of the banks (\$16,000 per annum) for ten years, to the three collegiate institutions then existing in the commonwealth : viz., Harvard, Williams, and Bowdoin. Of this generous donation, \$10,000 per annum for ten years was assigned to the University at Cambridge; the last act of patronage, I believe, for which we have to be grateful to the government of the Commonwealth. About a fourth part of this liberal endowment was employed in the erection of the Medical College in Mason Street, and supplying it with the apparatus required for medical instruction. These premises, having in the lapse of thirty years become too narrow for the accommodation of the school, have been sold, and the proceeds of the sale have yielded a considerable part of the funds required for the new building. The liberality of one whom I should leave unnamed, if I felt it right in such a connection to consult only his own feelings, — Dr. George Parkman, — has furnished the ground for the new edifice; — and the sum still required to complete it has been chiefly drawn from that fountain, which though always flowing is never exhausted, I mean the munificence of the men of wealth in Boston.

I hope this often repeated compliment is not out of place on this occasion; for though the amount of the subscription needed to complete our new edifice is not very large, we stand in a neighborhood, where the most magnificent and enduring monuments have been reared to the liberality of Boston. If I mistake not, the adjacent establishment, the Massachusetts General Hospital, with which the Medical

School is so closely connected, has in its two branches, the Infirmary and the Asylum for the Insane, been more liberally endowed than any similar institution in the Union. While the great parent institution, of which the Medical School is a department, — the university of Cambridge, — the favored child as it has been of the bounty of the state and of liberal hearts in different parts of the country and even in foreign lands, is more especially and in all its departments a monument of the public spirit and generosity of Boston.

I cannot say that I think our men of wealth, in these liberal appropriations of a part of their ample means, are guilty of any improvidence. In other words, I am disposed to think, that a wise endowment is, in every higher sense of the term, a good investment; meaning of course not an investment which yields the greatest pecuniary interest at the moment; but that from which, all things considered, the benefactor derives the highest satisfaction, which is productive of the greatest amount of good to himself and others, — which reacts most effectually upon the prosperity of the community, and will yield the richest crown of well-merited praise to the liberal benefactor. Natural affection and natural justice require, as the general rule, that property should pass from parents to children. But as far as feelings of family pride are concerned, it deserves consideration how seldom it happens in this country, that fortunes are kept in the same family beyond the third generation. How often does inherited wealth prove but another name for a bribe, with which parents from their tombs tempt children to learn the too easy lessons of indolence and dissipation. How often are the hard earnings and the fond accumulations of years wasted in a few days and nights of profligacy and excess. On the other hand, that portion of accumulated wealth which is appropriated to the endowment of charitable and educational foundations, — which is invested in these noble trusts, — which builds, furnishes, and maintains our asylums, hospitals, athenæums, our schools, colleges and churches, and thus provides for the relief of suffering, the diffusion of knowledge, the conserva-

tion of good principles and the spread of religious truth, — does it not effect an amount of good, not to be produced by any other mode in which property can be employed? What disposition could Harvard have made of his seven hundred and fifty pounds, by which anything like the same amount of good could be effected and so much honest fame acquired? In what other way than public benefaction, could a thousand times that sum have purchased to an equal extent the blessings of after ages? In what other way could the Hollises have so well invested a few thousand pounds of their property? The portion transmitted to their heirs has already passed into the possession of strangers to their name and race, while that which was bequeathed to our University will proclaim their name from the shelves of our library and stand as a monument to their liberality in the walls of our public edifices, till New England is swept from the family of nations.

It would be of course a work of supererogation to descant, before the present audience, on the importance of the institution for whose accommodation the present building has been erected. The claims of the Medical Profession to public respect and confidence are fully admitted in this community. The services of the intelligent Physician are felt by all, to be inferior to none, — humanly speaking, — which man can render to his fellow-man. With a considerable part of mankind, in highly civilized countries, either by the necessary hardships and exposure of their condition, by neglect of exercise, by recklessness or thoughtlessness, the first half of life is so passed, as to make habitual or frequent medical advice necessary for its prolongation through the other half. I believe that with a large part of the community, the degree of comfort they may enjoy materially depends on the skill and good judgment of the family physician. It is accordingly, a matter that comes home to the business and bosoms of every man, that the state of medical education should be such, as to secure a regular and adequate supply of physicians and surgeons, competent to aid us in warding off, or mitigating the attacks

of chronic disease ;— and into whose hands our lives may be safely committed, at those critical moments when their preservation hangs on a thread.

It may be hastily thought by some, that this is not a matter of high public concernment ;— that if the community in which we live does not furnish the means of good medical instruction, it can be had abroad ;— in short, that it is a profession, that will bear the cost of an expensive education. This, however, is true only of those who draw its higher prizes. By the majority of its members, a good professional education must be had in their native country, or it will not be had at all. If our own institutions do not furnish an adequate supply of well-instructed physicians and surgeons, the major part of the community will fall into the hands of those of an opposite description. If we wish to protect the great mass of our fellow-citizens from the cruel frauds, of which the poor and uninformed are sure to be the victims at the hands of unprincipled quacks, I do not know how it is to be done so effectually, as by making the means of a sound medical education more easily accessible. I am disposed to think, that this is a department of practical charity not enough reflected upon, and that the number is at all times quite considerable of those who are both poisoned and plundered by ignorant and corrupt pretenders.

There are other considerations connected with the peculiar nature of the medical profession, which make it highly desirable to place the education of its members on the best footing. This must be relied upon as our safeguard, — not against pernicious errors of theory and practice, on the part of individuals, — from that there can be no security, — but as the most effectual protection against their general adoption and prevalence. Owing in part to the really inscrutable nature of the human frame, and of its mysterious functions, and in part to the peculiar activity of the imagination, in all that relates to disease, — the healing art seems at all times to have been much exposed to the rise of fantastic theories and methods, which have their day, — enlist their teachers, — and unhappily slay their thousands, before the

intelligent and well-educated part of the profession, supported by the common sense of the rest of the community, makes effectual head against the pernicious novelty.

