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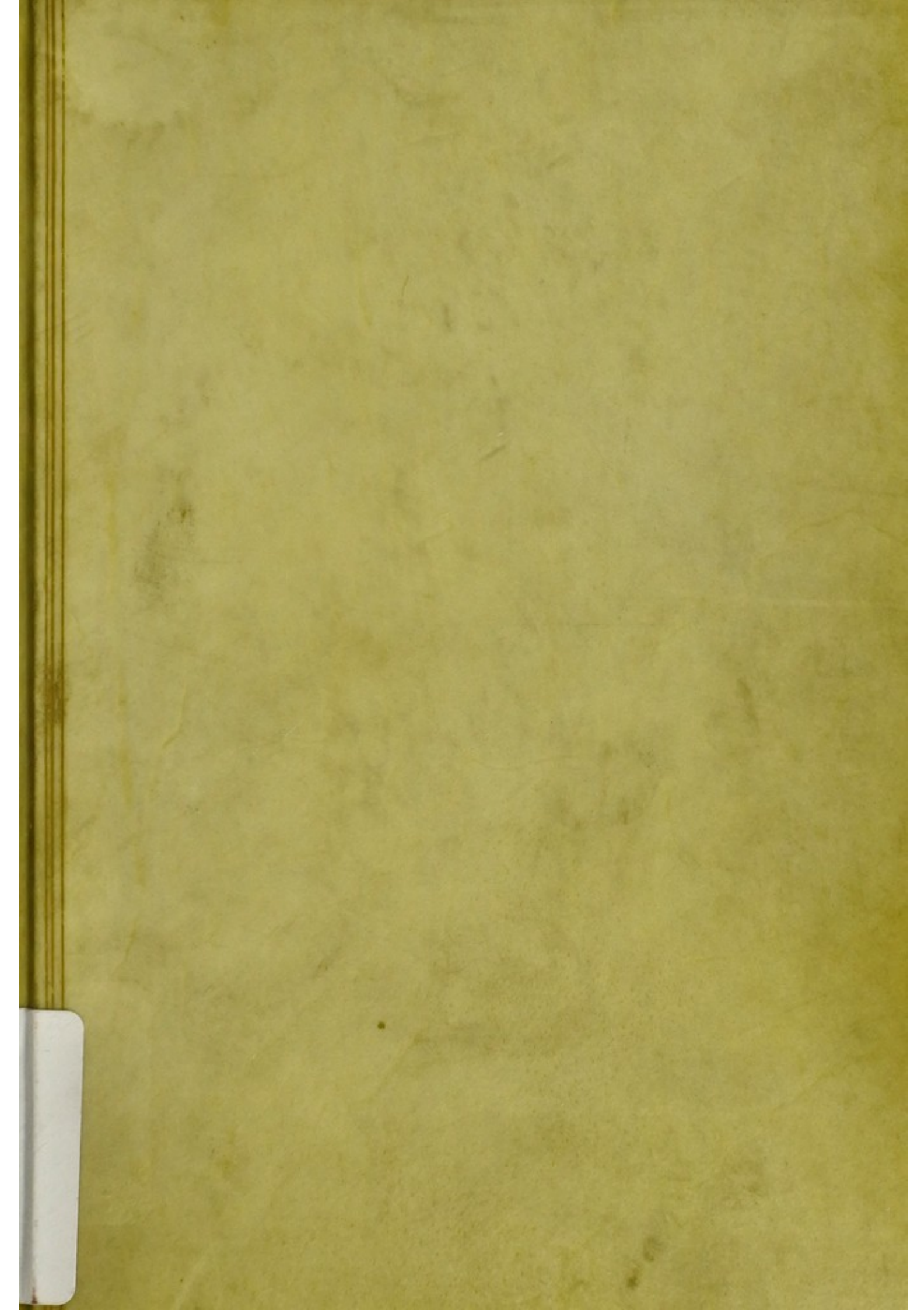
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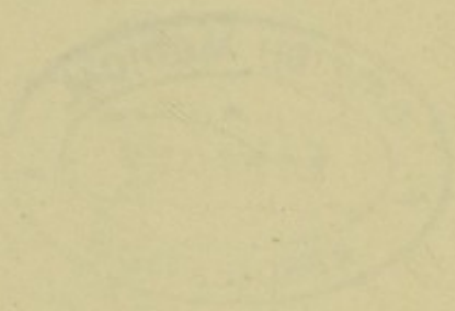
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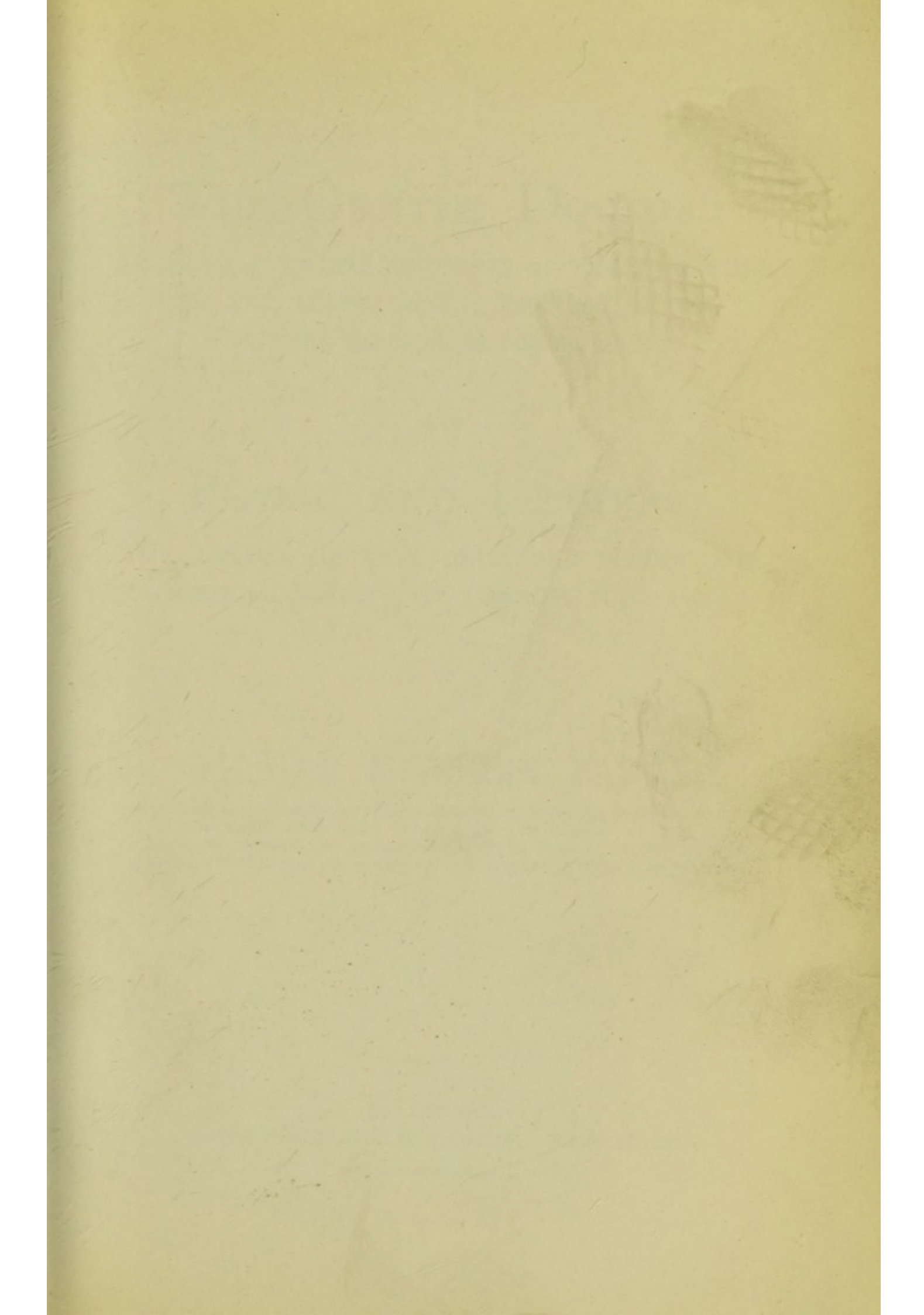


