

The annual address to the candidates for degrees and licenses, in the Medical Institution of Yale College, January 19, 1848 / [Josiah Gale Beckwith].

Contributors

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DR. BECKWITH'S ADDRESS

TO THE

CANDIDATES


FOR

DEGREES AND LICENSES,

IN THE

MEDICAL INSTITUTION OF YALE COLLEGE,

JANUARY 19, 1848.



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THE
ANNUAL ADDRESS
TO THE
CANDIDATES
FOR
DEGREES AND LICENSES,
IN THE
MEDICAL INSTITUTION OF YALE COLLEGE,
JANUARY 19, 1848.

BY JOSIAH GALE BECKWITH, A. M., M. D.,

MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS.

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1848.

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A D D R E S S .

As the appointed organ of this Board of Examination, it becomes my duty to address you on this *momentous* occasion—to congratulate you, that the ordeal of your examination for admission into the ranks of our profession, is now passed; and it gives me pleasure to say, in a manner highly satisfactory to the Board, honorable to yourselves and your instructors, and worthy of the Institution, whose ample benefits you have enjoyed, and which in return is now about to confer upon you the highest honors known to the profession.

This day will, therefore, stand out in its attendant circumstances, in “bold relief,” as an *era* in your lives, a *crisis* in your very existence. This day, you are admitted into the ranks of a learned, liberal, and time-honored profession; and receive from this venerable University, this crowning seal of her approbation in the degree which she confers upon you, which will enrol your names on her imperishable annals, with her other illustrious sons, whose history is the history of our country from the commencement of her colonial existence, through all the “days of the republic,” and will go down to the end of time.

This day, you meet for the last time, those able and scientific professors, by whom you have been taught the great principles of our art, and those lessons of wisdom which they themselves have gathered in their several departments, from the wide fields of practice, which they fill with such distinguished ability. Here, also, you meet, for the last time, those loved com-

panions of your toils and your studies, with whom you have enjoyed day-dreams of future happiness, arrayed in all the loveliness and beauty, which hope can paint, and fancy suggest, in warm and enthusiastic minds, when futurity is veiled in the illusive hues of distance.

These chains which bind you together, refined and elevated as they are by the pure and exalted nature of your pursuits, may be severed, but never broken. Like the veteran soldier, who glows with enthusiasm, as he recounts the martial deeds of his youthful days, when he fought for his altars and his liberty; so will you look back to this day as a green spot "in the barren waste of memory," whose mellow and beautiful tints, neither the sad realities of the world, nor the endless cares and perplexities of professional life, can ever obliterate, but on which she will fondly linger, and by bringing up the joys which gilded the past, banish a host of impending sorrows.

It is a day which will exert an influence scarcely less than tremendous, upon your own destiny and that of thousands of the human family; and ought, therefore, to be devoted to the establishment of such principles of action, and such a course of moral conduct, as will enable you successfully to accomplish the great designs of Heaven in your creation, rendering you objects of our pride, and securing to yourselves rich rewards and unfading honors, in the extensive fields of usefulness and fame, which are spread out before you.

We now receive you as equal competitors in the ranks of a profession as noble as talents, genius and life can be consecrated to; originating in instinctive impulses, prompting to the relief of human suffering, and to the mitigation of misery and wretchedness in the world.

Had man remained in a state of primeval happiness, and had he possessed an eternal and unconditional lease of those fields of Paradise in which he was created, retaining the "undimmed image" of his Creator, physically, morally and intellectually perfect, "the goodliest man of men since born," such a profession as ours could never have existed. But when this legal

representative of his race, by his disobedience, brought down upon his posterity a malediction which still presses upon the world with undiminished rigor, and unmitigated severity, and disease and death "and all our woes" became the legitimate inheritance of fallen man; he looked about him for relief from the dark and forbidding prospect which was before him—some agency to alleviate pain—make his existence endurable, and perpetuate his species. He found it in our profession, which is thus co-eval with the history of our fallen race, and was intended by the great Supreme, to furnish to physical man the same relief which he promised in a "Saviour to the moral world."

Man seems, in the ante-deluvian period of his eventful history, to have attained astonishing longevity; for when centuries had rolled over him, he still existed, despite the death-sentence which had been pronounced upon him.

But from various causes, ever since those days of patriarchal simplicity have passed away, man seems to have been constantly contracting the "brief span" of his existence, and adding to the fearful catalogue of his maladies, until the earth which he inhabits, has become one vast cemetery, within which repose the bodies of uncounted millions of mankind; and every breeze which salutes our ear, is loaded with fresh victims of suffering humanity.

The experience of more than six thousand years establishes this important fact, that a class of men have ever been regarded as necessary to "ward off the stroke of death," (if it might be averted,) to relieve pain and misery in the world, and to smooth the descent to the grave. In the early ages of the world, the priesthood was supposed to be clothed with superhuman agencies; and they were alike employed to minister to the physical, as well as the moral maladies of mankind. It was supposed that they held intercourse with the powers of the invisible world; and from the belief that our profession came from Heaven, it was termed the "Divine art." In the legends and traditions of those ancient times, anterior to the legitimate eras of medical history, we find our profession embodied in distin-

guished individuals, whose biography was the history of the profession, in the times in which they existed, mixed with the superstitions of the age; and although our profession was known for centuries before, we regard Hippocrates as the founder of medicine; for he embodied its rules of practice, and established it on the fundamental principles of observation by hypothesis. This form it retained for nearly two thousand years. Within a few centuries, it has been established on a foundation more permanent. We have rejected hypothesis, and now regard our profession "as an assemblage of facts, ascertained by observation. These may be combined into systems; or for the sake of clearness and method, generalized under some form of theory."

We observe, that even in those early times, our profession was established on a foundation which succeeding ages has ascertained was nearly correct; yet we are informed, that the illustrious Greek who immortalized himself by the great improvements which he introduced in medicine, was so ignorant of the anatomical structure of the human subject, that he applied the same name to tendons, arteries, and veins. It becomes an interesting subject of investigation, to ascertain the causes which deprived the world of that fundamental knowledge of the anatomy of physical man, which lies at the foundation of all scientific practice in medicine and surgery. Were the intellectual powers circumscribed? We answer, no. So far from this, on recurring to those early ages, we observe the "Prince of Poetry" inscribing on his parchment those sublime and enchanting lines, which have animated the soul, concentrated the thoughts, and charmed the imagination of all succeeding time. We hear the "Father of Oratory" arousing the most timid of his countrymen, and stimulating them to deeds of heroic valor and matchless bravery. We see painting and sculpture, in forms of life and beauty, giving to the leading spirits of the age "forms that breathe," and tongues that speak; while genius and taste have exhibited in broken columns, and splendid ruins

of colossal greatness, standards of unrivalled grandeur and architectural beauty and perfection.