These considerations pertain to the ordinary practice of the profession. If we measure the inducements for the improvement of medical education, by the amount of good which may occasionally be effected by the talent and sagacity of an intelligent physician, it would not be easy to speak without using the language of exaggeration. Take, for instance, the increase of human comfort, which has resulted from vaccination. I allude to the increase of human comfort, rather than economy of human life, for I am inclined to think that the terror which marched in front of that fearful pestilence, now so completely disarmed, was its most formidable feature. Dr. Holland, in his "Medical Notes and Reflections," mentions as a fact not generally known, that when the small-pox, after a long period of exemption, made its appearance in Iceland, in 1707, out of a population of only sixty-five thousand, nearly sixteen thousand perished.* It is quite clear, that besides the fourth part, which thus fell victims to the disease, the other three fourths must have passed the season of its prevalence in a state of alarm of the most cruel and paralyzing description. This, far from being an isolated case, was for several centuries at almost all times the condition of some one country in Europe or Asia. When it is considered that this once terrible foe of life and happiness has now ceased, — perhaps more than could be wished, — to be an object of terror, and that one of the most formidable of human maladies has become more completely subject than any other to the control of human skill, I do not know whether in the long roll of the benefactors of humanity, there is a brighter name than that of Jenner.

It is not to be expected, that discoveries like Jenner's can frequently reward the investigations even of the most sagacious. To exterminate a disease which has desolated mankind for centuries, is of course an achievement not to be often repeated. But discoveries and improvements of all

* Medical Notes and Reflections, Second Edition, p. 411.

kinds are likely to keep pace with the advance of education in general and professional studies. The greater the number of individuals whose perceptive powers have been awakened and guided by sound studies and wise discipline, the greater the probability that some sharpened glance will penetrate the yet undiscovered mysteries of nature.* Although a suggestion from me on such a subject cannot have the slightest value, I cannot suppress the remark, that the great principle of analogy seems to authorize the hope, that within the range of the diseases that can commonly be had but once, farther discoveries may be expected, scarcely less brilliant than that of vaccination.

So too, in reference to the whole department of Physiology, which seems one broad and inviting field of inquiry. The great discovery by Harvey of the circulation of the blood was made at the time when the science of anatomy, compared with its present condition, was in its infancy. Is it too much to expect, with all the light which has within two centuries been thrown upon almost every part of the human frame and the vital economy, that some new disclosures may before long take place akin to that which has immortalized the name of Harvey? Does their not seem some approximation to such disclosures in the state of modern speculation in reference to the nervous system? Is there not reason to think that, in the progress of discovery in the department of electro-magnetism in one direction, and of animal electricity in the other, some brilliant generalization embracing both may before long be established?

If any such discovery takes place, it may of course, like the first rudiments of galvanism, be the result of chance; although the popular accounts to that effect appear to be discredited by the recent researches of Matteucci. But accidents of this kind generally befall the intelligent and well-instructed. Harvey himself, after having had even his academical education shaped with a view to his future profession, passed five years at the best medical schools of France, Germany, and Italy. The illustrious discovery

* See note A. at the end of this Address.

of Jenner was the mature result of a happy conception, formed in his mind, at the very commencement of his professional studies, and pursued for more than twenty-five years of sagacious investigation.*

Not only are great discoveries, even when seemingly fortuitous in their immediate origin, most likely to spring from exact knowledge of facts already ascertained, but, in consequence of that sublime connection which binds all the branches of science together, and makes them cast light on each other,—the paths are most diverse which lead to the same result. In whatever direction the zealous student pushes a well-conducted investigation, he may reap his reward. A most brilliant illustration of this principle, has just been furnished by the sister study of astronomy. It might have been expected, that the discovery of a new planet would be reserved for some one of those, who, with well-trained eyes, are nightly sweeping the heavens with telescopes of the most improved construction and mounting. It was thus that Uranus was discovered, and the five small planets that fill the space between Mars and Jupiter. But the last great achievement in this department of science, of which the intelligence has just reached us from beyond the sea, was accomplished by the sagacious comparison of facts in a different order of inquiry. "In thus placing beyond doubt," says M. Le Verrier in his communication to the Academy, of the 1st of June, "in thus placing beyond doubt the existence of a planet hitherto unknown, I have inverted the order hitherto observed in the calculation of planetary disturbances. Instead of having to measure the action of a determinate planet, I have been obliged to depart from the known irregularities of Uranus, in order to deduce from them the elements of the disturbing body, to establish its position in the heavens, and to show that its attraction furnishes a perfect explanation of the apparent irregularities of Uranus." †

* See the details in the highly interesting Work, "The Life of Edward Jenner, &c." by Dr. John Baron, 2 vols. 8vo.

† *Récherches sur les mouvemens d'Uranus. Comptes Rendus des Séances de l'Académie des Sciences, 1 Juin, 1846.* See note B. at the end.

Having thus invaded the domain of astronomy, and perhaps at greater length than is proper on this occasion, I will still ask your indulgence for lingering awhile within its borders, for the purpose of reminding you, that of the seven planets, which, within three fourths of a century have been added to the solar system, two were discovered by a practising physician. I well remember the feelings of interest with which, nearly thirty years ago, I visited the venerable Dr. Olbers, at Bremen, and entered the modest observatory, (if observatory it could be called,) at the top of his dwelling-house, from which, with instruments of no extraordinary power, this distinguished member of your profession had found time to make discoveries of the most brilliant character, — two planets and a comet of determinate period. After alluding to the peculiarities of this last named body, a countryman of Dr. Olbers exclaims with just warmth, “Our Olbers, the fortunate Columbus of the planetary world, was the discoverer of this wonderful star. Science and her votaries feel the most lively interest in this uncommon man, who in his peaceful path marked by intellectual energy, has discovered to us three new worlds. In the strict sense of the word, he may be called the favorite of the heavens and the earth, useful to both; in the day stretching forth his helping hand to relieve the distresses of suffering humanity, and in the darkness of the night penetrating into the farthest recesses of the starry firmament.”*

Although it cannot often fall to the lot of the members of any profession to cultivate with success like this an independent department of science, yet from the nature of the case and especially in this country, the medical profession must be depended upon to furnish a considerable part of those who pursue natural science. I should only repeat the names of a good number of the men of science in the United States, if I were to enumerate the members of the medical profession who have done themselves credit in one or more of its branches.