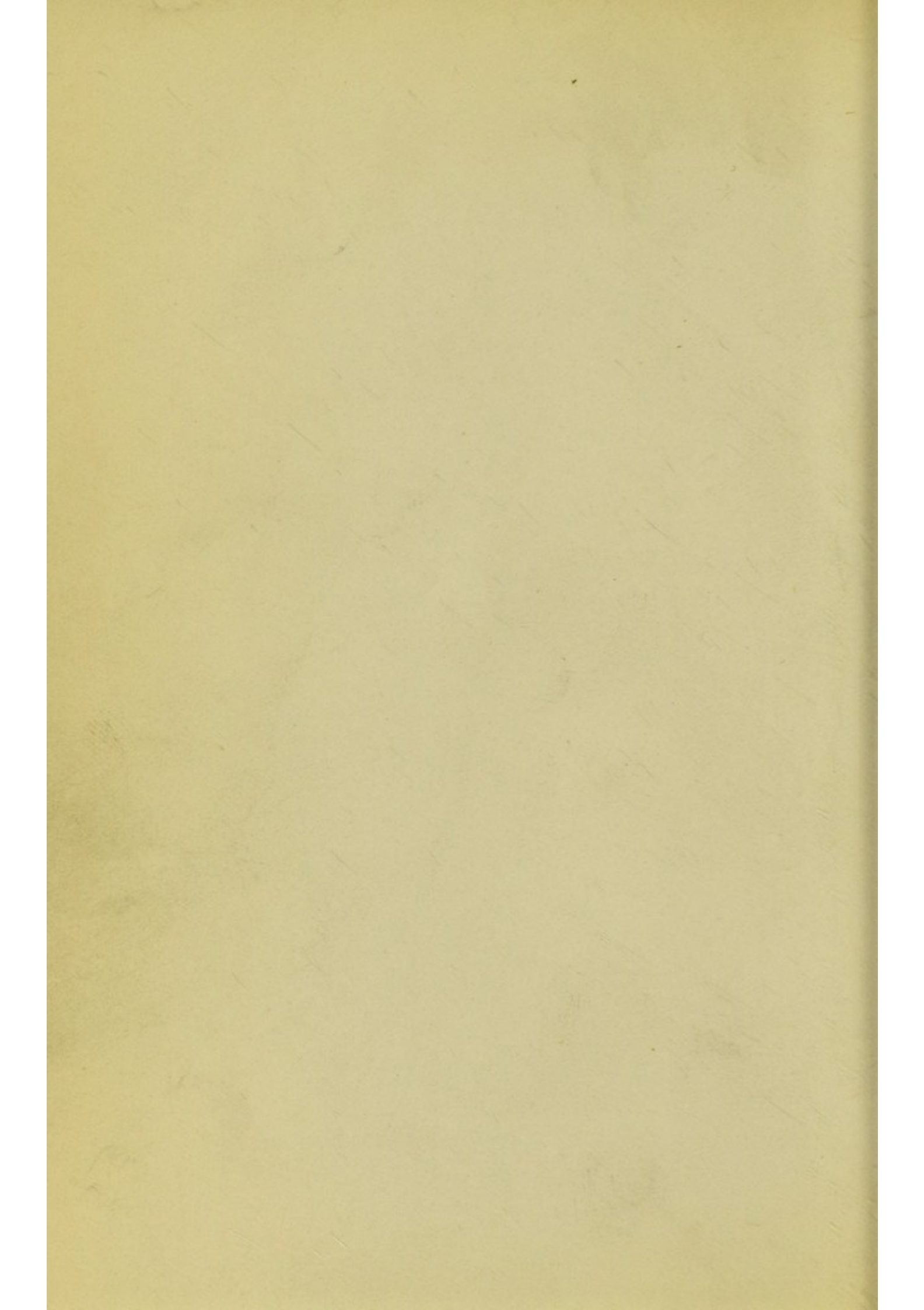
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To Ernest Hart Esq
with all good wishes from
W.M. Banks









THE GENTLE DOCTOR:

AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS OF THE YORKSHIRE
COLLEGE, LEEDS, ON THE OPENING OF THE
WINTER SESSION, OCTOBER, 1892;

AND

PHYSIC AND LETTERS:

THE ANNUAL ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE
MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON, MAY, 1893.

BY

WILLIAM MITCHELL BANKS,

PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LIVERPOOL; SURGEON TO THE
LIVERPOOL ROYAL INFIRMARY; MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF THE ROYAL
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LIVERPOOL:

LEE & NIGHTINGALE, 15, NORTH JOHN STREET.

MDCCCXCIII.

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INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

YORKSHIRE COLLEGE, LEEDS,

OCTOBER, 1892.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I wish to address myself specially to those among you who are my fellow medical students. I call you so purposely, for, however old we may live to be, and however many degrees or diplomas we may succeed in obtaining, we shall still be students of medicine to the end of our days.

What am I to say to you? Shall I tell you of the nobility of the profession which you have joined? Shall I speak to you of its astonishing advances,—advances so amazing that many, like myself, who have seen some of the greatest of them, never cease to marvel at them, albeit a day hardly passes without our making practical use of them? Have I anything new to tell you about the best way in which you may conduct your medical education and fit yourselves for your future life? I was thinking of all these things the other day, when I chanced to open an album in which were the portraits of many of my old teachers. I have always been a confirmed hero worshipper. I am sure it does a young man good to have his heroes, and adore them, and be enthusiastic about them, and believe they can do no wrong. One of the faults I have to find with your modern Cambridge and Oxford-man is that his motto is *nil admirari*. With him it is the height of good breeding to utter short

sentences in a monotone, to preserve a frigid calmness, and to gaze with an equally stolid and bovine eye upon a drunken cabby or a transcendant genius. Only do his pulses quicken when he comes to the consideration of a shirt collar or "the nice conduct of a clouded cane." I confess I cannot bear a fellow who stifles his natural, hearty emotions, like a man sitting on the safety-valve of a boiler.

To return, however, to the album. As I turned over its leaves, I came to the portrait of Syme, and looked at the keen, shrewd, somewhat stern face of the Napoleon of surgery, whom in my youth I had constituted my surgical hero ; and whose memory I still revere. A few pages further on I came to a beautiful head ; a head almost classic in its outlines, and surmounting a tall and stately frame. I recalled the gentle, tender eyes, and the mouth, which, when in repose, gave to the rest of the countenance a tinge of melancholy, but which, in happy moments could shape itself into a smile of surpassing sweetness. The face was that of Warburton Begbie, Physician to the Edinburgh Infirmary. As a student one used to dream day dreams of the future. If ever I pictured myself as a great physician, when I looked closely into that picture it was the portrait of Begbie that I saw. So he became my medical hero. There are some here who will recall him as vividly as I do, and who can tell you for what good he influenced their lives by his own. Of his great eminence as a physician and of the quality of his contributions to scientific medicine I need say nothing. They are still fresh in the memory of those who are best able to estimate their value. As a teacher he had no rival in Edinburgh when I was a student. But while there have been many great physicians and many great

clinical teachers Begbie was not only both, but he was also the gentlest and most kindly of men. When he entered a ward a new light seemed to shine in the faces of the sick. In sooth something to illuminate their lot was much needed in the dirty, dreary medical wards of the old Edinburgh Infirmary. The very way in which he would put his hand on a patient's shoulder seemed to give the invalid comfort and strength. It was a great lesson to us young lads. We were full of health and life and hope ; somewhat too apt to think that these sick people were only pathological curiosities and that we should never have trouble and disease like them. But *there* stood our master, who had seen much human suffering ; who had had not a few trials to bear himself ; and every day he taught us not only lessons in medicine but lessons in courteous and considerate demeanour to the poor. I have always thought of him in my own mind as *The Gentle Doctor*, and I have always striven in the hospital ward and in the clinical theatre to imitate his example. People have often said to me that after many years of surgical work a man must become case-hardened. What a mistake ! The more blood a surgeon sheds, the more readily do the tears come into his eyes.

As I was musing about my old master it occurred to me that he was essentially a product of the present day and the current of my thoughts took me back a couple of centuries, which is about as far back as we know anything real about the lives, and the manners and customs of doctors. Before that time all is imagination and mystery. How could a comparison best be instituted between then and now ? Probably by ascertaining what was and what is the popular idea of the medical man of the period. But who is to tell us ? The novelist will. The dramatist will. The painter will. At

any rate so it has appeared to me, and I purpose to take one of each from the seventeenth century and one of each from our own day, and see what they individually have to tell us about the doctor.

At the end of the seventeenth century lived Alain René Le Sage. He wrote the history of *Gil Blas*. In it he has drawn a caricature of the doctors of the day. Doubtless it is a caricature, but, after all, a caricature is only an exaggeration of the salient points of the individual portrayed. Sangrado is immortal. As long as there are doctors he will never die, and for all time, when anybody wants to poke malicious fun at us, Sangrado's memory will be used to poison the shaft of ridicule. You remember the description of him. "A tall, withered, wan executioner of the sisters three, who had done all their justice for at least these forty years. This learned forerunner of the undertaker had an aspect suited to his office :—his words were weighed to a scruple, and his jargon sounded grand in the ears of the uninitiated. His arguments were mathematical demonstrations, and his opinions had the merits of originality." There was no doubt about the last statement, for, after taking six good porringers of blood from the old Licentiate Pedrillo, he says to *Gil Blas* : "It is a mere vulgar error that the blood is of any use in the system :—the faster you draw it off the better. A patient has nothing to do but to keep himself quiet : he has no more occasion for blood than a man in a trance. Drink, my children ; health consists in the pliability and moisture of the parts. Drink water by pailsful. It is a universal dissolvent : water liquifies all the salts. Is the course of the blood a little sluggish ? this grand principle sets it forward. Too rapid ? its career is checked."

Let me recall to you the scene where the notary is summoned to make the licentiate's will. "The notary," says Gil Blas, "was a dapper little fellow, who loved his joke, "and he enquired who our physician was. At the name "of Dr. Sangrado, hurrying on his cloak and hat, For "mercy's sake, cried he, let us set off with all possible "speed, for this doctor despatches business so fast that "our fraternity cannot keep pace with him. That fellow "spoils half my jobs."

We really must not part from Sangrado without one more touch. After Gil Blas had been Sangrado's partner for a while he becomes dismayed at the fearful mortality which their treatment seems to produce, and says:—"If you will take the hint, Sir, we had better vary our "system. Let us give, by way of experiment, chemical "preparations to our patients. The worst they can do is to "tread in the steps of our pure dilutions and our phlebo- "tomizing evacuations."

"I would willingly give it a trial, rejoined the doctor, if it "were a matter of indifference, but I have published on the "practice of bleeding and the use of drenches. Would you "have me cut the throat of my own fame as an author?"

"Oh, you are in the right, resumed Gil Blas, our enemies "must not gain the triumph over us. They would say that "you were out of conceit with your own systems and would "ruin your reputation for consistency. Perish the people! "Perish even the nobility and clergy, but let us go on in "the old path."