But we find, that even in the golden age—the age of literature, of poetry, eloquence, and the fine arts—the fundamental principles of our profession lingered in the shades of ignorance, from which originated superstition, whose twilight shades still linger in the meridian splendor of the nineteenth century. It was superstition which made it sacrilege to examine into the structure of the human body, watching with sleepless eye the sepulchral gate, and thus deprived the world of the only fundamental knowledge of our noble and useful science—fettered the mind, and paralyzed the energies of the leading medical men of the age. At length there arose some bold and fearless spirits, impelled with the true spirit of liberty, which emanated from true philosophy and the christian religion, who broke the fetters of mental bondage, and placed our profession on a correct basis. *So it has ever been*; medical science, true philosophy and religion, have ever been found together, in the darkest periods of man's eventful history; they have been driven into the mountains, where they have gleaned together; into deserts and caves, where they have reposed side by side; and again they have issued forth from their retirement, and the shackles have fallen from the human mind, and the world has been blessed and renovated by their life giving influences.

But it is not my intention to give you the early history of our profession, nor to dwell upon the distinguished merits, nor present the claims upon your gratitude, of such men as Hippocrates, Vesalius, Galen, Celsus, Boerhaave, and others, whose names are suspended in our medical history, as resplendently “as if they sparkled in the constellations of the heavens.” Is it not surprising, that they succeeded so well, when the surgeon had no Anatomy, and the physician had no extended *Materia Medica*? But I intended merely to glance at those causes which have retarded the progress of medicine, and operated so disastrously upon its prospects and influence, in all ages of its eventful history. Ignorance, bigotry, and superstition, a

triple unholy alliance, always found together, destructive alike to the happiness of man, in his individual, social and national character—these are the causes which have yielded to the antagonizing influences of learning, true philosophy, and religion. But a brighter day, and more glorious prospects, have dawned upon the medical profession, for which we are indebted to the great improvements in all the arts and sciences. The establishment of medical schools—legalized dissections—the organization of medical societies—a prescribed term of studies and an examination for licenses and degrees—the general diffusion of knowledge—these have given to the illimitable mind an impetus which is constantly developing results wonderful and astonishing.

In what an astonishing age do you commence your professional career! Never did the sun shine upon such an eventful period in the history of man. The wildest visions of the Poet are more than realized. The great improvements in steam, in its application to the mechanic arts—to the printing press—to navigation upon the ocean, bringing continents in juxtaposition,—the rapid communication by rail roads, in bringing together the ends of the earth,—the instantaneous communication, which annihilates time and space, by electricity—are all within your recollection, and so familiar have we become with astonishing results, that we cannot estimate their influence upon the world. When the immortal Franklin arrested the unchained lightning in its destined course, the halls of science and philosophy were astonished and bewildered. But we have gone much farther; we have not only disarmed it of its deadly power, and sent it to convey to the ends of the earth, as by nervous communication, the transactions of this present moment; but we have made it an agent in subduing disease—made it useful in the arts, and chained it to the car of human improvement; yet all is received as a matter of course, and excites no special wonder, so familiar are we with astonishing phenomena. In it printing and steam have found a coadjutor; and their combined influence upon the world cannot yet be realized.

These momentous circumstances of the age, to which we have briefly alluded, and the impetus which our profession has received from these various sources, while a cause of thanksgiving, will also require from you a proportionate degree of attainment, not only to satisfy the present high demands of public expectation, but to meet the increased demands of future time—that future so prolific in consequences to you, on which you depend for all your professional eminence, and your moral greatness.

Already has an “American Medical Association” been fully organized, for the express object of carrying out these expectations of the public mind, by largely increasing the preparatory requisitions for admission into the profession, by requiring a knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, an extended course of study and lecture terms, and greater purity of morals. These recommendations have already been promulgated, and made the basis of action in our State Medical Societies; and will soon produce an accession to the profession, worthy of your competition.

But the object of my address, is not merely to congratulate you on having auspiciously passed the “vestibule of the temple of Esculapius;” but to exhibit the moral dignity and elevation of the profession—the education, habits and principles, which its nature, and dignity, as well as public sentiment, require of those who aspire to a commanding eminence, and great usefulness, as physicians—and the certain rewards which will come from successful labors in alleviating the miseries of your fellow men; which if not realized in this present life, will be in a future state of existence.

This moral dignity and elevation are evident from the nature of man, who is subjected professionally to your power, and on whom you are to exert your skill. Man, the entire man, is to be the great subject of your operations—man, who was formed in the image of God—the best, the noblest, the crowning work of creation—constituted by the Great Supreme, with his erect, dignified, and commanding form, to be lord and sovereign of

the earth. On his brow sit deliberation and care; on his countenance are impressed, in lineaments of life, the passions of his soul, the glow of fancy, the fervor of imagination, the smile of joy, the exhilaration of hope, the mildness of benevolence, the tenderness of sympathy,—in short, the whole character of the individual. Well might the immortal poet of nature exclaim—"What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in actions, how like an angel! in apprehension how like a God! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!"

This mysterious and wonderful being is the subject of your study and investigation—the entire man, in his physical, moral, and intellectual character. Other learned professions regard him as the subject of duties and obligations regulated by laws human and divine—contemplate him as an accountable being—and they act as tutors and governors in preparing him for usefulness in this world, and happiness in another state of existence. You are to notice man in his physical structure, in which you behold the beautiful symmetry, order, arrangement, and proportions of the several parts, and the perfect adaptation of this whole system to his wants, his convenience, his pleasures and his happiness. His body is material, subject to disease, decay and death, but animated by a mysterious principle, which we call life—a principle "self-sustaining, self-continuing, self-acting," immaterial, undecaying and deathless; on the withdrawal of which, this structure of beauty, design, and strength, crumbles into dust. A perfect knowledge of anatomy is to the surgeon, what the magnetic needle is to the mariner: it guides him safely through the most difficult and intricate operations, inspiring the operator with calmness, and the patient with confidence. It likewise conducts the physician through the complicated labyrinths of disease, to the organ which requires relief; and thus enables him to prescribe the remedy, which restores the balance of the system. How wonderful the art, which can keep in equilibrium so wonderful a mechanism, through such a great length of time—when the smallest insect may destroy

life, so nice is the adjustment of parts, that the slightest derangement produces, confusion, disorder, and death!