* North American Review, Vol. X. p. 268.

I cannot, gentlemen, close this hasty address, without expressing the opinion, that no profession or pursuit in the community has it in its power, by general influence and extra-professional effort, to render greater service than yours to the cause of morality and religion: — as there is certainly none whose members are, by the very nature of their studies, more directly led to take serious views of the highest objects of human contemplation. To none are presented, so steadily and in such powerful lights, the proofs which organized nature affords of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. One of the great masters of your profession in antiquity, — Galen, — in the course of his treatise “on the use of the parts of the body,” (of which many a section would bear a comparison with anything that Paley has written on the subject,) exclaims, that he is unwilling, by dwelling on the depraved ideas of some sensualists to whom he has alluded, to pollute the discourse, which he would compose as a hymn of praise to the Creator; adding, “and I think that this is true piety, not to sacrifice to him many hecatombs of bulls nor ten thousand offerings of frankincense and cassia, but if I first learn to know him myself, and then to set forth to others what he is in wisdom, power, and goodness.” *

If such was the wisdom of heathen antiquity, do I err in saying to the intelligent physician and surgeon in an age of Christian light and hope, that he has it in his power, (beyond all other persons except those whose express business it is to minister in holy things,) to promote the virtue and piety of others? He approaches them when levity is sobered, when pride is subdued, when apprehension is awakened, and men are predisposed to give willing entertainment to thoughts, which at other times are repelled, or pass through the mind without leaving a deep impression. A seasonable word dropped unobtrusively at times like these by a serious man, who stands at the bed-side clothed by the imagination of the patient, if not in reality, with the power of life and death, will often sink deep into the heart.

Especially in reference to the young, it is often in the

* *Hippocratis et Galeni Opera*, Ed. Charterii. Tom. IV. p. 361.

power of a conscientious physician to mingle with professional advice such information, counsel, and warning as may prove the safeguard not merely of health but of morals and character, when all are trembling together in a doubtful balance. He will teach them, that they are in danger of drinking a worse poison than hemlock from the tempting wine-cup, and that the deadliest contagion which can send rottenness into the bones is that which besets the paths of sinful indulgence.

Nothing remains gentlemen, at the present time, but that I should tender you, on behalf of the academic authorities, our best wishes for your success, whether as teachers or learners; and if any exhortation were needed to the strenuous exertion of your powers, let it consist in reminding you, in the words of your great master, one of the oldest and wisest of heathen antiquity, that "Life is short, and art is long, and occasion sudden, and experiment doubtful, and judgment difficult."*

NOTES.

A. (Page 11.)

I AM not sure that since these remarks were delivered, a discovery has not been announced, which fully realizes the predictions of the text;—I allude to the discovery of a method of producing a state of temporary insensibility to pain, by the inhalation of a prepared vapor. A full account of this discovery is given in a paper, by Dr. Henry J. Bigelow, in the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, for 18th of November, 1846. Dr. Bigelow ascribes its first suggestion to Dr. Charles T. Jackson, and its application under his advice, for the purpose of mitigating pain, to Dr. W. T. G. Morton, dentist, both of Boston.

I witnessed a very successful instance of the application of the prepared vapor, on the 18th November; and was informed at that time by

* Ὁ βίος βραχύς, ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρὴ, ὁ δὲ καιρὸς ὀξύς, ἡ δὲ πείρα σφαλερή, ἡ δὲ κρίσις χαλεπή.

Dr. Morton, that he had employed it in several hundred cases of dentistry. It has also been made use of with entire success at the Massachusetts General Hospital, and elsewhere in Boston, in capital operations of surgery. The few cases of failure may perhaps be ascribed to irregularities in the process of inhalation, or to peculiarities of temperament or constitution on the part of the patient.

I understand that great confidence is placed in this discovery, by the most distinguished members of the medical profession of this vicinity; and that they are disposed to regard it as an effectual method of inducing complete insensibility under the most cruel operations, by means easily applied, entirely controllable, and productive of no subsequent bad consequences. It seems not easy to overrate the importance of such a discovery.

B. (Page 12.)

Not content with having made the discovery of a new planet by a process which has excited the admiration of the scientific world, the ardent mind of M. Le Verrier is already meditating still farther achievements in the same sublime field of investigation. In the fifth and last part of his Memoir, "On the planet that produces the perturbations of Uranus," (*Compte Rendu* for 5th October, 1846, p. 659,) after pointing out with honest satisfaction, that the place which he had assigned to the planet then undiscovered, on the 31st of August last, differs from its observed place by only $0^{\circ} 52'$, he bursts out in the following striking manner: — Ainsi la position avait été prévue à moins d'un degré près. On trouvera cet erreur bien faible, si l'on réfléchit à la petitesse des perturbations dont on avait conclu le lieu de l'astre. *Ce succès doit nous laisser espérer, qu'après trente ou quarante années d'observations de la nouvelle planète, on pourra l'employer, à son tour, à la découverte de celle qu'il suit, dans l'ordre des distances au Soleil.* AINSI DE SUITE: on tombera malheureusement bientôt sur des astres invisibles, à cause de leur immense distance au Soleil, Mais dont les orbites finiront, dans la suite des siècles, par être tracées avec une grande exactitude, au moyen de la théorie des inégalités séculaires! "

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

BY GEORGE HAYWARD.