This is all exquisitely funny, but in one sense it is very terrible reading, for it is obviously so true to the life. The English translation was made by Dr. Tobias Smollett. I

wonder what he thought of Sangrado. After all, I don't suppose he considered it a very far fetched description. Look at his own novel, *Roderick Random*, written a hundred years later, and containing much of his own early experience as a surgeon's mate in the Navy. Could anything be more degraded than the position of a very large section of the medical profession even at so much later a period?

Turning to the drama, it is somewhat curious to note that while Shakspeare, with the exception of the Apothecary in "Romeo and Juliet," hardly makes any allusion to medicine, Molière constantly introduces medical characters into his plays. Sad to say, they were invariably brought in for the purpose of being satirized and held up to scorn. In his celebrated plays the *Malade Imaginaire* and the *Médecin malgré lui*, and in the smaller pieces the *Médecin Volant* and *L'Amour Médecin*, he is so severe upon the doctors that he almost seeks an opportunity for excusing himself. In the *Malade Imaginaire* he makes Argan, the imaginary invalid, say—

"Your Molière, with his comedies, is a fine, impertinent fellow! I think it is like his impudence to go and bring upon the stage such worthy persons as the physicians." To which his brother, Béralde, replies, "He does not make fun of physicians, but of the ridiculousness of physic." Béralde is always very severe upon the medicos, and when his invalid brother says to him, "But doctors must believe in the truth of their art inasmuch as they make use of it for themselves," he retorts, "That is because there are some of them who actually share in the popular errors by which they profit, and others who profit by them without sharing in them at all. Your Dr. Purgon, for instance, does not

“discriminate very clearly. He is a thorough-going physician
 “from head to foot;—a man who believes in his rules more
 “than in all the demonstrations of mathematics, and who
 “would think it a crime to wish to examine them. He sees
 “nothing obscure in physic, nothing dubious, nothing difficult.
 “With an impetuosity of prejudice, a stiff-necked assurance,
 “a coarse common sense and reasoning, he flies to bleeding
 “and purging, and stops at nothing. You must not owe him
 “a grudge for anything he might do to you, for he would
 “despatch you with the most implicit faith. In killing you
 “he would only do to you what he has done to his own
 “wife and children, and what, if there were any need, he
 “would do to himself.”

There is a most delicious interview between the invalid and a certain Dr. Diafoirus, who is accompanied by his son, young Dr. Thomas Diafoirus.

“ARGAND : ‘Pray, sir, just tell me in what condition I am.’

“DR. DIAFOIRUS (feeling the pulse of Argand) : ‘Come, Thomas, take hold of the other arm of this gentleman, to see whether you can form a good judgment of his pulse. *Quid dicis?*’

“THOMAS : ‘*Dico*, that this gentleman’s pulse is the pulse of a man who is not in good health.’

“DR. D. : ‘Good.’

“THOM. : ‘That it is hardish, not to say hard.’

“DR. D. : ‘Very well.’

“THOM. : ‘That it acts by fits and starts.’

“DR. D. : ‘*Bene.*’

“THOM. : ‘And even a little irregular.’

“DR. D. : ‘*Optime.*’

“THOM. : ‘Which is the sign of intemperature in the splenetic parenchyma, which means the milt.’

"Dr. D : 'Very good.'

"ARGAND : 'No ; Dr. Purgon says that it is my liver which is not right.

"Dr. D. : 'Well ! yes. Whoever says parenchyma, says both the one and the other, on account of the close sympathy there is between them through the *vas breve* and the *pylorus*, and often through the *meatus cholidici*. He no doubt orders you to eat much roast meat.'

"ARG. : 'No ! nothing but boiled.'

"Dr. D. : 'Well ! yes. Roast, boiled—the same thing. He prescribes very carefully for you and you cannot be in better hands.' "

The *Malade Imaginaire* closes with an Interlude, a burlesque ceremony of admitting a Doctor of Medicine into the Faculty. The stage directions, after describing the hall, say, "Then "the whole assembly, composed of eight syringe bearers, six "apothecaries, twenty-two doctors, and the person that is to "be admitted physician, eight surgeons dancing and two "singing, enter and take their places, each according to his "rank." There is a president, who invites members of the assembly to "heckle" the candidate. The whole is spoken in dog Latin, with an admixture of French, Italian, and Spanish that is extremely diverting but quite untranslatable. Whatever be the question the candidate has only one answer, "Clysterium donare, Postea seignare, Ensuita purgare," and at once the chorus bursts out into "Bene, bene, bene respon- "dere : Dignus, dignus est intrare In nostro docto corpore." One doctor profounds a case to him with the usual answer, "But what is to be done if the case won't get well," says the examiner. "Reseignare, repurgare et reclysterisare," cries the candidate, while the chorus roar out "Bene, bene, bene,

"bene respondere." Finally clapping the doctor's bonnet on the bachelor's head, the president gives him his licence to practice with the right of physicking, purging, bleeding, piercing, slashing, cutting, and killing throughout the whole land. "Ego, cum isto boneto Venerabili et docto, Dono
 "tibi et concedo Virtutem et puissanciam Medicandi,
 "Purgandi, Seignandi, Percandi, Taillandi, Coupandi Et
 "occidendi Impune per totam tenam." The whole interlude constitutes perhaps the funniest satire on medicine that ever was written.

And now for the painters. In the house of a friend of mine hangs an old engraving by Nanteuil called "Le Bassin." It is a representation of a doctor holding in one hand an earthenware vessel containing *excreta* of some sort, to which he is solemnly pointing with the forefinger of the other. He wears a gown. His head is covered with a kind of big flat cap from beneath which flows his long hair. Round his neck is a fur collar, and large white bands hang from below his chin. His eyeglasses are somewhat awry on his nose, and he is evidently giving forth some protentious prognostication as the result of his examination. A glance shows him the incarnation of quackery. Beneath the picture are some verses in old French, the sense of which may be expressed thus :

Doctor ! this precious mess test well,
 And from its savour, from its smell
 Your prophesies declare :—
 Your skill should soon procure at least
 A burial service for the priest,
 Whose fees you'll gaily share.*

* De ce mets précieux goûte, friand Docteur,
 De son odeur, de sa saveur
 Tire d' infaillibles presages,
 Voi si ton Art aura promptement procuré
 Des *De Profundis* de curé
 Avec qui gaiement tu partages.

The same form of sarcasm is seen in the famous picture "La Femme Hydropique," and in many other productions of the Dutch and Flemish artists. It comes out at a much more recent date in the savage caricatures of Gilray. I saw one the other day in which the peasants of a village are represented shooting their rubbish. A great crowd follows three wheelbarrows in which three individuals are being wheeled away. In the first is an attenuated wretch with bag and papers ;—the lawyer. In the last is a great, fat figure with full bottomed wig and gouty leg done up in flannel ;—the parson. In the middle barrow, with three-cornered hat on head and still grasping his squirts and bottles, sits the doctor.

And, now, while we have the idea of the seventeenth century doctor fresh in our heads, let us leave two centuries behind and come to our own to-day. What says the modern novelist? If you want to read a charming book go and buy *Le Docteur Rameau* by George Ohnet, one of the few French authors who do not consider it essential that the chief constituent in a novel should be literary ordure—which is considered a great crime in him by those mandarins the Parisian critics. The doctor is of the humblest origin, the son of a railway employé in the country. One day a terrible collision occurs near his father's hut. Although only fourteen, he displays such energy in helping the village surgeon, Dr. Servant, to succour the wounded that the latter sees his genius. He gets him put to school, and, in due time, with the aid of scholarships, gained by his indomitable hard work, Rameau has his choice of going to the *École Polytechnique* or to the *École Normale*. Here his benefactor, Servant, steps in and says to him, "Do thou be a doctor. What I

"have given to thee give back to thy fellow beings. That
 "genius, which is undeniable in thee, place it at the service
 "of humanity." When he comes on the scene, Rameau has
 reached the highest grade in his profession. He is a professor
 and operator of renown, in great request as a consultant and
 a famous clinical teacher. Here is the description of him.
 "Fifty years of age, with a vigorous constitution never
 "weakened by any excesses, Rameau is a man of great stature,
 "with a visage rugged as a volcanic soil. His big forehead
 "is crowned with grey hair, wavy and coarse, like the mane
 "of an old lion. His grey eyes, clear and piercing as his
 "own steel instruments, are surmounted by eyebrows, black
 "and shaggy. A ruddy complexion tells of blood boiling
 "with the activity of a life absolutely devoted to toil, and his
 "thick lipped mouth breathes of kindness. But there is a
 "deep wrinkle at the root of the nose, furrowed between the
 "eyebrows, and when he is profoundly occupied or when he
 "is annoyed, this wrinkle gives him a fearsome look. At the
 "hospital or in the amphitheatre, when the word is passed
 "that 'Rameau has got his wrinkle' it is a storm signal for
 "the house surgeons and pupils. Not a man but trembles
 "and holds his peace when that fearful furrow comes over
 "the usually genial brow of the savant, for his bursts of
 "passion are formidable and nothing can stop them. His
 "roughness is as well known as his skill. No woman ever
 "put on a dressing or adjusted a bandage with a lighter hand
 "or more dexterous fingers; no carter ever swore at his
 "horses more furiously than the doctor at his assistants. The
 "frightened patients get under the bedclothes or bury their
 "heads in the pillows, when they hear the thundering voice
 "of the surgeon, as he flourishes with a menacing air some

"sharp bladed instrument. He does what has to be done
 "for them ; and then, transported with joy, the poor things,
 "more dead than alive, learn that the operation, which they
 "fear has hardly begun, is already over and finished. Then
 "it is that they bless the skill of that kindly carver, and come
 "to know why it is that the house surgeons and pupils
 "laughingly say behind his back, 'It's only Rameau's tongue
 "'that ever hurts his patients.' Without doubt the confidence
 "which he inspires accounts for half the success of his
 "treatment. It is so well established, that the presence of
 "Rameau by the bedside of a sick man puts death to rout,
 "that, at the first glimpse of the doctor as he comes in, the
 "patient feels himself saved. No great person in the land
 "ever has a serious illness without Rameau being summoned
 "at whatever cost. When the Innspruck surgeons wanted to
 "cut off the Archduke Charles' leg, after he had fallen into a
 "ravine chasing the blackcock, it was owing to his skill
 "and ingenuity that the prince was saved from being a
 "life-long invalid. For his trouble he demanded a hundred
 "thousand thalers. He once went to operate on Garibaldi
 "for a phlegmon, which was seriously endangering his life.
 "He asked from the grand old adventurer, as a fee, a flower
 "from his garden. Rameau is a democrat and a freethinker.
 "A democrat, because sprung from the people, he has
 "inherited their bitter notions about equality. A freethinker,
 "because in his profound scientific researches he has only
 "encountered at the end of his scalpel mere matter, and
 "because his powerful mind refuses to admit what it cannot
 "explain."