It is conceded that the throne of intellect occupies the most elevated portion of the body, as every other portion has been insensible, and the mind has been enthroned in strength, so long as its citadel was safe. In his intellectual character, man is a reasonable and rational being; but, as the authorized agent of the Almighty, in governing the earth, he wields weapons of such tremendous power, that he can produce a panic through the civilized world. When in the execution of God's will, he brings together his armed legions, and by the engines of destruction which he has invented, he batters down the munitions of rocks, the Gibaltars of defence, destroys nations, and writes his name, to be read by after ages, in the blood of the slain. He soars above the loftiest mountains in ærial cars of his own invention, is lost among the clouds of heaven, and returns in safety to the earth. He has made the pathless ocean his safe highway. He has arrested and directed the swift lightning in its course. By the power of his genius in poetry, in history, in works of taste and imagination, in painting and sculpture, he has transmitted a transcript of himself, to be exhibited through all time. By the powers of his eloquence, he exerts a mighty influence in the forum, the senate chamber, and the pulpit, and controls the destinies of nations. Not satisfied with the earth, he attempts to scan the works of the Almighty, and revels in the secrets of futurity. With telescopic eyes, he unveils the heavens, examines the stars, and calls them by their names; calculates their magnitude and revolutions; and talks familiarly of the ways of Him who clothes the earth with verdure, and garnishes the heavens with beauty. Such are only a part of the intellectual powers which man wields; but enough to exhibit the dignity of a profession, to whom is committed their healthy action.

These intellectual faculties, while occupying their throne in the material man, can be possessed in their integrity and perfection, only while the functions of the system are in a healthy

state. If the brain either is the seat of disease, or suffers by sympathy with other diseased organs, the mind, with its astonishing energies, is more or less incapacitated. It is the province of the surgeon and physician to relieve the physical disorder, and thus restore the mind. By such means, even when reason is driven from her throne, she is often re-instated in her dominion. This faculty to make deductions and draw inferences, which we call reason in man, is common in other animals, but conscience is the prerogative of man alone, to act as a minister in keeping him in the path of duty, and controlling his actions and moral conduct. This important part of man is more or less influenced by the physical system, and can only be relied upon as a sure guide, when this is in a healthy condition. You will often be consulted professionally by men who are suffering from the indulgence of habits ruinous to health and the mind, and thus destructive to the happiness of the individual and his family. You, in your professional character, can give advice, which relieves you from moral responsibility, and may emancipate your patient from the thralldom of a pernicious habit, and restore a valued life, and useful citizen to his family and the community. The great importance of the intellectual powers and moral sentiments, the investigation and remedial care of which are the province of medicine, confers upon the profession a moral dignity and importance, scarcely inferior to any other.

A duty which devolves upon you, as members of a liberal and dignified profession, is to sustain in your individual characters, a reputation for learning, science, and moral courage. The profession is made up of individuals, every one of whom contributes either to elevate or degrade its character and influence with the public. We cannot suppose you ignorant of the orthography and grammatical construction of your own language. Such a deficiency in your preparatory studies, would arouse a suspicion in the public mind, that you are also deficient in a fundamental knowledge of the great principles of your art. Let those branches of study which lie at the very threshold of

education, and all their collateral branches, even now receive attention, if they have been neglected.

You, gentlemen, now become public men, and the common property of the profession and the world. How necessary is it that you fully understand all those important departments of knowledge, which the profession appropriates to itself, and the world concedes to it! You have been styled the "Missionaries to civilized man," and the great teachers of mankind. "Can the teacher be ignorant?" It is not an available argument for you, that there have been great men in the profession, who by a native energy of character, an armor and drapery peculiarly their own, have overcome obstacles insurmountable to men of ordinary capacities, and even attained a commanding eminence in the profession. You are to expect such distinction only by untiring industry, intense application, and laborious research. It is an admitted fact, that while the profession which you have selected, furnishes ample scope for men of the most gigantic minds, yet it does not require supernatural powers; but men of ordinary powers of intellect, well cultivated and disciplined to habits of discrimination and judgment, have made themselves useful, and even eminently distinguished. Do not rest satisfied with your attainments, however extensive they may be. Your studies have but just commenced, and if you are true to your own interests, and your obligations to your fellow men, they can end only with your active life. Improve the opportunities which are offered you, during the first few years of professional life, to prosecute your studies. A just and realizing sense of the obligations which devolve upon you, as guardians of the public health, will stimulate you in the pursuit of knowledge, which "is power" in your hands.

Young men have some obstacles to encounter, which are incident to them only, in our profession; and which they can, in no way, so well overcome, as by great promptitude and strict punctuality in the discharge of their professional engagements. Let the public be jealous of your merits, suspicious of your ability, and watchful of your success; it will only render more apparent,

and bring out in more striking contrast with your more careless and unfortunate rivals and competitors, the skill and tact which you exhibit, and the successful results of your practice. Fortunately for you, there is in all communities, a class of patients, who have exhausted the skill and patience of the older members of the profession; and are always ready to give employment to the young aspirants for patronage. Their cases are usually incurable, but admit of some relief, and furnish you an opportunity to make yourself known to the community. Your efforts to relieve their wants and sufferings, will often secure you the continued patronage of families of respectability and influence.

Although accident, or a fortunate coincidence of circumstances, may lay the foundation of an extensive and lucrative practice, yet you are to depend upon nothing short of superior skill, determined energy, and indomitable perseverance in the discharge of all your duties, with a uniform, consistent, and manly conduct, for permanent success and eminence. Continued effort is required to meet the increasing expectations of the public; for it has been well said, that there is such a thing as "having more reputation than you can sustain." Never therefore, allow yourself to make a prescription without the greatest circumspection and care; for you may blunder into difficulty, but seldom into eminence.

No young man ought to offer himself as a candidate for employment, who has not seen practice, previously, under the eye of an experienced physician. There is a practical knowledge of the duties of our profession, which can only be attained in the sick room; and an ignorance of which, will often render abortive the attempts of a young physician to succeed in any location he may make, however advantageous it may be. You had better labor without pecuniary compensation, for a few years, with some veteran in the service, than to commence practice without such knowledge. Confidence in your own skill will not secure you the confidence of the public, as a safe medical adviser: commit a fatal error, and with a loss of public

confidence, you lose your peace of mind forever. This practical knowledge of your duties will enable you, under all circumstances, to *act* coolly, promptly, and if needful, efficiently. No matter how appalling an aspect a case may present; let others tremble and exhibit fear—you are to retain your presence of mind, and calm and collected sustain your patient's hopes, and allay his fears, until the crisis is over. A young man may thus, from the intellectual energy and moral courage, exhibited in the management of a single case, so favorably impress the community, as to lay the foundation of a good reputation, and extensive usefulness.