GENTLEMEN,

WE meet to-day, for the first time, in this building. It has been erected since our last course of lectures, and it is to be henceforth devoted to the promotion of medical and surgical knowledge. It will be found, it is hoped, well adapted to supply the wants of those who come here for medical instruction. It is furnished with ample and commodious lecture rooms; with convenient apartments for cabinets of specimens to illustrate the various branches of our science; with a spacious laboratory, with all the necessary appliances for the elucidation of the lectures on chemistry; with a room for the library, to which the students will have free access; and in addition to these, it has the proper conveniences for the prosecution of practical anatomy, a department of knowledge of the greatest value to the physician, and of paramount importance to the surgeon.

It is our pleasure, as well as our duty on this occasion, to make our grateful acknowledgments to those citizens, whose munificent liberality has contributed to the erection of this edifice; and our thanks are in an especial manner due to one, whom we are proud to call a professional brother, whose well-timed bounty, secured the accomplishment of an object, which might otherwise have been for some time postponed. We know that he will feel himself amply rewarded, by the consciousness that he has done something,

as he often has before, for the prosperity of his native city; something to aid the student in the acquisition of professional knowledge, and something we trust for the advancement of the various branches of the healing art.

But while we feel grateful for these increased facilities for the communication and the acquisition of knowledge, it must not be forgotten that they impose new duties both on teachers and pupils. Both, I trust, will feel that more is expected of them, and both, I am confident, are prepared to enter on their labors with increased zeal and earnestness. Let it not be our reproach, that the liberality of the community has been misplaced; that we are insensible or indifferent to the advantages we possess, or that we are unwilling to labor for the advancement of an art, which is so intimately connected with the health and the lives of our fellow-men.

It has been the practice in this institution for a few years past to begin our annual course by an introductory address, by some one of the faculty, and unfortunately for the audience and myself, that duty, this day, devolves on me. Presuming that most of those who are present are members of the medical profession, or are preparing themselves for it, it occurred to me that I could not better occupy the first hour of our meeting, than by saying a few words upon some of the duties of that profession. I shall speak but of a few of these, they are those however, the obligation of which, every man in our calling should deeply feel.

The first of these, the great, the most important duty, is that of qualifying oneself, by adopting every means within his power, for the practice of the profession. In the other callings of life, if an individual undertake to do that for which he is not qualified, he alone for the most part is the sufferer. His deficiencies, let them come from whatever cause they may, will sooner or later be known; the confidence that had been reposed in him, will be gradually withdrawn, and he will then look back with bitter regret, on time misspent, and opportunities unimproved.

With us it is somewhat different. We undertake to practise a calling, which professes to have the power, in many

cases, of lessening human suffering; in some perhaps of successfully combating disease, and in others of prolonging human life. I will not undertake to say, nor would it be easy to do it, to what extent these professions are well founded. That there is some ground for them I am sure, but that the great mass of mankind confide too much in the powers of the healing art, I have no doubt. Without stopping to discuss this point, it is very certain, that a great degree of confidence is reposed in the members of our profession; the health and the lives of our fellow beings are entrusted to our care; our aid is often sought in moments of trial and difficulty with such an assurance on the part of those who seek it, that it will not be unavailing, that adds most painfully to our responsibility; and it cannot be doubted, that there are situations in which we are sometimes placed, where the life of a human being may depend upon the course which we adopt at the time. Here then our deficiencies affect others. They may cause the loss of a human life, or entail upon a fellow being an incurable infirmity.

It may be said that this is an extreme case; one of rare occurrence; but even admitting this, the mere fact that it may happen, would alone be a sufficient reason for assiduity and diligence in preparing ourselves for practice. But it is not so rare as some may imagine. There is hardly a physician of any experience to whom it has not happened, and it is quite as likely to occur at the outset of our career as at any other period. It may happen to any pupil who now hears me, almost as soon as he leaves these walls and enters on the duties of his profession.

He may be called to a patient in extreme agony, with symptoms that may arise from different causes, and which would require very different modes of treatment. If he has availed himself of all the opportunities, which have been within his reach during his pupilage, he would be at no loss to decide upon the nature of the complaint and the mode of treatment; he would act promptly and with confidence, and the patient would, in all probability, be soon restored to health. But, on the other hand, if he be at a loss to decide,

the mere delay consequent upon this doubt may be fatal. This may seem an extreme case, yet it has occurred, I fear, too frequently. Strangulated hernia has been mistaken for a spasmodic affection of the bowels; the treatment, of course, has aggravated the difficulty and hurried on a fatal termination. Even delay, under such circumstances, will compromise the safety of the patient, and death may occur before the medical attendant has decided what course to adopt. Yet both colic and strangulated hernia, are, in a majority of cases, if seen early, within the control of remedies, and almost any one, who has diligently studied his profession, may in most instances bring them to a successful issue.

Let me suppose that one of the first cases to which you are called when you begin the practice of your profession, is that of an individual who has received a deep wound from a sharp cutting instrument. There are many circumstances connected with cases of this kind, that add much to their painful interest. The sudden manner in which they occur; the great amount of blood that is usually lost; the entire prostration of the patient and the frightful change in his appearance ordinarily produce so much terror in the bystanders, as to prevent them from rendering any assistance to the sufferer. They depend entirely on their medical adviser; the whole responsibility rests on him, and they anxiously wait his arrival. Here then you are thrown upon your own resources. There is no time for counsel. You must not only decide what is to be done, but you must be prepared to do it promptly. The scene is most frequently one of great confusion, and calculated to disturb the equanimity of the most cool and self-possessed.

On your arrival, you probably find that the flow of blood has ceased from the fainting of the patient. He is cold, pallid, almost insensible. You fear to bring on reaction, lest the bleeding should return; you are equally afraid to have him remain as he is, lest death should soon close the scene. If you should simply dress the wound, without ascertaining what vessel is injured, and securing it, if it be one of any considerable size, you will find to your sorrow that the trouble is not over. If the amount of blood lost be not very

great, and if the patient had been previously in good health, reaction will come on, and you may indulge the delusive hope that the danger has passed. But this will last but a short time. A second bleeding will occur, and you will be summoned again in haste to your patient. Again you may find him faint and the blood no longer flowing. You may be again tempted to resort to means that will be only temporary in their effects. If you do not feel entire confidence as to the proper course to be adopted, you will make increased pressure and bind up the part more firmly than before. You will persuade yourself, if you have not studied your profession as you should have done, that you will have no farther difficulty, though the chances now of the recurrence of the bleeding are vastly more than they were before. And it will recur ; and the same course will be gone through with three or four times more, till the patient gradually sinks away and dies. Not because there was anything necessarily fatal in the accident, but because his professional adviser did not know how to treat it. This is not an imaginary case ; I have known it to happen more than once.