Is not this a delightful description of a modern French
 doctor by a modern French novelist? I think you will

forgive me quoting for you a charming incident. There are two ladies, widowed mother and daughter, who have been reduced from affluence to poverty, and barely eke out an existence by dressmaking. Their old servant Rosalie still clings to them. The mother takes ill and is at the point of death, and the daughter's anguish is terrible. Then the servant Rosalie invades the crowded consulting room of Rameau. She is arguing with the manservant who is telling her that the doctor cannot possibly see her till the following day. Then comes this scene,—

“The sound of a bell interrupted the talk, and, without giving
 “a thought to the distressed woman, the manservant opened
 “a door and proceeded to let out the person who was leaving
 “the consulting room. In the half light of the waning day
 “the tall figure of Rameau appeared. Some brief parting
 “words were exchanged between the doctor and his patient.
 “The woman, who was weeping, had raised her head. With
 “the intuition of grief she divined in that unknown, barely
 “visible person the saviour she had come to implore, and,
 “rising sharply, she precipitated herself after him into the
 “room. Rameau did not hinder her, but looked her all over
 “with a smile.”

“‘What is it, my good woman?’ he said in his deep, grave tones.”

“‘Oh! my dear sir! Surely your are Dr. Rameau; are you not?’”

“‘Yes, I am.’”

“‘Then it must be Providence that has permitted me to reach you. Ah! Great Heaven! your servant was just telling me that I must either wait or come back to-morrow. As if death would wait.’”

“‘Death?’”

“‘Yes, my dear, good sir, our doctor has said so. It is
“a question of hours. If the operation is not done this
“very evening, my mistress will never get over the night.
“And we heard that it was only you that could save her.
“Then mademoiselle said to me: Run for Dr. Rameau and
“bring him. Ah! Dieu! promise him what you like: we
“shall sell the furniture, if necessary, to pay. Only let him
“save mother!’”

“Rameau knit his brows. The woman saw a cloud pass
“over the face of the savant. She reddened and stopped
“quite confused.”

“‘Forgive me,’ she cried, ‘I am so troubled that I say
“anything that comes first. But I am indeed sorry to have
“offended you.’”

“Rameau made a careless gesture.”

“‘Are your mistresses, then, poor?’ he asked.”

“‘Alas! Yes! The dear ladies! After having been in
“such an excellent position too; the distress is all the more
“painful for them. But so good, one would be cut in pieces
“for them. And mademoiselle, so sweet and so beautiful.
“Ah! doctor! if you only knew her!’”

“‘Well, now, what’s the matter with your invalid?’”

“‘Oh! some sort of gangrene. At first they treated her
“for rheumatism in the shoulder, and, then, day after day, they
“have seen her steadily going from bad to worse. Ah! Sir!
“if she had been rich, as she once was, they wouldn’t have
“let her go to the last gasp. But the poor! They can die.
“Isn’t that so!’”

“Rameau threw back his head and very gently replied
“‘No, my good woman.’”

Then he calls his carriage and goes out with her leaving the rich occupants of the crowded ante-chamber to come next day. He cures the mother and marries the beautiful m'amselle. After some years his wife dies, leaving him a daughter, and terrible griefs and calamities accumulate around him. Still he obstinately remains a disbeliever and an atheist, and, under the burden of his sore troubles, he only becomes more and more defiant and obdurate. His miseries culminate in what threatens to be the fatal illness of the beloved child. But she recovers and marries her father's assistant, and the story closes with a beautiful scene in the church at the marriage. Beside Rameau sits his old and faithful friend Talvanne, who has stood by him through all his troubles.

“ At that moment with measured steps the priest descended
 “ from the altar to unite the young couple. Adrienne's
 “ uplifted veil allowed her countenance to be seen bent
 “ down in fervent prayer. At the question, Do you take for
 “ your husband so and so? she answered with a clear tone Yes;
 “ and her gaze, turned a little sideways, rivetted itself on
 “ her father as if to offer to him all that happiness which
 “ filled her. That look expressed a tenderness so profound
 “ that it penetrated Rameau to the heart. At the same
 “ instant, the sun streaming through the windows of the choir
 “ kissed with its rays Adrienne's yellow hair and lit it up as
 “ with a golden glory. So she appeared as if transfigured,
 “ almost isolated in a divine luminosity, like some young
 “ saint come down among men. In her Rameau beheld an
 “ angel sent to him to console him for all his miseries. All
 “ that remained in him of bitterness or pain melted away in
 “ a delicious ecstasy, and, full of humble gratitude, he knelt

“down. Talvanne hearing him speak in a low tone,
 “leaned over to listen and heard these words murmured with
 “fervour,

“ ‘ My God ! My God ! ’

“ It was the atheist, who was praying.”

And, now, how do they put the doctor on the stage nowadays? The other night I went to the theatre to find out. I went to see Sidney Grundy's play, the *Fool's Paradise*, in which the chief part, that of Sir Peter Lund, the physician, is played by my old friend Mr. John Hare. In a character of this sort Mr. Hare has admittedly no rival in this country, and, therefore, it need hardly be said that the part was played to perfection. Doubtless many of you have seen the play, and will remember the admirable make-up of the old doctor, who obstinately keeps up, even in his dress, the traditions of his youth. He is brusque and dictatorial, but there is a total absence of solemn pretentiousness about him. He affects not to know anything, and would have you believe him to be a sort of medical agnostic. He actually delights in making fun of his own profession. But he has not uttered half a dozen sentences before you see that he is a shrewd man of the world, who has mixed with every class of society from the peer to the pauper. He knows that drugging is for the most part useless and says so, only the public will have drugs and don't believe in a doctor who talks common sense to them. There are some capital bits of humour in the conversations between Sir Peter and his patient Philip, whose mysterious case he is quietly and accurately fathoming, while affecting all the while to talk nonsense to him. Sir Peter says to him—

“ Well ! what's the matter with you ? ”

"PHIL. : 'Really, Sir Peter, that's what I want you to tell me.'

"Sir P. : 'You have a high opinion of the medical profession. Do you suppose we can tell you anything, if you don't tell us it first?'

"PHIL. : 'I have always supposed so.'

"Sir P. : Error, Sir. You tell us everything we tell you. The only difference is you tell us in English and we tell you in Latin. You take a fee out of your pocket : we put it in ours.'

"PHIL. : 'You are plain-spoken, Sir Peter. Now, tell me with equal candour what is the matter with me.'

"Sir P. : 'Shall I tell you the truth?'

"PHIL. : 'Of course.'

"Sir P. : 'I don't know.'

"PHIL. : 'Surely with your experience——'

"Sir P. : 'Sir, I have no experience.'

"PHIL. : 'Well, with your knowledge——'

"Sir P. : 'Sir, I have no knowledge. Knowledge is the monopoly of extremely young practitioners. I have been doctoring for forty years, and now I stand here on your hearthrug, sir, a monument of triumphant ignorance.'

"PHIL. : 'Nonsense, Sir Peter.'

"Sir P. : 'Sense, sir, sense.'

"PHIL. : 'Be candid and tell me frankly what is wrong with me.'

"Sir P. : 'Your liver, probably.'

"PHIL. : 'Only my liver!'

"Sir P. : 'Don't speak disparagingly of your liver, sir.'

That eminently respectable organ has been much misunderstood. It is commonly supposed to serve certain functional purposes in the physical economy. Another fallacy! The liver was made by a beautiful provision of nature for the benefit of the medical profession.'"

During the play I watched the audience to see what they thought of Sir Peter. They evidently liked him very much. They enjoyed him. In one scene the wicked wife, who does not wish him to prolong his stay in the house, says to him "But what will your patients do without you, Sir Peter?" "Recover," he answers, and bolts out of the room. This amused them amazingly. But why did they like him? I am certain they liked him for his honesty and his kind heartedness. In spite of his odd ways and affected cynicism one could see that he was a genuine true friend, and, in his own heart, was oppressed with anxiety for the safety of his friend and patient. And when the time came for a terrible disclosure and he had to denounce the miserable wife as the poisoner of her husband, he rose to the occasion. There was no affected cynicism in the sharp clear voice with which he said "I suspected you from the beginning." He stood out a courageous old man prepared to do and say anything for the right.