Remember that it is moral greatness, which commands the spontaneous homage of the world. Kings, emperors, and even tyrants, who have filled the world with their power, have been awed by the presence, and cowered under the withering reproof of an honest man, armed with intellectual power, firmness and goodness of heart. These qualities, with cultivated taste, are chief elements of moral greatness; and no man should attempt to discharge the high duties of our profession, without a good share of these attributes of character. If thus distinguished, your patients will feel honored by your visits, your sayings will become proverbs, and no one will dare question the correctness of your opinions; while if your reputation is limited, they will feel entitled to your gratitude for giving you employment.

When duly prepared for all the active duties of your profession, the question of location will arise, which may embarrass you. But having the power of loco-motion, if your first location disappoints your expectations, remove to another. You will carry with you the experience already attained, which will be a passport to the confidence of many, who would reluctantly become the first patients, for the trial of your skill. There is presented to your view a boundless continent, exhibiting a variety of claims to your attention. If you wish for an unoccupied location, a new country, with new inhabitants, go to the far west, the extreme border of civilization; and soon villages and cities will spring up around you. If the densely populated

towns of the atlantic, or middle states, or the crowded city, are more congenial to you views, you will find no ground unoccupied, but must expect to meet with competition. Select such a location as suits your habits and taste, provided there is a reasonable prospect of success, and if deserving of the public confidence, you will soon find employment. The rapid increase of population ; the changes constantly going on in society ; the march of the the great leveller, who does not spare even those who are entrusted with the lives of the people, but bears away alike him who has just commenced a career of usefulness, and the veteran in the cause of afflicted humanity, thus leaving the places of human life to be successively filled, "as wave succeeds wave"—all these causes will make ample room for you.

But the public expect from you costly sacrifices—the pleasures and comforts of home, the society of friends, political preferment, and every thing incompatible with a full and unreserved surrender of yourself to the active duties of your profession. You must encounter with cheerfulness, cold and watching, fatigue and hunger, the midnight darkness, and the "pitiless storm ;" and often, when exhausted nature demands repose, and you fondly imagine an hour has come for rest, suddenly you will be hurried away to brave anew the storm and tempest, with the desolation of the midnight hour, to give to others the relief and repose which you so much need yourself. Can wealth adequately compensate you for such hard services ? These sacrifices are often made for those who have not wealth to bestow. Can the love of applause, the approbation of your fellow men, furnish you with motives ? These missions of benevolence are often undertaken, when no eye but that of Omnipotence is upon you. No ; gentlemen, your profession has no earthly rewards, which can adequately compensate for the toils and privations of your self denying, self sacrificing calling. The most faithful and devoted servant to his profession, often wears out a long life in the public service, and dies in poverty, leaving his family dependant on the cold charities of the world. But he dies in peace—"he meets his summons like one who wraps the drapery of

his couch around him and lies down to pleasant dreams." Conscious of having never shrunk from the faithful performance of his duty to frail erring man—he has the "unwavering assurance," that he has a "record on high," which he would not exchange for the legacy of countless worlds. Your rewards are not confined to this world; but belong more properly to another. Human life, protected by the sanction of human and divine laws, is committed, under God, to your keeping. You are responsible to your consciences, and to your Maker, for the manner in which you shall discharge your obligations. Human laws can take cognizance only of outward acts; but if through your ignorance or negligence, life is sacrificed, though you might not be convicted on human testimony, at the bar of conscience, and at the tribunal of eternal justice, you are guilty.

In the discharge of professional duty, you will sometimes be placed under circumstances of great responsibility, when called upon in courts of justice, to give testimony in cases involving the rights, the privileges, and lives of individuals, as in questions of legitimacy, idiocy, and lunacy, and on trials for murder, and other crimes. You should be prepared to give accurate and definite testimony, in exposition of the medical principles involved in the case, in language divested of ambiguity and technical terms, bearing in mind always, that the public and the individual both have rights, which are sacred. With consequences you have nothing to do: yet by your fearless, impartial, and learned opinions, you will protect the innocent and really insane, on the one hand, and on the other, sustain the majesty of the law.

In your private practice, you must expect to meet with cases trying to your sensibility, and causing you deep anxiety, when, notwithstanding all your skill and fidelity, the disease is unchecked, and the remedies, selected with care and administered with discretion, prove powerless. On the result are suspended the hopes and prospects of relatives and friends. Perhaps your patient is a son on whom an aged father and helpless mother rely for their only stay and support, in the twilight shades of

life—or “the only son of his mother, and she a widow”—a father to whom a large and helpless family look for daily subsistence—a statesman in the midst of his years, to whom the nation look for counsel—or the honored man, and devoted minister of religion, who breaks to his people the bread of life, and watches for their spiritual welfare and immortal interests. Such will be among the most trying occasions of your life. You must meet them by a firm reliance on that Almighty Being, who by the wise dispensations of his providence, secures to himself, our respect, admiration and confidence. On such occasions never despair, and render a fatal termination certain, when it is your duty to nurture hope—that hope, which is always written on the manacles of the captive, on the walls of the dungeon, and also on the walls of the sick chamber. Often in the darkest hour, light breaks and dispels the gloom of night, and your patient arises to life as it were from the grave.

Under circumstances of great responsibility, the public ask for the counsel of your professional brethren—for a division of responsibility with an older and more experienced practitioner. Your interest and your reputation require a cheerful acquiescence in a request so reasonable, in a matter so important. If your councilor is worthy of your confidence, he will give you character and influence with the family, and in the event of an unfortunate termination of the case, preserve your reputation uninjured. It is expected, that even when you are certain of a fatal result, you will manifest your sympathy by a continued attention to your patient, in performing the last sad duties of friendship and humanity, when he is insensible to your kindness, and medicine can no longer avail him.

But this obligation to counsel with your brethren in good standing, does not require you to extend this deference to empiricks. You cannot hold professional intercourse with them without degradation. Treat them with silent disapprobation. Quackery has been elevated by the direct and coercive measures taken to suppress it. The public have been impressed with an opinion, that there is really something in it, of which we are jeal-

ous. The fact is otherwise. There may be good things in hydro-pathy, homeopathy, and other partial systems. Their remedies are all those of the regular physician; but he does not rely upon them, to the exclusion of others, and often more appropriate remedies. But the devoted adherent to a partial system or a secret preparation of medicine—the *one idea* practitioner—recommends his system or nostrum as infallible in every case. The deductions of the educated physician are general and comprehensive, while those of the empirick are particular and circumscribed. You cannot, without compromising the dignity, learning and usefulness of your profession, counsel with the empirick, however much educated men in other professions may countenance and sustain him. Let the reverend clergy profane their sacred calling, and learned “judges sully the purity of their ermine,” by publishing to the world certificates of the wonderful and mysterious effects of a secret pill—or by patronizing the exclusive devotees of lobelia, infinitesimal doses, or cold water—let grave senators, and wise legislators disgrace the statute book, by an attempt to elevate ignorance and empiricism to the standing and dignity of a learned and liberal profession. Such prostitution of the clerical and legal professions, and legislative bodies, are unworthy of the genius and intelligence of the age.