Let it never happen, I beseech you, to any one of you ; and it cannot, if you improve the opportunities of acquiring knowledge that will be offered to you here. The instruction which you may desire from the lectures and the dissecting-room will render you competent to the management of such cases.

I could adduce, I am sorry to say, many others of a similar character, well calculated to enforce what I wish to impress upon you, the moral obligation which is imposed upon every man, who undertakes to practise the profession of the healing art, to qualify himself in the best manner he can to discharge the duties of it. I will add but two or three more examples, and these belong to a class from which the members of our profession have experienced more vexation than from almost any other source. I allude to injuries occurring about the joints. On every account, it is of the utmost importance to examine accidents of this character with extreme care. An erroneous decision may entail upon the patient an

infirmity for life ; and may bring upon his attendant, not merely mortification and regret, but not unfrequently the heavy penalties of the law. I would not imply, that in every case, if the nature of the injury be perfectly well understood and managed, the limb can be restored to its former usefulness. I know it often cannot be ; and there is hardly any subject upon which mankind are more unreasonable than upon this. They attribute to mismanagement, oftentimes, what is due in part to the accident, and in part perhaps to the state of the patient's system. They seem to think that it is in the power of our art to restore the limb to its original condition, be the injury what it may ; and if this be not accomplished, they too frequently try to make their medical attendant responsible. I am grieved to say, that there is much reason to believe, that professional men sometimes encourage suits of this kind against their brethren ; and it is melancholy to think, that decisions in such cases are too often made by men who are utterly incompetent to form any opinion on the subject. It is no unusual thing to have a dislocation complicated with a fracture of the neck of the bone ; in such cases it is almost impossible to restore the head of the bone to the socket before the fracture has united, and we are then oftentimes foiled in our attempts to do it, by adhesions that have formed, by partial obliteration of the socket, and other causes. Under these circumstances, judicious surgeons proceed with great caution ; they are fearful of resorting to violent means, because they know that these would certainly do harm, and that even mild ones have sometimes cost the patient his life. But if they have, from the beginning understood the nature of the accident, they can explain it to the patient and his friends, and in most instances satisfy them, even if the limb be stiff and its motions limited, that all has been done that could have been, and that the patient is indebted to the skill of his attendant for his limb, if not for his life. And what is more important than all, a thorough knowledge of the injury, a correct diagnosis in the beginning, enables the surgeon to adopt that course of treatment that is most likely to bring it to a successful result. He is not

disturbed by doubts nor embarrassed by conflicting opinions ; his path is a plain one, and he pursues it steadily and with confidence, and let the result be what it may, he has the conscious satisfaction of knowing, that a different method of treatment would have probably left his patient in a far worse condition.

But there are sometimes cases of this kind in which a correct diagnosis is not made ; a wrong method of treatment is consequently pursued, and an incurable lameness or deformity is the result. I am aware that there is often a great degree of obscurity about these accidents, yet in most of them I am confident their precise nature may be ascertained by any one who has studied his profession aright ; and their very obscurity calls for greater care and caution in examining them. An individual may have injured his shoulder by a fall or a blow on the part. There may be a fracture of some portion of the shoulder blade about the socket, or the head of the bone may be displaced. The two accidents have some symptoms in common. Now if a wrong opinion be formed in a case of this kind, the chance is that the motions of the limb will be for the remainder of life very much limited ; the limb may become almost entirely useless, and in some instances the patient will suffer excessively from the preternatural position of the head of the bone. This is very likely to happen when a dislocation of the shoulder is mistaken for a fracture of the acromion process ; no attempt is made to replace the head of the bone ; the axillary plexus of nerves is usually compressed by it ; the limb consequently wastes and is painful, and its motions are limited, and occasionally almost lost. If this injury had been properly understood in the beginning, there would have been but little difficulty in its management. The dislocation of the shoulder is more frequent than that of any other part, and perhaps when recent more easily reduced.

It is not unfrequent for a fracture of the condyles of the humerus to be mistaken for a dislocation of the elbow ; and in consequence the patient will be very likely to have a permanently stiff and deformed limb.

Injuries about the hip are often productive of still more serious mischief, from the greater importance of the limb concerned, and the greater degree of violence by which the accident is usually produced. Their diagnosis is rendered difficult by the thickness of the muscles by which the joint is covered and surrounded. We cannot feel the parts concerned in the injury with the same ease that we do in accidents about the shoulder or the elbow. We are thus deprived of one important means of arriving at a correct opinion. Yet it cannot be denied that there are others, which, if carefully used, will most likely lead to an accurate decision. Within a few years great light has been thrown upon this heretofore obscure subject. Mistakes are less frequent than formerly. Regular physicians for the most part are familiar with the diagnostic signs of fracture of the neck of the thigh bone and of dislocated hip, the two accidents which have been so often mistaken for each other. Yet we still occasionally hear of an erroneous opinion being formed; and in consequence an erroneous method of treatment being adopted. If the accident be a fracture, and the attendant, who has the case in charge, supposes that there is a dislocation, it is obvious that the treatment will be almost anything but what it should be. Extension will be used; the patient will be subjected to extreme suffering, and while the limb is extended, it will be thought that the object is accomplished, and the head of the bone replaced. But as soon as the muscles are allowed to contract, the shortening reappears and the deformity is as great as before. Renewed efforts are then made, and repeated perhaps several times, till the sufferings of the patient are almost beyond endurance, and compel his professional adviser to desist. To say nothing of the immediate suffering of the patient, the bone will not in all probability unite as quick or as well, as if the case had been left entirely to nature.