Finally we come to the painter of to-day. It will not be denied that the picture of 1891, the one which stood out clearly and prominently above all the other pictures of the year, was Mr. Luke Fildes' "Doctor." Of the hundreds of medical men who must have stood before that picture I am sure there was not one whose pulses it did not quicken with pleasurable pride, or who left it without thinking that it already had been, and again would be, his privilege to fight

against pain and suffering and death like his colleague on the canvas. For to us he is a real living man like ourselves. We have acted like him and felt like him.

Note where the scene of the picture is laid : not in some rich man's mansion, where the doctor might reasonably expect a handsome fee for his trouble, but in a working man's cottage, where, most likely, the gratitude of the people and a consciousness of having done his duty by the poor would be his sole honorarium. With admirable skill the painter has pitched on the early hour of morning for the time. The light of the lamp in the room and the light of the dawn coming through the casement are struggling with each other. It is the cold sad hour when human vitality is the lowest and when statistics tell us most men die. The sick child, worn with the raging fever that commonly burns from eight in the evening till one or two in the morning, lies spent and exhausted. Till then the parents have been fighting on with their nursing : soothing, caressing, encouraging their little one. But now they too are exhausted and depressed, and hoping against hope seems all that is left to them. And there sits their friend—the gentle doctor—watching with them, and still puzzling his brains to think what more he can devise to stay the lamp of life from flickering out. He is no courtly physician, no London specialist, that man (thank God !) He is only a country doctor. But his somewhat rugged face tells of honesty and common sense and self-reliance and gentleness. What more do you want ? The men that look like that man, whatever be their business or trade or profession, whatever be their wealth or their social position, I say, of such men is the kingdom of heaven.

Let us take a review of the whole matter. This much is clear that, when a personification of the doctor was presented to the public two hundred years ago, he was invariably held up to ridicule as a quack. He was a man who pretended to a knowledge that he did not possess ;—by consequence a man whose life was one continual fraud. His language was inflated and bombastical, and his sesquipedalian words were employed to distract attention from the unintelligible and idiotic ideas which they concealed. Having a love for collecting old medical books I have dipped a good deal into them. Often, after coming to the bottom of a page, I have read it again, and, if it had been written by any lunatic in Bedlam, it could not have been more absurd or vacuous. The word “ experiment ” was almost unknown. If there arose a question as to whether some particular thing was blue or red, men did not go to find it, and see with their own eyes whether it was blue or red, but they sat in their closets and argued about it. I must admit that, if the doctors of that day were always presented to the public as quacks, they did their best to deserve it. The next thing that is clear is that they were overbearing, greedy, hardhearted quacks. Never once are we shown one of them doing a good or kind action. The doctor is an imposter, whose sole object is to get his fee. That fee he must have, if the wretched patient has to sell the shirt off his back for it. Such, I assert, is the impression which must be conveyed to the mind of anybody, who reads the novels or dramas, or looks at the pictures or caricatures of the seventeenth century. But were all those old doctors like this? No, most certainly not. There were splendid men among them. Look at the names of Morgagni, and Bartholin, and Willis, and Sydenham, and Malpighi, among many others.

These men had as great patience, as keen wits, as unselfish motives, and probably more courageous hearts, than any of our scientific men of to-day. Their labours and discoveries were as great and as important as our own. We are every day making use of their work, just as the twentieth century doctors will make use of ours. But they were in a small minority. Their bright and glorious example had not descended. The rank and file of the profession were still the greedy quacks that Le Sage, and Molière, and the Dutch artists painted.

Molière has been accused of having been too severe upon the doctors of his day, but no ridicule can be too severe when it is employed to expose the humbug and the charlatan. To him, as a profession, we are under an eternal debt of gratitude. As a body we were sick men. His physic was bitter enough in all conscience, but it took hold of the disease and cleansed away many of our impurities.

Turn we now to the picture of to-day. Whatever be the shortcomings and weaknesses which the doctor has, in common with all his fellow-men, they are not now seized upon and savagely caricatured and grotesqued to amuse a jaded public. Nobody makes more fun of us than *Punch*. But his fun is always so genial and good humoured that, when a medico forms the principal figure in one of his pictures, the medicos eagerly buy the paper to enjoy the joke. And when a doctor has done some self-sacrificing bit of heroism, who so ready to sing his praises as our dear old friend *Punch*?

If you go to the theatre you will see that the people like Sir Peter Lund. His brusquerie, his pretended cynicism, and his real tender-heartedness please them. They admire his

honesty and his fearlessness when the moment for decisive action arrives, and they are amused with the keenness and shrewdness which a long acquaintance with men and things has given him.

And finally tell me a picture that has ever appealed more powerfully to the public than Mr. Fildes' great work? Naturally it has had to run the gauntlet of severe criticism: but to attract criticism is in itself a sign of the inherent value of a thing. As to the technical merits of the picture I say nothing. Artists are the proper judges of that. But, when they accuse the painter of false sentiment, I join issue with them at once. To my mind a picture is falsely sentimental when the artist represents in it a scene or situation which does not occur and is consequently unreal, with the object of eliciting our sympathy and our more tender emotions. But the situation represented in "The Doctor" is not an unreal one. It is a painfully common and real one. It is one which occurs continually in our lives. Would that I had some Asmodeus to lift off the roofs of the houses of Great Britain to-night and to take these critics to where life and death are engaged in the final contest for the mastery. They would see to-night—this very night—Luke Fildes' doctor sitting by the bedside watching for every deeper breath, every stronger pulse that might give him hope to go on with the fight. They would see the country doctor in the Highland cottage or the Yorkshire farmhouse. They would see the physician of renown in some great nobleman's palace. They would see the house surgeon in the hospital ward. But, in whatever capacity he might be revealed, of this I am sure, that he would be seen overmastered by the one idea of how to save his patient and how to show himself the gentle comforter of the afflicted

friends. I have just said that we owe much to Molière for lashing out of us the quackery and ignorance that prevailed in his day. But what do we not owe to Mr. Fildes for shewing to the world the typical doctor, as we would all like him to be shewn ;—an honest man and a gentle man doing his best to relieve suffering? A library of books written in our honour would not do what this picture has done and will do for the medical profession in making the hearts of our fellowmen warm to us with confidence and affection.

And now, my dear young friends, we are nearing the end of the nineteenth and you will be the doctors of the twentieth century. Upon you will devolve the responsibility of maintaining that honourable position in the sight of all men which your forefathers have struggled to win for the profession of their choice. You are no longer students of a mere provincial school of medicine. You are members of a college of a university, which, before your days are ended, will have revolutionized education in the north of England. The ground has been prepared and planted and watered, and you are the first fruits. Yours it is to bring forth an abundant harvest of good works not merely for the credit of your profession but for the glory of your alma mater. You must copy the intense industry, the resolute will, the single eyed devotion to science of le Docteur Rameau. You must, like Sir Peter Lund, learn to be wise as serpents, as well as gentle as doves, so that you may bring to bear upon your patients' cases not merely a knowledge of morbid anatomy and drugs, but also a knowledge of the ways of the world and of the inner workings of men's lives. But, above everything, whatever may be the rank in your profession to which you may attain, remember always to hold before you the ideal

figure of Luke Fildes' picture, and be at once gentle men and *Gentle Doctors*.

Ladies and gentlemen, I take my farewell of you in the words with which Molière's president opens the examination function for the Bachelor of Medicine,

Savantissimi Doctores,
Medicinae Professores,
Qui hic assemblati estis ;
Et vos, altri messiores,
Sententiarum Facultatis
Fideles executores.
Chirurgiani et apothecari,
Atque tota compagnia aussi,
Salus, honor et argentum
Atque bonum appetitum.

THE ANNUAL ORATION,
DELIVERED BEFORE THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,
MAY 1ST 1893,

BY

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

I must, in the first place, thank you for the great honour you have done me in asking me to speak here to-night; although it is truly no easy task to address the Medical Society of London in the room which has echoed the wise and eloquent words of Marshall Hall and Humphry, of Hutchinson and Lister and Crichton Browne. That my words can never compare with theirs I know full well, and so I pray that this audience to-night may be merciful and long-suffering towards me.

The best thing that a man can talk about is that which he has most recently and most earnestly been thinking about. I have said—indeed I am vain enough to hope that I have done—some things for the furtherance of medical education;

and, in the course of considering what professional training was best suited for a youth so as to make him a well educated doctor, I have been tempted to go further and enquire into the position of the said doctor as a well educated man. And so to-night, as I am free to choose my subject, I will leave alone strictly professional topics (for these we have always with us) and ask you to take a glance at the relations between our profession and the world of letters.

Are the study and practice of medicine of a nature to attract men to the field of literature? I fear not. Our studies, although almost entrancing in many of their departments, give no play to the imagination. The branches of the femoral artery and the sciatic nerve are, to all intents and purposes, numbered, fixed and immutable. When we are trying to unravel the functions of brain or muscle or gland there must be no rein given to speculative hypotheses—sweet as stolen fruit; there must be no poetic “fancy free” to dazzle and divert our sober reason. The light of science is given forth from the clear, steady-burning lamp of the student, and not from the fiery cresset that flares amid shipwreck and storm, or lightens the skies on nights of glorious and bloody battle. And, when we come to the actual practice of our art, what are we confronted with? With sickness, with pain, with grief, with misery, with death—with so many things that are sad and repulsive, that many a time we have to string up all our inner-man to battle against them. It is often no easy task for the doctor to maintain that amount of cheerfulness, without which his own life would be wretched, without which his patients would be bereft alike of hope and comfort. The temperament so engendered is

certainly not that which will be likely to direct a man's mental footsteps down the sweet, shady alleys of poetry or fiction. And yet, in spite of all that, of the three learned professions—divinity, law, and medicine,—I believe we stand foremost in the number of distinguished literary men, who began life in our ranks.