If *learning* confers no benefit upon our profession, banish it; and what is the result? You will roll back upon society, the degradation of former times. You bring back the superstitions of the dark ages. You shroud in the mantle of night, effulgence which has dawned upon the profession, from the labors of such devoted men as Hippocrates, Boerhaave, Celsus, Hunter, Haller, Bell, and a worthy host of others.

Abolish these schools of medical instruction—these great arteries, which carry through the whole system, to its very extremities, the influences which invigorate, nourish, and sustain the whole medical body, diffusing the latest improvements in medicine and surgery—and the whole system would languish. The great fountains of medical knowledge would cease to send forth those healthful streams, which carry joy and gladness to

every habitation in the land. Improvements would be arrested in their onward march, and the whole circle of the arts and sciences (of which "they are the trustees,") would droop, and wither, and die.

Destroy the arts and sciences, and you complete the desolation. You destroy the fireside comforts of every domestic hearth; you rob your table of its daily pleasures; you obstruct the rays of light, which bring cheerfulness into your parlors; you are no longer furnished with the beautiful garments of summer, nor the more substantial defences against the piercing cold of winter. The husbandman would feel the deprivation of the necessary implements for the cultivation of his fields, the mechanic in his work-shop would feel the loss of his tools, and the mariner, in his vessel freighted with human life, could no longer traverse the ocean with safety. Every department of commerce, manufactures, and enterprise, would feel the blighting, desolating, paralyzing influence; for they are all deeply indebted to the arts and sciences. You would throw the oblivious pall over the proudest monuments of human genius. Our social fabric, and our political institutions, would fall an easy prey to the exterminating "Goth and the ruthless Vandal."

But have we over-estimated the influence which our profession exerts upon the world, in upholding and sustaining the social fabric, and our existing institutions? If so, banish it, and with it, as a consequence, the sympathies which it fosters—the kindness which it manifests in the hour of man's greatest calamity, the hour of sickness and death—the disinterested benevolence which it dispenses, under a kind providence, to all classes of the community—and the relief which it carries to the lowest depths of suffering humanity.

Where yon hospital points its spires to heaven, and attracts the sick and friendless stranger to find repose and relief, let the care-worn and decrepid parent find on the "cold lap of earth" his last resting place, with no pillow to support his head in death; "without a shelter from life's storms, or a covert from its tempests;" with no "angel almoner of pitying Heaven" to

administer to his stern necessities; no minister of religion to point him "to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world," and to direct his expiring hopes to a bright inheritance beyond the grave. Let his helpless children find no pitying eye, or sympathetic tear; but let cold, unfeeling desolation hold uncontrolled dominion. Such would be a faint outline of suffering humanity, in those dark and benighted regions, where our profession, and the kindred sympathies of our religion, exert no salutary influence.

So familiar have mankind become with the benefits and blessings which our profession confers upon the world, that they almost cease to consider their proper source. Look, then, for manifestations of these effects in new fields of practice. Go with me, and visit that great people who have separated themselves from the rest of mankind, being a world of themselves—a proud and mighty nation, who look down from their supposed elevation which they have misnamed "celestial," upon all other nations of the earth. In that region, proudly exulting in the superiority of its language, its literature, and its antiquity, you find a graduate of your own Alma Mater, overcoming those ancient prejudices—hitherto insurmountable obstacles—by the simple operations of modern surgery. On yonder walls are suspended the delineations of his operations. With what astonishment and delight did they view him, giving eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and restoring the death-stricken to life and usefulness! Never, either in the traditions of their fathers, or in their ancient or modern histories, had they heard or read of such exhibitions of God-like power. It has proved an engine of tremendous power, in demolishing that stupendous wall of separation, which has, for so many ages, encircled that immense population, in despotism and inveterate superstition. But by its influence, her teeming millions are now beginning to rejoice in the larger liberty of religious toleration.

A profession which claims such moral dignity, and which holds in trust the issues of life and death, must necessarily demand unsullied purity of life and character, with a sense of ac-

countability to a superintending Providence, in every individual member, who would discharge its sacred duties with acceptance to the public. Can the mysterious fire of human existence be entrusted with safety to the keeping of him, who declares that "there is no God," and that "death is an eternal sleep;" and who would erect as a superscription over the cemetery—" *Fields of Repose?*" What security does he give, that he will watch with unceasing vigilance, and with all the abilities of which he is possessed, that valuable life committed to his care? How is it in other professions? The lawyer with whom you entrust your property, must be a man of responsibility, or he must give bonds for the trust reposed in him. But the physician can give no security adequate to the invaluable deposit committed to his keeping. Nor can he be brought before any earthly tribunal for punishment, except in manifest cases of mal-practice. The public must, therefore, find their security in his integrity, and his belief in a future state, and the retributions of eternal justice.

But there has been an impression in the public mind, that the study or practice of our profession causes a tendency to infidelity. Let us look at this subject; for it is a matter of great importance, and demands a rigorous examination. Can it be in the necessary preparatory study and investigation? This study as we have before seen, embraces the whole man in his intellectual, moral, and physical character; which latter so strongly impressed itself upon a distinguished anatomist, that he was forced to exclaim, "the undevout anatomist is mad." "And the immortal Galen is said to have sung a magnificent hymn of praise, before entering on his daily duties." Can the study of this body induce a scepticism in regard to a resurrection, which is seen exemplified in every "morning's resurrection from the death of night," and "every spring from the torpor and death of winter?" Because the anatomist cannot comprehend the mysterious connection between the soul and body, he would most unwisely thence conclude that both must perish at the same time.

Can the practical duties of our profession lead to infidelity? How often are we called to witness the untimely end of one

whose life has been a career of crime and infamy! He has acknowledged no God, and would fain believe that there is none. Suddenly he is arrested by disease—in the ghost-like paleness of his cheek, the terror which convulses his frame, and the cold sweat which demonstrates his dying agony, you can read the despair in which he closes his wretched existence. Contrast this with the fortitude and composure with which the Christian descends into the vale of death—"the unwavering assurance which he expresses, that he shall meet his friends in happiness, and enjoy with them the larger movements of the unfettered mind." Such scenes would seem to furnish no grounds for scepticism, but incontestible evidence of a God above, and a future state of existence. Few, if any, remain in the profession, of those who formerly avowed infidel principles, which they imbibed, not from the study or practice of the profession, but from the doctrines of misnamed philosophers of a foreign land, whose infection spread equally among the learned of other professions.