It has happened, though I hope not often, in cases in which the head of the thigh bone has been thrown from the socket, that the accident has been mistaken for a fracture of the neck of the thigh bone. An error of this kind is of much more

consequence than the preceding. If the bone is to be restored to its place, it must be done soon if at all; and if it be not replaced, the patient is very likely to have lameness, deformity, and perhaps suffering for the remainder of his days. It is true that dislocations of this kind, if well understood from the beginning, cannot in every instance be reduced. But if the patient be aware of the nature of the accident, and be satisfied that all proper means of relief have been adopted, he will for the most part be reconciled to his condition; but if he feels that his case has not been understood, and that proper efforts have not been employed, he will be very likely to heap bitter reproaches upon his attendant.

It would be easy to multiply cases in which an ignorance of our profession might oftentimes entail lasting infirmity, if it did not cause the death of those whom we undertook to relieve. The mere possibility of a solitary occurrence of this kind, makes it an imperative duty for every one who intends to practise the profession, to qualify himself for the faithful performance of it. It is an obligation of the strongest kind; it is wonderful that all do not feel it. We have no right to assume an office, the discharge of which involves the health and lives of our fellow-men, without preparing ourselves as far as we can for so responsible a station. If we are not willing to undergo the labor, toil and privation which this preparation demands, then we should not undertake the duties. I would say to those who have come here as pupils, that if they are not ready to submit to the self-sacrifice which our profession demands of all its votaries; if they are not willing to devote themselves earnestly and with their whole hearts to the acquisition of knowledge, not merely now, but when they have entered on the practice of their calling; and if they do not feel the deep and almost overwhelming responsibility of the occupation which they have chosen as the business of their future lives, let them go no farther; it is better to stop now, than to be compelled to retrace their steps hereafter, or than to go on in a course, which cannot, under such circumstances, be pleasant or honorable to them nor useful to their fellow-men.

The duty which we owe to the community is a sufficient reason, as I have before said, for diligence and assiduity in studying our profession, not merely while we are pupils, but after we have become practitioners. There are other reasons of a personal character, of far less importance I admit, than the one of which I have already spoken, but yet not entirely without their weight. Without a competent knowledge, we can never practise the profession with comfort to ourselves. We shall be continually disturbed with doubts and embarrassed by difficulties, which arise entirely from our own want of qualification. Every new case will be a source of new difficulty, and our daily labors will be burdensome and oppressive.

On the other hand, if we are adequately prepared, and have kept ourselves familiar with the advance which the science of medicine is daily making, we shall find our occupation agreeable, and our labors light. We shall have too the satisfaction of feeling, let the result of a case be what it may, that we have done all that art could do, and thus escape the bitterness of self-reproach. The practice of medicine, under such circumstances, is among the most agreeable callings of life ; the responsibility which at the outset is painful, daily becomes less so, till it is only enough to stimulate the practitioner to an exact performance of his duties. He will find himself too an object of affectionate interest to many who feel that they owe much to his skill, and he will gradually acquire an honorable and respected name.

It should not be forgotten, and the fact may have an influence with some, that it is very rare for any member of our profession to acquire and long retain the patronage of the community without adequate preparation. He may, it is true, if not qualified, enter on his duties under such favorable auspices, as to secure for a time an extensive business. But this will not probably continue, and at that period of life, when others more competent, are pursuing a successful career, he will be likely to find himself in great measure neglected by his former patrons.

I do not mean to say that every well-educated physician

is sure to obtain patronage ; I am aware that there are many adventitious circumstances that control this to some extent ; but I do believe that no man who is not well educated can retain for a series of years an extensive and valuable practice. He will be overlooked, when he arrives at that age at which, under other circumstances, his counsel would have been eagerly sought, and he will be doomed to experience the most chilling neglect, at the very moment when a well qualified physician enjoys the most enviable fame.

There is another duty, which I deem of great importance, and which I think many members of our profession disregard too much, that may be called the moral management of the sick. Some men seem to think, that if they have pursued their studies with diligence when pupils and continue to do so while in practice, it is no matter in what way they discharge their professional duties. They are oftentimes rude, impatient and harsh in their intercourse with the sick ; they manifest no sympathy for their sufferings and have, in their manners, the appearance of indifference and want of feeling. This is a mistake in every point of view, both as it regards the patient and his attendant. Kindness to the sick may be regarded as a remedial agent. A bright countenance, a cheerful smile, or an encouraging word from the physician, often does the invalid quite as much good as the prescription. The mind has a wonderful and mysterious influence over the body both in health and disease, and that practitioner who overlooks or disregards this, does not avail himself of all the means within his reach in the management of the sick. He deprives himself in fact of a very useful agent, which others often less learned than himself use with great adroitness.

I do not suppose that any man can feel deeply for the sufferings of all whom he visits. It would unfit him for his profession if he did. But he can at least avoid the appearance of indifference ; he can manifest some degree of sympathy, and can oftentimes light up by his kind and cheerful manner a spark of hope in the breast of a sufferer, which protracted illness had almost extinguished.

Self interest usually prompts practitioners, in their inter-

course with the affluent, to adopt the manners which they think will in all probability be most acceptable. If they are rude, abrupt and apparently unfeeling towards them, it may in most instances be set down as affectation. They have heard of some physicians, who disregarded all the little courtesies of life, and who were occasionally almost brutal to their patients, and they are unwise enough to attribute their success in life to the peculiarity of their manners, when in truth the most that could be said, is that they succeeded in spite of them.