Need one mention Goldsmith? “The Deserted Village”—that sweetest poem in our language—and “The Vicar of Wakefield” will be read while an English tongue wags in an English head. And there was Akenside—forgotten as physician to St. Thomas' Hospital, unknown as Gulstonian Lecturer and Fellow of the Royal Society, but still remembered and admired as the author of “The Pleasures of Imagination” and of some of the most beautiful pastoral poems imaginable. Sir Samuel Garth, the life-long friend of Pope—the man by whose kindly help the remains of Dryden were borne to their last resting place—was an admirable physician, and no bad poet either. “The Dispensary” sounds a curious title for a poem; but Dr. Johnson said “it was on the side of “charity against the intrigues of interest, and was, therefore, “naturally favoured by those who read and can judge of “poetry.”

We can claim old Crabbe, too—“Nature's sternest painter, yet the best,”—for he was a general practitioner before he became the Duke of Rutland's chaplain. I am delighted to find Crabbe coming again into public favour. Modern poetry is rather like some kinds of modern painting; so much of the symphonist and the impressionist about it, that it passes the wit of the average man to make head or tail of it. But Crabbe's work is like a picture by old Teniers or Van Mieris. It tells its own tale, and its colours are as clear

and brilliant as the day they were laid on the canvas. And if we pass from poetry to prose the name of Smollett is no bad name to conjure by. Day by day a cascade of novels tumbles on the heads of the British public, drenching them with words, words, words. How many of these have the stuff in them to last a hundred and fifty years, and still be fresh and racy, like "Roderick Random" and "Peregrine Pickle" and "Humphry Clinker?" And then there was the handsome, courtly, mirth-loving Arbuthnot, Queen Anne's physician, with whom Swift used to prowl about St. James' arm in arm, and whom he used to talk about in the "Journal to Stella." What fun there is in "Martinus Scriblerus!" while from the "History of John Bull" dates the origin of the conventional Englishman whom *Punch* draws for us now. Pope sadly but gratefully said of him—

"The muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
 "To help me through this long disease, my life,
 "To second, Arbuthnot! thy art and care,
 "And teach the being you preserved to bear,

.

"Oh, friend! may each domestic bliss be thine."

It has been truly said that the name of John Locke is as little associated with the profession of medicine as that of Sir James Mackintosh, who was a practising physician till ambition and poverty made him select a more lucrative vocation and turn his energies to the Bar. But that the great philosopher actually practised medicine at Oxford there is no doubt. Sydenham tells how his method of treating acute diseases had received the approbation of Mr. John Locke, "who had examined it at the bottom, and who, if we
 "consider his genius and penetration and exact judgment,
 "has scarcely any superior and few equals now living." The

present is the day of mental evisceration, the day of the Marie Bashkirtcheffs and similar sentimentalists, who agonize in public and dissect their emotions at so much a paragraph. What a contrast to read the "Religio Medici" of old Sir Thomas Browne and learn from his simple and manly words the secret of the faith that was in him !

If we come nearer to our own time, there was Mason Good, who translated "Lucretius" while tramping the streets of London to visit his patients, and Leyden, the great Oriental scholar, who mastered nearly all the languages of the East and gave to English readers the "Commentaries of Baber;" and there was Dr. Thomas Young, who first deciphered the writings of the old Egyptians, who called to life the dead history of a bye-gone world, and summoned the mummy of an ancient king to tell the story of three thousand years ago; and "Delta" Moir, the country doctor who worked among the fisher folk and colliers of Musselburgh—and adorned the pages of *Blackwood*. Even now we are not without a representative in the world of letters, for have we not still with us, aged in body but alert in mind, the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table?"

In scholarship too, among the older heroes of our craft we are proud to reckon some giants. Linacre, who founded the College of Physicians and was its first President, was probably one of the most learned men of his time. He was the first Englishman who read Aristotle and Galen in the original Greek. I fancy the last must be dead. At any rate, I never met him. Linacre actually taught Greek in the University of Oxford. Both as a scholar and as a physician he ranked so high that Henry the Seventh placed him near himself, and entrusted him with the education

and health of his son Prince Arthur. Just imagine living in the house of Lorenzo de Medici, teaching Sir Thomas More, and having Erasmus for your friend and patient, as he had! And what a famous successor did Linacre have in John Key! Associated with letters not less than with medicine, he raised on the foundation of Gonville Hall that College in the University of Cambridge which bears his name, and in whose chapel lie his bones, with the simple epitaph "Caius fui."

In that delightful book, "The Gold Headed Cane," there is a charming scene, where Radcliffe visits Mead in his library. He says "As I have grown older, every year of "my life has convinced me more and more of the value "of the education of the scholar and the gentleman to "the thoroughbred physician. Perhaps your friend there "(pointing to a volume of Celsus) expresses my meaning "better than I can myself, when he says that the discipline "of the mind *quamvis non faciat medicum, aptiorem, tamen, "medicinæ reddit*"—though it cannot make a man a doctor, it makes him all the better doctor. This was surely a noteworthy saying of a man whose professional life was so successful that his money built the Radcliffe Library, Observatory, and Infirmary at Oxford, and founded the Radcliffe Travelling Scholarships. And it is the more noteworthy because Radcliffe was not much of a scholar himself, insomuch that Sir Samuel Garth said a very funny, if rather severe, thing about him, viz., that the notion of Radcliffe bequeathing his fortune to endow a library, was as if a eunuch were to leave his money to build a harem.

However, gentlemen, when we pay a visit to Oxford or Cambridge, we may cock our beavers as we walk past the

Radcliffe Library or Key's College, and remember that two doctors built them.

Mead, again, who succeeded Radcliffe as President of the College of Physicians, was a most accomplished scholar, and one of the most erudite men of his day. There were few such patrons of learning even amongst the nobility. What meetings those must have been with Pope and Newton and Bentley, in his great library with its ten thousand books, its marble statues of Greek philosophers and Roman emperors, its busts of great English poets, its collections of bronzes, gems, intaglios, Etruscan vases and coins : He made a magnificent income, and he spent it magnificently. After his death it was said of him that, of all the physicians, who had ever flourished, he gained the most, spent the most, and enjoyed during his life the highest reputation not only in England but abroad.

To come down from the intellectual giants of old days to our own time, I think we must frankly admit that the enormous amount of professional knowledge which the modern doctor has to acquire effectually prevents him from rivalling his predecessor of old in the field of general literature. To attempt that would involve raising the sum of our lives from the three score and ten years to the century ;—a thing, by the way, which I firmly believe will come to pass. But while admitting this, have we not been neglecting too much that general learning and varied knowledge (apart from things medical) which are understood to characterize the members of a profession which proudly calls itself a "liberal" one? I fear we have. There never was a time when our calling was held in such high esteem by our fellow-men as now. Never before was the individual doctor

so highly trained and so thoroughly versed in his own special work. But, if you ask me what I think of the accomplishments, the mental culture and the extent of reading of our profession as a body, I am bound regretfully to say that they are not as extensive, not as high as they ought to be. In looking into the reason for this state of matters, it appears to me that three things conspire to account for it. First, there is the very defective school training which boys, destined for our profession, for the most part go through. Secondly, there is the fact that so soon as medical study commences, there comes an interval of five years so enthralling in its claims on the student's brains and time, that it is an absolute blank to him as regards general reading. During that time he loses the habit and the love of it. And, finally, in after life there is the exacting and exhausting nature of our occupation, which too often drags the doctor down to the level of a mere patient-visiting machine. Will you enter with me for a few minutes into these three questions ?

First, then, let us take up the question of inferior school training. This especially exists in England. The youths who elect to join our profession are drawn from the middle class of society. I would go even further, and say that only a certain proportion of them are drawn from the upper middle class. Now, the great majority of these youths have received their education as boys in the private preparatory day schools of their own towns, and I venture to say that, in the whole range of educational institutions from the highest to the lowest, there are none where teaching is so bad as in this class of school. They are conducted by men who have to make their living and their money out of them, and whose first object consequently is to keep down expenses.

The result is that the under masters (or ushers, as they used to be called) are men of a very inferior type, both in education and social position. Furthermore, they have never been taught to teach. In this respect they are all supposed to be inspired or supernaturally gifted. That very sensible people, the Germans, however, don't believe in inspired school-masters, they believe in the science of pædagogy and in the business of teaching the teacher how to teach. The Scotch are credited with being a money-loving people, but it must in fairness be admitted that they have loved learning as well. They tell a story of an old Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who was entertaining some foreign potentate, who enquired what was the chief manufacture of the city. The Provost scratched his head, hesitated, and then blurted out—"Please, your Royal Highness, I think it's just school-boys." Now, as far back as I can remember, there was in Edinburgh a certain Normal School, as it was termed, where young men and women were trained to be teachers. The truth is, that at the present moment the middle-class boy has not even the guarantee for good teaching that the school board boy has got; for not only are the teachers of the latter most carefully prepared for the business of their lives, but the manner of their teaching and the quality thereof are subject to constant and careful inspection. From the lower middle-class day-schools of our great towns I assert that at present we get only an inferior product. I often ask a new dresser to read a report of his case, and, at the end of it, am compelled to say: "Sir, your production is on a par with the letter of the cook to her intimate friend, which winds up with 'this cums hopping.'" And, in truth, to that young gentleman, grammar, capital letters, and stops are of no more moment than vowels

to an etymologist. As for writing out a prescription in full, the Latin gender and genitive case present such insuperable difficulties that Pod. Iod. is about as far as we generally get. Now, it is clear that two persons are to blame in this matter. The first is the teacher, who does not teach the boy thoroughly; the second is the examiner, who does not examine the young man thoroughly. There are certain university entrance examinations in arts for medical students which exact a good amount of knowledge from the candidates; but possessing, as I do, a very intimate acquaintance with the subject, I maintain that, with regard to the examinations for the licensing colleges, there are a vast number of students rubbed through their sieve who ought to have been caught and retained on the way. As to these colleges publishing their subjects and their questions, and offering them to public view as evidence of the high standard of their examinations, I value their printed papers at the value of the paper they are printed on. What I want to see is the answers to their questions. But these are not forthcoming. The General Medical Council, in exacting a five years' course of medical study, has done a very remarkable thing for the advancement of our profession. But, with a uniform five years' curriculum, the method of spending the five years will soon shake itself into shape; and, therefore, the question of the strictly professional studies of the student need not for a long time occupy much thought. What is now wanted is that that Council should look more stringently into the entrance examinations. Let them get hold, not of the question paper of the examiner, but of the answer paper of the examinee, and let them ascertain what the standard really is which passes a man through the portals of our profession.