Gentlemen—the charge of infidelity cannot now be made against those who fill high places in the profession; and in this enlightened age, for a young man to embrace, and attempt to defend, doctrines so monstrous and untenable, would be suicidal. It would evince a perversity or obtuseness of intellect, which would brand him a "knave or a fool." Look at those who recently followed a deluded infidel leader, and be warned by their sad fate. Beware how you suffer the citadel of your virtue to be undermined. Look over the whole earth in ancient and modern times, and you will not find one truly great and honored man, who had not moral character and religious principle, as the basis of his reputation.

Another charge often made against our profession, and with more appearance of justice, is the desecration of the Sabbath. This charge is owing in part, to a portion of the community who seem to have the erroneous impression, that this day was made for medical business, and who, on that account, will if possible, defer sending for a physician until this day. A slight examination of the origin and institution of the Sabbath, will show, that

the altars of religion are not to be deserted, except from imperious necessity ; so that while the physician on the one hand, is not to neglect the really sick, on the other hand, he should be cautious how he trespasses on sacred time, in attending to his duties. From an able report made in 1832, in the British Parliament, by twenty-nine of their number, including Sir Robert Peel, Lord Morpeth, and others most distinguished for talents and ability, we find that they "came to this irresistible conclusion, from the highest possible testimony, that human life was cut short from excitement in those professions, where rest could not be indulged on the seventh day." Sir Robert Farr, M. D., testified, that "he had observed the premature death of medical men, from this cause alone ; and that he had abridged his Sunday labors on that account." It had for a long time been a matter of surprise, why medical men should be shorter lived than men in other professions, when they better understood the means of attaining longevity. If, therefore, you aspire to long life, rest as much as possible on this sacred day. "But the observance of this day rests on higher authority than this *physiological* reason." The day was instituted by God himself, in Paradise, who sanctioned it by his own example in the creation, when he "gave six days to man, he reserved the seventh for himself." His right to it, therefore, is unalienable ; and on the principles of "common honesty," no man can use it, except "in deeds of mercy." He gave it to the Jews, subjecting the violator to the death penalty—enjoined it in the fourth commandment of the decalogue—made it inherent "in the nature of man and beast"—and ordained it as the "immutable law of his kingdom forever." It appears, therefore, from incontrovertible testimony, that "these are the unchanging laws of Heaven ;" and man's interest and duty coincide, in giving them observance. The practice of the ablest medical men is in accordance with the above principles ; and it is said that the immortal Rush, "appropriated his Sunday labors to the cause of benevolence."

Gentlemen—we cannot violate the laws of Heaven, either expressed or implied, and find ourselves prosperous and happy. God governs the world by general laws; and unalterable as the pillars of his throne are the laws of his empire. Nations, as well as individuals, are punished for their transgressions. The desecration of the Sabbath is among the sins of our land; and if we are destined, like all preceding republics, to be expunged from the earth, and chronicled as the sad failure of the last experiment of liberty, it will be from the corruptions and abuses which are the legitimate results of national sins. Examine the pages of history, both sacred and profane, and you will find recorded the fulfilment of the denunciations of the Almighty against national sins. Look at that land, once illumined by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness himself, and cheered by the labors of his devoted apostles—once “the pride and glory of all lands.” Where are now her splendor and glory? “They have long since departed. She is blotted from the record of nations—her people are scattered through all lands.” Go among her desolate and broken columns, and her moss covered sepulchral ruins; and you will hear the voice of the prophet exclaim, “the people and nation that forget Thee, shall perish; yea, their land shall be utterly desolate.”

No profession exerts a greater influence in maintaining good order, and in sustaining our civil and political institutions, than the one which you have selected. No class of men so intermingle with, and mould the character of the youth of the country; and the impression made on the wax-like mind of childhood, is engraven like “eternal brass,” and communicated from generation to generation. The influence, therefore, which we exert, will continue to act for the weal or woe of generations yet unborn, long after we have left the earth, and our very names are forgotten. How important then, that the good physician should be, at the same time, the good citizen—the supporter of the constitution and laws of his country! But the purity and dignity of your profession should elevate you above the contaminating influence of political and partizan excite-

ment. A faithful and conscientious discharge of your professional duties, will not allow such a prostitution of your time and talents. We do not say, that you are to be disfranchised; nor that the quiet discharge of the duties of a freeman, are incompatible with your professional duties. But we do say, that it is a dangerous experiment for you to make, to enter into the demoralizing arena of party politics, and hazard on the altar of political ambition, the sacrifice of time, character, influence, and all that is valuable in life.

The physician should cultivate an elevated and agreeable style of conversation, adapted to the various capacities and conditions of his patients. In making your prescriptions, give directions in clear and definite language. Endeavor to make the sick room pleasant by your manner and conversation. Be very tender of the feelings of your patients, and never treat them with rudeness or neglect. Bear in mind, that they are naturally selfish, jealous and suspicious, from the sombre nature of disease. On all occasions, therefore, let your dignified, yet gentle manners, and your elegant and instructive conversation, diffuse a moral beauty over the scene, which shall inspire sentiments of confidence and esteem.

When the sick and suffering poor call for assistance, bear in mind always, that

"The quality of mercy is not strained,
But droppeth like the gentle rain from Heaven:
It is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives,
And him that takes."

The cheerfulness, with which you perform acts of kindness and mercy, will materially enhance their benefit. In our highly favored land, the external circumstances and conditions of men create little distinction, and should be utterly disregarded in your professional services. The rich man in his splendid edifice, and the poor man in his thatched cottage, are equally the objects of your care and attention. Even if conjoined with poverty, intemperance or sensual indulgence shall have produced their legitimate effects upon the broken constitution of

what was once a man, and crime shall have branded him with infamy, still you are to watch over this loathsome outcast of earth, as if he were a nobleman and the most beautiful model of the Creator's power. For this degraded and miserable man is destined, like you, to an existence enduring as the throne of God; and his eternal destiny may depend upon the skill and watchful attention of his medical adviser. Your attendance among the poor and the unfortunate will be amply rewarded, by calling into pleasing exercise the kindest feelings of your nature, by the practical knowledge which you acquire of disease, and by bringing you in contact with other members of the community who are there on like missions of charity. Kind woman will be there, with her mantle of benevolence, on her errand of mercy. Feeble and delicate as she may be, "that even the winds of summer may not visit her too roughly," with cheerfulness she encounters the storms of winter, and the burning heat of summer, that she may carry consolation and gladness to the lowest depths of suffering humanity. Your acts will be subjected to her keen eye, and quick perception. Her influence, gentlemen, on your success, is not limited; as on her usually devolves the selection of the "family physician."