The sick have a claim upon our sympathy, and when in addition to this they are poor, the claim is still stronger. I know not how any man can be insensible to it. And yet I fear that most of us do not bear this sufficiently in mind. Some medical men manifest impatience in their visits to them; they do not make sufficient allowance for the mental weakness that grows out of bodily suffering; they treat their complaints too frequently with a chilling indifference; and make it apparent that they regard much that is said to them as unreasonable querulousness. If they choose to adopt this course to the rich, I will find no fault; but I can assure them if they do, that not many of that class will long seek their advice. But I maintain that they have no right thus to treat the destitute. They are in some measure in our power; to a certain extent dependent upon us; they have little or no means of redress when injured or ill-treated, and they have therefore a stronger claim upon our kindness and sympathy. We should never forget that we are of one brotherhood; creatures of a common parent; subject to the same infirmities, and we cannot tell how soon we may make the same demands on our fellow-men as they now make on us. I am sure, too, that kindness is never lost upon them; it costs us but little, yet it does much to soothe and comfort them. Every man, I am confident, must feel better, who thinks he has done something to smooth the pillow of sickness, and if it be not in his power to remove the disease, with which his patient is afflicted, that he has at least lessened his sufferings and made his exit from life more easy. We have nothing

to do with their moral delinquencies ; we are only called upon to minister to their physical infirmities, and to remove them if we can.

It occurred to me, in a recent visit to Europe, that the poor in some of the public institutions which I saw there, were treated with more kindness and consideration than they are for the most part with us. There are two asylums for paupers maintained by the city of Paris, called the Bicêtre and the Salpêtrière, one just out of the walls and the other within, which contain nearly 10,000 inmates. These establishments are exclusive of the hospitals which have at least 10,000 free beds, most of which are usually filled. Among the subjects of these two alms-houses, some are suffering merely from the infirmities of age ; others from those of excess or previous disease, and there is in addition a large number of idiots, epileptics and maniacs. I spent a day at each of these institutions, and I certainly did not spend two days more to my satisfaction, while I was in that interesting city. It was delightful to see the kindness with which they were treated by all the officers from the highest to the lowest ; and equally delightful to see the grateful feelings of these poor, helpless beings, depicted in their countenances as we passed through their rooms. It was evident, from their manner, that this was the mode in which they were accustomed to be treated, and not put on because a stranger happened to be present. Everything was apparently done to make them comfortable. There was light occupation for those who were not too infirm ; there were but few if any who passed their time in listless idleness, and all the improvements in the management of the insane, which have been so great within a few years past, are now introduced, if they did not originate, in these establishments.

They have also taken a step in advance of any other institution in the world ; they have established a school for idiots, in which they combine both physical and intellectual culture. It is wonderful how much has been already accomplished by patience, kindness and perseverance among this apparently hopeless class. The progress made by some of these moping

idiots is almost beyond belief. I saw individuals there, who when they entered had hardly intelligence enough to enable them to walk securely and who could not tell the number of their fingers, draw diagrams on the black board and demonstrate problems in geometry. And the school had not then been in existence more than three years. All this was accomplished mainly by persevering kindness. It was this, that reached and brought out the ray of intelligence, of whose existence there was before hardly the slightest evidence.

I have selected these two asylums as examples, because many of their inmates are among the least deserving class of society. The greater part have brought themselves to their present condition by an habitual indulgence in vicious habits of the grossest and most offensive kind, and are consequently the least likely to excite the sympathy of their fellow-men. Yet all this does not prevent those, under whose charge they are placed, from treating them with a degree of kindness that is usually extended only to the more worthy. In fact in all the charitable institutions that I visited, both in Great Britain and on the continent, the same mild and gentle plan is adopted; as if it were intended not merely to relieve the wants of those, whose necessities were supplied, but if possible to improve and reform them. Gratifying as it was to witness this course in relation to the vicious poor, it was infinitely more grateful to see it extended to those who were only sick and destitute. I know not a more interesting sight, than can be obtained by a visit to the Hospital for sick children at Paris. The nurses of these poor little patients are sisters of Charity, who are prompted by religious motives alone to devote their lives to this holy office. Nothing can exceed their kindness, solicitude and watchful attention. The bright and happy countenances of the children who are not suffering acutely, and the perfect contentment of all, are enough to satisfy any one how well they are treated. They are guarded by these kind women with almost the same anxious care that a fond mother extends to her own offspring.

I am rejoiced to learn that a similar institution, but of course on a much smaller scale, is about to be established in

this city, and from what I know of the skill and active benevolence of the individual who has projected and will no doubt manage it, I am confident that it will be a blessing to our community.

I hope I shall be excused for having suggested to those who are preparing themselves for the profession of medicine, the great importance of an uniformly kind and gentle manner in their intercourse with the sick, without regard to their condition in life. It is important both to the practitioner and the patient; it often gives to the former an influence and authority in the sick room, which he would not so readily acquire, and by soothing the latter, it not unfrequently lessens his sufferings, and sometimes even hastens his recovery.

I shall be pardoned too, I trust, for saying to students how desirable it is in attendance upon surgical operations to observe the most perfect decorum and silence. I can hardly imagine a more painful situation than that of a patient, who is brought into the theatre of a hospital to undergo an operation. He is usually among strangers; with the anticipation of severe suffering before him; often at a distance from his home, and deprived of all those little endearing sympathies of domestic life, which are so grateful under such circumstances. An appeal is thus made to the best feelings of our nature that ought to be irresistible; and I am confident that when levity or indifference is manifested at such times by any of the spectators, it is from thoughtlessness merely, and not from want of feeling. I would not do so much injustice to any one of our profession as to suppose that it could proceed from any other source. The best course for the spectators, in the operating theatre, is to observe a profound silence while the patient is present. It implies a sympathy for him, which he feels and appreciates, and which, judging from my own feelings, is most grateful to the operator.

Allow me also to suggest to those who engage in the labors of practical anatomy, and I trust that all will do so, who are preparing themselves for the profession of medicine, the importance of doing it in such a way as to avoid offending in the slightest degree, the public sentiment. While I feel

that the dissection of the human body is essential to a thorough medical education, I am willing to acknowledge, that it is necessity alone that can justify the practice. It is naturally repugnant to men's feelings; we are compelled, for the good of others, to overcome this aversion; and it requires in the onset, no small degree of effort with most people, to do it. We should be careful, when we have overcome it, to conduct our investigations so as not to shock, in the slightest degree the opinions of our fellow-men. It is due to ourselves, to our profession and to the public, who permit this practice, that it should be thus done. We, as citizens of this commonwealth, owe it in an especial manner to the enlightened rulers of our state, who have sanctioned by law, what in many parts of the world is done by stealth. A different course, while engaged in these pursuits, is very apt to blunt the moral sensibility; to make a man in some measure indifferent to human suffering, and thus tend in no small degree to disqualify him for the practice of the profession for which he is preparing himself.