There is another matter which is telling seriously upon the sound education of our boys, and that is the undue prominence given in the present day to athletics. Now, let me premise by saying that my age and proportions at the present day are hardly such as to justify me calling myself an athlete, nevertheless, I have all my life been a lover of sport and exercise. I was a boxer and an oarsman (aye, and rowed many a good race) when I was a youngster. At a later period I pedestrianised, knapsack on back, over road and mountain and glacier, and now I fish and play golf and ride a bicycle. I have the profoundest belief in the *corpus sanum*. I know that it is the outdoor life and habits of Englishmen that have enabled them to fight and conquer and colonize in every climate in the world, from Hudson's Bay to Ceylon. But it seems nowadays to be forgotten that, after all, the *corpus sanum* is merely the fleshly tabernacle of the *mens sana*. I object strenuously to a boy being encouraged to regard the life of a mere athlete as the highest to which a human being with an intellect can aspire. But at English schools thews and sinews seem to be the only objects of admiration and respect. Brains are out of fashion. Well might the German schoolmaster say that the English boy plays at his work and works at his play. I have asked many a proud mother about her son at some public school and been told with a radiant air, "Oh! he is doing splendidly! getting on *so* well!" This means that he is captain of the school eleven, or has got into the first football team, or is stroke of the school boat. Never by any chance do I hear of the boy's position in his class or form; of his progress in his studies; of the prizes he has gained. In fact, the studious boy is regarded with contempt by the great majority of his

fellows. The very masters have to be athletes. One knows the usual style of advertisement for a junior master : "Must be Church of England, and a good cricketer," like the crack emigrant ship of former days which was advertised to carry a cow and an experienced doctor. I assure you, gentlemen, so little have our students been trained to use their brains as schoolboys that it takes most of them, after they have scraped through an easy preliminary examination, the best part of a couple of years to get into habits of steady, methodical, hard work. As for the fine, handsome, young gladiators turned out by Eton and Harrow and Rugby, the school board boy is ousting them out of the office and the counting-house, while getting into the army nowadays means work. Too often their expensive education is found only to have fitted them to go farming in Manitoba, cattle ranching in Texas, sheep raising in New Zealand, or bar-tending in Australia. The worship of bone and muscle has gone a shade too far in this country. I trust the pendulum has swung to its furthest.

In attacking the schools where our students too often receive their early training, I would have you remember that it is not so much the things that are taught as the manner in which they are taught that I am criticizing. What I complain of is a want of sound, honest, thorough "grounding" in a few things, and an omnipresence of superficial smatterings. Also of a failure to impress the boy with the importance of the fact that upon his early work very generally hangs his whole future life. Also of a tendency to pay attention solely to those boys who evince a natural aptitude and liking for work, while the rank and file, who don't like work, are not whipped up and drilled into it, until they do like it.

As to what a schoolboy should learn, *tot homines quot sententiae*. But I have lived sufficiently long to have seen and watched a great many schoolboys grow into men. As a result I will propound what will doubtless seem to you almost a paradox, viz. :—that if a boy, destined for a profession, were to be taught nothing but reading, writing, and 'rithmetic till he was eleven, and after that nothing but Greek, Latin and mathematics till he was eighteen, at fifty that boy would turn out a more widely cultured, better read man, than, if in his early years, he had been stuffed with geography, history, philosophy and the twopenny-halfpenny fragments of chemistry, botany and zoology which constitute school science. All these things will come to him in time. Let him learn thoroughly the elements and the rudiments.

Let us now turn to point number two :—the blank in the medical student's literary life caused by his curriculum of scientific study. At a time when other young men going into professions are revelling in a delightful freedom from school-boy drudgery, and wandering at their own sweet wills down the nearest and most fascinating glades of literature, the medical student must sit down to five long years of hard and incessant work at science. During that period there is no possibility whatever of his keeping up his general reading. Every hour must be given up to the inexorable necessities of his professional work. Before I began to study medicine I was an omnivorous reader, but so completely did my medical reading crush out of me all desire for general literature, that it was long after I graduated ere the desire for it returned. I had almost to force myself to it. Indeed had I not been thrown into the society of some professional friends, who were men of cultivated tastes and wide

knowledge, the old love might never have come back. On the other hand had I been plunged into a hard, busy general practice, or planted away in a lonely country district, the local newspaper and the weekly medical journal might well have limited my mental horizon. Not for a moment do I mean to say that the varied studies involved in a medical education are not pleasant. They are more than that. They are entrancing. Every day brings fresh delights ; the delights that children experience who ramble on a holiday into some unknown forest. But when they are over, what then ? Then comes practice ; the weary, harassing, often disappointing realities of life. Can the doctor fly for solace and repose for his jaded mind to his student text books ? I trow not. The essay, the review, the poem, the incident of travel, the glamour of history, the romance ; these are the things that for a short, sweet, evening hour or two will carry him into a land where there are no querulous complainings of sick men, no tearful faces of anxious relatives, no thankless words of ungrateful patients.

And this brings us to our third head, the argument that, when the doctor comes home jaded and exhausted with a day of toil, he has neither bodily nor mental strength to sit down to read. But my contention is that, if the doctor has learned to love good books, he will find in them the very thing he needs, rest and comfort such as he cannot get from anything else. If he has lost the love of letters he must force himself back to it. There may—there will be—an effort at first. Nothing that is really excellent is easy to do or to find. It is like a beginner practising scales on a musical instrument ; weary, monotonous drudgery. But after he has patiently mastered these difficulties he suddenly makes the discovery

that he can play tunes, and straightway the whole realm of music lies open to him. And ever after he flies for his chiefest delight to that instrument which at first was so ungrateful and irksome.

I would say, moreover, to those who hold that the life of the average doctor is so engrossing and fatiguing, that the utmost he can do is to read his newspaper and his medical magazine, that there is no necessity to go outside the limits of our own profession to see how erroneous that view is. Look at the men who are our acknowledged leaders. They are, every one of them, men of cultivated minds, who know many things outside of their own special craft. Surely their lives have not been easy ones; lives devoted to hard, professional toil, to laborious scientific research, to the strain of lecturing and teaching. But there is none among them who has not found time to put into the prescription of his daily life, what the old apothecaries used to call the "Corrective and Adjuvant," a good book by the fireside at night. Every wise man feels in his heart that, if he live sufficiently long, a time will come when ambitious toil, and money-getting labour will cease to satisfy. He recognises early the fact that in order to enjoy his old age he must not only have a well lined pocket but a well stored brain. For the Frenchman, La Bruyère, was right when he said that man too often employs the greatest part of his life only to make the remainder miserable.

Ours is, no doubt, a hard and trying occupation, our climate for the most part is dull and depressing, our big towns are gloomy and unlovely, and we are said to take even our very pleasures sadly. Henrich Heine, who never lost an opportunity of venting his spleen at England, nevertheless

worshipped Shakespeare. He called him "The Sun of England." He said, "Shakespeare has, indeed, been a "spiritual sun for that country, where the real sun is "wanting twelve months in the year, for that island of "damnation, that Botany Bay without a southern climate, "that stone-coal-stinking, machinery-buzzing, church-going, "and vilely drunken England." For his charming comparison of the greatest of poets to the sun that lightens up the Englishman's home we may forgive Heine his other savage words. Surely, with Shakespeare and Byron and Tennyson, with Scott and Dickens and Thackeray, with Carlyle and Macaulay and Prescott, even the humblest doctor should be able to draw down some sun into his soul.

Sir John Lubbock, in his own charming way, has always tried to make us look upon our books as our friends. They are, in truth, a man's very best or very worst friends just as he chooses to use them. There are not many men who intentionally cultivate the society of blackguards, and so there are not many who of *malice prepense* set themselves deliberately to read filthy or degrading books. But there are a great many persons who are fond of pleasant, attractive, careless friends; friends who are not too particular about anything, who don't do anything very bad, but who certainly do very little good, whose conversation, though amusing, is trivial, and who, at heart, are untrustworthy and unsatisfying. It seems to me that in literature that sort of friend corresponds to newspapers, trashy novels, and cheap magazines; all pleasant acquaintances in their way, but not good enough to be made the companions of a lifetime. Once a man elects to ally himself with these his literary decadence is ensured. *Noscitur a sociis*. If you find him constantly in their company you will

look round in vain for his bookcase. The *Standard* in a leading article upon Carlyle not long ago had some excellent sentences, as follows:—"It can hardly be supposed that
 "Carlyle, if he were amongst us still, would altogether applaud
 "the social drift of things. He would be no indulgent censor,
 "we imagine, of the tastes which a scrutiny of the registers of
 "books most in demand at public libraries would reveal. An
 "author, who complained because he suspected that the Queen
 "had not studied his own works, would naturally wince at the
 "preference accorded to the lightest of light fiction in books,
 "and the smartest of smart weeklies or magazines. Better the
 "trivalest of your own thoughts, he would say, and the
 "unloveliest of your own imaginings than such pestilent stuff
 "as this. But he would find much on the other side to gratify
 "and reassure. If the proportion of those who fritter away
 "eyesight and such faculty of intellectual attention as they
 "possess on things unprofitable is much greater than could be
 "wished, the number of people to whom study in the proper
 "sense is a delight is enormously larger than it was in the
 "times when he bore his testimony against the low ideals of
 "an untoward generation."