A prompt and cheerful obedience to the calls of the poor, we are told, were "stepping stones" to practice for Sydenham, Fothergill, Rush, and many others, who have risen to eminence. As, therefore, you regard your professional success, relieve the wants of the poor, the needy, and the disconsolate; and more especially that they may be witnesses for you before Him "who is no respecter of persons, but who rewards every man according to his deeds." Follow his example, "who in the days of his humiliation," made the poor the especial subjects of his miraculous power, and who devoted his life on earth to the relief of their temporal and spiritual maladies. He it was who said, "The poor ye have with you always;" and who has left on record the memorable assurance, that when he re-appears in awful majesty to judge the world, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, in-

herit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; *I was sick, and ye visited me*; I was in prison, and ye came unto me;" and "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." The awards of the judgment day, and the retributions of eternity, are therefore dependent on the discharge of these humble duties of mercy.

The character of your profession requires the strictest abstinence from every form of dissipation. If you wish to live long and respectably in the world, abstain from every form of alcoholic *stimuli*. It was formerly deemed necessary to throw around the system some guards to ward off disease, and sustain the system under the depressing effects of cold and heat, fatigue and watching; and in fact, against every form of exposure. This impression pervaded all classes of men and conditions in society. The fields of labor, the work-shops of the mechanic, the halls of legislation, the temples of justice, and even the sanctuary, sent forth their streams which carried ruin, distress, moral death, and the seeds of future misery, through the length and breadth of the land. Poor houses, jails, and penitentiaries were filled; and even the gallows was furnished with victims, by inebriation. Great and good men regarded it as a necessary evil, and believed that stimulation made the sick well, and the well better. At length the important discovery was made, that stimulation was unnecessary in health; and that intemperate drinking brought a flood of misery, wretchedness and premature death upon mankind. The best energies of the nation were put forth for the temporal salvation of the earth. No class of men contributed so much as physicians, to the achievement of a great, though peaceful and bloodless victory over man's most formidable enemy. I would caution you not to yield to any influence, which operates so disastrously, as stimulation in all its forms, upon the sound judgment, the clear head, and steady hand of the physician.

There is another habit which I approach with more delicacy and reluctance ; but as it has a bearing upon your happiness, I may be permitted to allude to it briefly. It is not professional, but equally contaminates all classes of the community, irrespective of "color, clime or condition." It came from the aborigines of the land, but is now almost regarded as a mark of civilization. Were an inhabitant of the fourteenth century to re-visit the earth, after his long repose, would he not believe that the long sought for "charm" had at length been discovered, (since his departure from the earth,) by which the ills of life might be warded off, and great and lasting benefits conferred upon mankind? What would be his astonishment, when made to understand from high and unquestionable authority, that this extraordinary substance, which held such a portion of men in bondage, was in itself *a poison*, and was only endurable by the strong force of habit—that although only occasionally an individual dies directly from its deleterious effects ; yet, that so far from warding off disease, it is a source of most formidable disease—that impaired digestion, premature debility, partial or complete annihilation of the senses of taste and smell, and loss of voice, are some of the many sacrifices, which the infatuated votaries of this habit make, in the use of a substance, which has not one redeeming virtue to shield it from contempt and reprobation. What would be the amazement of this man of past centuries, when further informed, that it is an article of commerce ; is subjected to a tariff of duties, and pays more revenues into the treasury of foreign nations in a single year, than the whole christian world has expended towards the emancipation of five hundred millions of immortal beings, from the degradation and direful consequences of heathenism !

Gentlemen—if any of you are so fortunate as not to have contracted a habit of using *tobacco* in any form, let me advise you not to waste your time, property, health, and the perfection of those senses, with which the God of nature endowed you for useful and noble purposes, in a custom which is so foul

a blot upon civilized society, and such an outrage on the beautiful order and happiness of social and domestic life.

In sustaining the moral dignity of your profession, you have a duty to perform to your professional brethren, which implies the performance of all those obligations which govern honorable men in their intercourse with each other, sanctioned by medical ethics and police, and further, whatever is comprehended in that golden rule, "do unto others as ye wish them to do unto you." The character and influence of the profession depend, in a great degree, upon the deference and regard which its members manifest for each other. You are, therefore, to be watchful and careful of the reputation of a rival and competitor. Treat him with kindness and magnanimity. If he is an honorable man, your gentlemanly bearing and deportment will induce him to return the same high minded and honorable treatment. But if from mean and selfish motives, he attempts to persecute and disparage you in the estimation of the public, you are still to preserve your equanimity of temper. Discountenance the reports which the industrious public bring to your notice; nor regard them as worthy of investigation. You will thus disappoint or mortify your rival, in the failure of his attempt to induce you to bring yourself down to his level; while he will find his own level, be disgraced before the public, and thus secure to you the elevation which you deserve. It has been wisely observed by another, "There are two ways of attaining reputation—the praise of honest men, or what is surer, the abuse of rogues. An open, frank, and uncompromising conduct covers all your duty to your rivals and competitors."

The dignity of your profession requires, that it be sustained by organization. Its honor, influence and usefulness are greatly promoted by its organized societies, governed by a code of medical ethics, and a system of medical police, regulating the practice, intercourse and fees, on principles of justice to the profession, and to the public. Connect yourselves, therefore, with the medical society of your county and state. Pay your taxes promptly, and maintain your standing with your associ-

ates. You will acquire, in this way, increased influence, and a wider field of exertion, by the stimulation which it gives you to distinguish yourselves. You will also thus profit by the labors, investigations and researches of the whole association; and the ever varying and Protean character of disease requires the combined intelligence and practical knowledge of such organizations, to produce the greatest achievements in the postponement of the hour of man's dissolution.

The profession, true to itself, educated, devoted, and united as it should be, will exert an influence almost irresistible upon that fountain of all power, and all legislation, *public opinion*, resulting in wise and liberal appropriations for the public welfare. Our Medical Society is also a medium of communication with legislative bodies, who ask for counsel, on subjects of public hygiene, quarantine regulations, and the establishment of prisons, hospitals and asylums; and likewise when new diseases invade the country, bringing with them general terror and dismay.

What monuments have our organization created in our midst, in institutions giving sanity to the insane, eyes to the blind, and ears to the deaf! Through one of these institutions, how many thousands of the human family have had restored the lost but imperishable treasure of mind! These, and kindred institutions, have diffused an atmosphere of the most extended benevolence through the land, and encircled the age with a halo of glory unprecedented in the history of our race.