There are one or two other points on which I intended to have said something; but having already occupied so much time, I shall detain you but a little longer by enlarging upon them. I will notice them very briefly.

I would say, then, that it is desirable that every member of our profession should take a right view of the nature of it. I think that many err in this respect. Too many, I fear, look upon it merely as a means of obtaining a livelihood, and perhaps accumulating wealth. They seem to forget, when they enter on its practice, that they should devote themselves to the cause of science and humanity, and that the emolument that may arise from it, though not to be overlooked, should not be the primary object. We owe it to the great men who have gone before us, and who have done so much to adorn and dignify our calling, we owe it to them to labour for the enlargement of the boundaries of human knowledge. It should be our endeavor to add something to the accumulated wisdom of past ages, and to aid in removing from our profession the character of uncertainty with which it is reproached.

We owe it to the cause of humanity to strive diligently for the advancement of our science. How much suffering still exists which we cannot lessen, or at any rate entirely remove. There are many diseases that are yet incurable, and many others over which we have no control.

I would not imply that physicians should in all cases practise their profession gratuitously, or for an inadequate compensation. I feel that they are entitled to an honorable reward, and that their services are not requited in our country as they should be, except perhaps in some of the large cities. If they were better rewarded the profession would be cultivated with more liberal and enlarged views. Its practitioners would be relieved from the anxiety that many of them now feel as to their pecuniary concerns. They would then be able to give their undivided attention to the duties that are strictly professional. Their minds would not be engrossed to any extent by the ordinary occupations of life, and their thoughts would be chiefly directed to the care of the sick and the acquisition of knowledge.

Many persons when they enter on the practice think too much of themselves and too little of the profession to which they belong. They regard it as a trade and not as a science. They made a mistake in the beginning; they selected it as they would any of the ordinary occupations of life, as a means of maintaining themselves and their families, and they set about doing this, overlooking the higher and more noble pursuits connected with their vocation. One thing is certain, that our profession when followed in this way will yield neither fame nor wealth. Such of its members as adopt this course are very sure to reap nothing but disappointment, while at the same time they bring discredit on their professional brethren. Under any circumstances, it is the last calling which should be chosen in our community as leading to riches. If wealth however be not the object, no other occupation in life can hold out stronger motives for its cultivation. It engages the mind by the variety and interest of its studies; it presents a field for the exercise of the kind feelings of our nature, which is altogether peculiar to itself; it brings us

most agreeably in contact with our fellow-men, and for the most part we escape the painful collisions, which are experienced in almost every other path of life.

A few words more and I have done. I cannot close without saying something as to the proper conduct of physicians towards each other. We are not regarded by the rest of the world as the most harmonious profession. We are supposed to be often jealous of each other's fame, and blind to each other's merit. That we fall readily into unpleasant controversies; engage not unfrequently in personal altercations, from which no good and much evil is sure to follow. I could add to this list some other unpleasant charges that have been made against us. But this is not necessary for my purpose, which is merely to say something in palliation, and to warn you against the errors into which too many of your predecessors have fallen.

I admit that there is some degree of truth in these charges, far more than I wish. At the same time there are extenuating circumstances that are usually overlooked. We are peculiarly situated. For the first few years of our career, our characters and acquirements are often judged of, and pronounced upon, by those who are wholly incompetent to form any opinion on the subject. Hence very erroneous decisions are frequently made. Men of small intellect and little learning, possessing none of the requisites of a judicious physician, by their plausible manners or by some similar means, occasionally acquire extensive business and a certain degree of reputation, while men of modest merit pass along in undeserved obscurity. This is a state of things that is not likely to last, but for the time it engenders bad feelings. It may excite envy perhaps in the breasts of those who are conscious of superior attainments. They may indulge in detracting remarks in relation to their more successful rivals, and thus springs up an unkind feeling, that not unfrequently leads to discreditable controversies upon very slight provocations.

The members of the clerical and legal professions are differently situated. They come at once before the tribunal of

the public. Competent judges pronounce upon their merits. From this there is no appeal ; and in this decision all parties usually acquiesce.

I would not be understood however as attempting to justify or excuse in any degree the spirit of controversy with which medical men have been charged ; at the same time I think it right to have suggested, what may be regarded as palliating circumstances. Every motive urges to the adoption of a different course. We owe it to the honorable profession of which we are members. We have no right to sully the name of that calling, whose objects are the advancement of science and the alleviation of human suffering. We cannot maintain its dignity, if we permit ourselves to lose sight of these.

We are bound to judge charitably of each other ; to avoid the expression of unkind opinions ; knowing as we do the uncertainty of our art, and the slight control that we have in many cases upon their issue. We are bound to believe, that every well educated man, unless we know otherwise, has practised skilfully, be the result what it may ; and we have no right to intimate, that a different course would have produced a more favorable termination. Our self-respect requires this of us ; our respect for our professional brethren imperiously demands it.

I trust that no one will enter on our calling who is not willing to adopt this course. He will not otherwise be a fellow-laborer in elevating its standard. He will do nothing to advance its honor. He will feel no interest in its true prosperity and welfare.

The members of our profession have a great work to perform, and great responsibilities rest upon them. If they do not feel this ; if they are not willing to labor for its accomplishment and cannot bear these responsibilities, they should seek another occupation.

All of us should bear in mind, that we have received as a precious inheritance from the wise and the good men who have gone before us, the stores of wisdom that they have gathered up. We may not by our labors increase them ; we

may not even profit by them as we might ; but if we cannot add lustre to the name of the profession of which we are the humble votaries, let it not be our reproach that we have done any thing to tarnish it.