It is an immense pride and pleasure to us to think that of all the learned professions none in late years has advanced—none is advancing—in public estimation so rapidly as ours. Medicine, in place of being the scoff of every would-be wit or poetaster, as it was two centuries ago, is now regarded with astonishment and respect. We are not merely healers of the individual units of the population whom we call our patients. All through the length and breadth of the land medical officers of health stand on guard to ward off infection and pestilence from whole districts and cities.

In the year 1872, at Manchester, that most sagacious and prescient man, Lord Beaconsfield, said these words:—

“In my mind the great social question which should
 “engage the attention of statesmen is the health of the
 “people, for it refers to all those subjects which, if
 “properly treated, may advance the comfort and happiness
 “of man. A very great man and a very great scholar two or
 “three hundred years ago said that he always thought that in
 “the Vulgate that wise and witty king of Israel when he said
 “*Vanitas vanitatum omnia vanitas* should really have said
 “*Sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas*. I am sure that had King
 “Solomon said that, he could not have said a wiser thing.”

But the statesmen of the time, the followers of that *haute politique*, which philosophized about the balance of power and formed petty cabals in the drawing-rooms of the Leo Hunters of the day, contemptuously stigmatized his policy as
 “a policy of sewage.” Over twenty years roll by, and the other day the Marquis of Salisbury went down to Oxford to plead for the Radcliffe Infirmary. He said, “I believe that
 “if you respond munificently to the appeal that is made to
 “you you will do something more than place this infirmary
 “in a position of which it need not be ashamed: you will be
 “taking a long step towards introducing more closely the
 “cultivation of one of the greatest of sciences—the science
 “of medicine—in this ancient university. I always think
 “that science has scarcely received among us all the tribute
 “that it ought to receive among the sciences which rest upon
 “observation. It is the most sober, the most absolute, the
 “most positive among all the sciences. Again, there is no
 “other science which is but another name for a work of
 “mercy; there is no other science that is so closely linked

“with the relief of human suffering, as a remedy for human
 “calamity in its most overwhelming form. It is a curious
 “coincidence, a curious fact, that at this moment the whole
 “tendency of scientific thought appears to be rapidly con-
 “centrating itself upon the fields in which medicine reigns
 “supreme. In the early part of this century the infinitely
 “small or mainly the inanimate portion of creation—the
 “atoms and all that surrounded them—ran supreme in the
 “minds of scientific men. In the middle of the century it
 “was something more delicate still—the discoveries of the
 “spectroscope, and the meaning and interpretation of the
 “infinitely small waves of that light, whose nature we are not
 “yet able to discern. Now, partly under the pressure of
 “human necessity, there is another portion of the infinitely
 “small—the bacilli—which is attracting more and more
 “the attention of the scientific intellect of Europe. It is
 “dangerous always to prophesy, but I do not think anyone
 “who has watched the course of science will doubt that, for
 “a generation to come, the investigation of these creatures,
 “which have been revealed to us by new methods of research
 “and by singularly patient labour, and upon which the lives
 “of millions of human beings depend, will figure larger in
 “the scientific field than any other object of study, and these
 “are the special domain and privilege of medicine.”

Gentlemen, the man who spoke these words in his early
 life followed the profession of letters. In his own magnificent
 home his relaxation is chemistry. He is the head of one
 of the noblest families of the land, and, until recently, he
 was Prime Minister of State. No man in so great a position
 has ever spoken of our profession in terms of such admi-
 ration and respect. To the sailor accustomed to watch with

intensest eagerness the minutest changes of sea and sky, it will often happen that the appearance of the tiniest ripple, the look of a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, are things of profound importance. I regard this speech of Lord Salisbury as full of meaning. It is a recognition in high places of the value of our art to our country at large. We are accustomed at hospital dinners and dispensary bazaars to hear from great noblemen—yea, even from princes of the blood—what good fellows we doctors are. *Mais ça ne fait rien.* It is kindly meant, and we take it kindly. But the speech of Lord Salisbury refers not to our worth as individuals, but to the public value of that profession of which even the humblest private in its ranks is proud: yes, gentlemen, and whose honour he has often died to maintain.

I look forward with confidence to the time when important public duties will fall to the lot of members of our profession, and when many posts of honour and distinction will be filled by them. Even at this moment is not a doctor holding a high and prominent position in the Government of the country—Sir Walter Foster? But, looking forward, as we all must do, to a greater position for medicine in the future than ever she has had before, will it not be incumbent on her followers, more than ever, to shew themselves worthy of her? And the thesis, which I am here to maintain to-night, is that we shall not be worthy of her unless we are something more than mere prescribers of physic and healers of wounds. In my youth, I had it strongly recommended to me to stick to my profession and leave everything else severely alone. The life of a doctor was to see patients, do operations, order drugs, and collect fees. I thank God that I entirely repudiated this idea of my profession. If I had adopted it, I

should never have had the honour of being asked here to-night.

Gentlemen, I hold that an exclusive devotion to the literature and work of our profession is a bad thing for us. It narrows us down. Life becomes made up of "cases." I am quite certain, from my own recollection and experience, that a teacher, who knows nothing but the details of that section of the healing art which he practises, never has the influence over his students that a man of general culture and catholic reading possesses. The latter has more humanity in him. He takes a broader view of affairs. He has learnt that there are other things in heaven and earth than such as can be heard through a stethoscope, or seen through a microscope, or laid bare by a scalpel. And, therefore, I say that this knowledge gives him power over the minds of his students, who irresistibly feel that he is not merely a great doctor, that he is not merely an able teacher, that he is something more; that he is a widely educated man. What shall I say of those who do the general work of our calling? Some there are literally earning their bread by the sweat of their brow among the poor of our overgrown cities; some there are toiling in the blackness and darkness of mining or manufacturing villages; some there are braving the storm, the rain, the frost on the bleak roads of a wild, country practice. To these men, if they would but learn to love reading, a solitary shelf of well-picked books would alone be enough to lighten and sweeten their lives.

Some fourteen years ago a very clear-headed, commonsense, worldly-wise doctor, Milner Fothergill, wrote some very hard things about the social status of our profession, which he said was not equal to that of others. He unfortunately gave

utterance to some remarks which were scarcely justifiable in the phraseology in which he put them. And so there fell upon him a terrible host of gentlemen, who wrote furious small print letters in the medical journals denouncing him as a traitor to his colours—a bird fouling his own nest. On account whereof Fothergill for a while was very unpopular with that variety of inferior practitioner who is always so exquisitely sensitive about the dignity of his profession. But I remember very well that the impression left upon me was that the furious letter-writers quite lost sight of the general bearing of Fothergill's just and courageous remarks, and lashed themselves into a fiery indignation solely on account of a few indiscreet sentences which he had suffered to break loose. Now, I maintain that he was in the main right. To become a gigantic mutual admiration body is a mistake. There can be nothing worse for us than to be ignorant of our weak places, and the man who, like Fothergill, points them out to us is certain to be a thousand times more keenly alive to the real dignity of our profession than the vulgar persons who boast so much about it and add so little to it. By mere virtue of our profession we do not rank socially with other professions. The most callow curate with his Oxford B.A., the youngest sub-lieutenant of a marching regiment or a gunboat who wears Her Majesty's uniform, "Mr. Junior" of the bar mess—by mere virtue of his cloth is taken into any drawing-room in the land. It cannot be said that this is the case with the doctor. His profession alone will not take him anywhere. He has to make his social position for himself. That he can do so and that he can hold his own with anyone

is apparent everywhere. Nay, I will go further, and say that no man commands more social respect than the man who is a well-bred, well-read doctor. His education covers a great range of subjects, and embraces more than that of other professions. It makes him a more entertaining and companionable friend, a more valued and respected guest. Even the querulous Pope said of us, "They are in general "the most amiable companions and the best friends, as well "as the most learned men I know." So much the more reason then why our whole profession, down to the youngest graduate, should be men of such good general culture that their company should be welcomed not merely by the the rich (for of these I make little account), but by all those whose well-trained minds, whose liberal ideas and whose refined manners constitute them the true society of our country.

The other day I went to pay a visit to one of my oldest and kindest medical friends. For half a century he laboured in general practice, and retired some seven or eight years ago with a modest but sufficient competence. I found him, at eighty, not strong, but upright in carriage, with hearing perfect and an eye that can read the smallest print. When I came in upon him in the afternoon two or three old friends were taking tea with him, and merry grandchildren were bringing him his cup and his plate. I went with him after a while to have a chat and a cigar in his study. I knew him always as a reader, and so I was not surprised to find "Joseph Andrews" lying on the table, nor to hear him say that he was just going through Fielding again, and that the

oftener he read him the more he enjoyed him. We talked about friends and old times and practice and many things beside, but we got back eventually to reading, and his last words were—"Not for a thousand a year would I lose my love of reading."

Gentlemen, when we come to eighty, may the evening of our days, like that of my old friend, be made supremely happy by troops of friends and the love of good books.