As a means of sustaining your standing in the profession, furnish yourselves with good libraries of standard and approved works, and the best periodicals of the day. Let them be companions of your leisure hours. Roll back the tide of time for centuries, and imagine that you have lived, and treasured up for use the results of all their labors. In ancient times, the Temple of Health was frequented by those who had been restored to health, for the purpose of inscribing on its walls and pillars, their diseases, with the remedies; so that others, by resorting thither, might find for their several maladies a cure. As

"coming events cast their shadows before," thus was evidently shadowed forth the more permanent and enduring results of the art of printing, which has brought together, and placed in your hands, the experience of former times, and carried back your existence to the earliest ages of light and knowledge. Study these records of by-gone ages attentively. Remember that the price of eminence is labor, untiring labor. The astute lawyer, the learned divine, the able statesman, and the profound philosopher trim the midnight lamp in their unceasing labor; and shall the physician exhibit less industry, in his sublime researches, and ilimitable fields of investigation?

There are mysteries in the unfathomed depths of ocean, in the unexplored regions of the earth, in the modifications of mind and matter, in our own intricate and complicated structures, and in the "*modus operandi*" of medicine—phenomena in pathology—facts in chemistry, in botany and the other natural sciences—which men of the most gigantic minds and profound investigation, have never been able to reveal. All these are legitimately within your field of investigation. And can you expect, that Providence will disclose to you, without untiring labor, those rich treasures which have been hidden from the researches of such men as Newton, and all the learned men of more recent times?

Gentlemen—let me remind you, that your profession entitles you to all the remedial agents, which the great kingdoms of nature yield. The mineral, the animal, and the vegetable kingdoms are all yours—all given up to your use in your warfare against disease and death. What a host have been added within the last fifty years! And yet the stern tyrant, though often foiled, is sure at last of his victim. Let the hydropathist praise his water-cure—the homœopathist his concentrated and infinitesimal doses—the Thompsonian his steam and lobelia. Their remedies were yours, long before their systems originated. Away, then, with your *partial* systems! What would you think of the soldier, who should go into battle with his small arms alone?—Or of the general, who should march against the enemy with his light

and inexperienced troops, and leave encamped behind him his tried veterans and effective artillery? Take broad ground. Our system, founded on broad principles, has stood the test of time—it came down to us in unsullied lustre, unimpaired integrity and gigantic proportions, from Hippocrates through a long line of “nature’s noblemen,” a princely ancestry. Partial systems have, in succession, originated, flourished, and fallen; while this stands like a pyramid enthroned in clouds, as compared with the frail, temporary fabrics erected around.

In view of the literary atmosphere which surrounds you, of the bright example of the distinguished men, whose instruction you have enjoyed, of the aids which modern science has imparted to the profession, and of the irresistible claims of the profession, and the world, to your faithful services,—we look forward to the time, when you shall arrive at distinction, by improvements and discoveries with which your names shall be forever associated. Set your aims high, and remember that the old maxim, “*Perseverantia vincit omnia*,” seldom fails. The discoveries and improvements which you may make, will go down to posterity in the medical records of your times. These records are imperishable. The sepulchral monuments of Hippocrates and Boerhaave have long since crumbled into dust; but their names and labors are forever embalmed in the records of medical history.

Gentlemen—with such objects before you, in such a cause, who would be inactive? We will not do you the injustice to suppose it possible for you: and, as says the lamented Godman, “It is impossible that a man, who is impelled by a feeling irresistible, irrepressible, inexhaustible, inextinguishable, should utterly fail.”

But, I am aware, that I am trespassing too long on the courtesies of this occasion.

Go, gentlemen, exhibit to the world the talents, learning, zeal, and energy, which you now dedicate to your noble profession. Fulfil your high destination; and prove yourselves faithful to the trusts which are now committed to your charge.

Time, in its ceaseless course, is carrying us all onward. Soon shall we have reached the limits of human life. Within the last two years, two of this Board of Examiners, who had for several successive years presided over our deliberations, have fallen before the great destroyer. The *one* had reached the common goal of man's brief existence, and departed full of years and honors. The *other* had just past the noon of life—and was in the meridian of his active usefulness, and in the full maturity of his vigorous intellect, and was invested with the highest honors of his profession. Possessing an iron constitution, and stalwort frame of noble proportions, he towered above his associates, and seemed to bid defiance to disease. Self-taught, unaided, unassisted, he had, by his own indomitable perseverance, erected among his native mountains a noble monument of devotion to his profession, to which he dies a martyr—leaving to his much loved profession, his *only heir*, his *only estate*, the influence of his useful and exemplary life. Imitate the distinguished excellence of FULLER and TICKNOR; both of whom were emphatically self-made men, and by moral worth, energy and perseverance, had risen to eminence.

Soon we, and our whole generation shall have disappeared from the earth. Successive classes, in successive years, will fill these seats. *Your* ranks will not be unbroken. *Your* enterprise, and the high indications which you give of future eminence, will not protect you all against the great destroyer of human life. Some of you will be compelled to leave to others, the rich harvest of reputation, which heaven seemed to have promised as your inheritance.* Obey, therefore, the injunction of true wisdom. Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might; “For in the grave, whither you are going, there

* The premature demise of two members of the class, within the few weeks between the delivery and publication of this address, gives melancholy cogency to these remarks. NATHAN BULKLEY, M. D., died in Trumbull, February 16th, aged twenty-seven, and Dr. MUNSON A. SHEPARD, a licentiate, died in Danbury, February 29th, aged thirty-four—both young men of superior attainments and excellent character.

is neither wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device." Within a short period, on those of you who are the survivors of your generation, will devolve all the important interests and responsibilities of the profession. These vacated Professorships, these Halls of medical science, and the duties of moulding the medical character of another generation, will all be yours. Shall these interests so important, with consequences so momentous, be committed to faithful stewards? After another short period of time, and the grave shall receive the last survivor of your number. For a time, the earth will continue to perform her accustomed revolutions, until suddenly, the machinery of the universe will be arrested—the stars will fall from Heaven—the sun be shrouded in darkness—and we shall again be brought together; and with us, the medical worthies of all generations. Hippocrates will be there—Boerhaave will be there—and the congregated millions of the profession. All will then rest from their professional labors; for our great mission of benevolence to man, which originated in his ejection from Eden, will have terminated with the annihilation of disease and death. We shall then stand, with the assembled multitude, before the throne of eternal justice. If, then, you shall have been faithful to the high and sacred trusts this day committed to you—shall have heard "the cry of the poor and needy, and him that was ready to perish," and to your utmost ability, done the whole duty of man, you shall receive rewards, inconceivably rich, abundantly satisfying, and enduring as eternity. *May you realize them all!*

