

**Valedictory address, to the medical class of Geneva Medical College :
delivered at Geneva, June 9th, 1849 / By Charles A. Lee.**

Contributors

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VALEDICTORY ADDRESS,
TO THE
MEDICAL CLASS
OF
GENEVA MEDICAL COLLEGE:

Delivered at Geneva, June 9th, 1849.

BY CHARLES A. LEE, M. D.,
PROFESSOR OF GENERAL PATHOLOGY AND MATERIA MEDICA.

GENEVA, N. Y.:
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CORRESPONDENCE.

GENEVA, June 9th, 1849.

PROF. C. A. LEE:

DEAR SIR: At a meeting of the MEDICAL CLASS of GENEVA COLLEGE, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to solicit a copy of your able and highly instructive Address for publication. In accordance with our instructions, we would respectfully request a copy of your Valedictory, which we sincerely hope will be complied with.

With sentiments of profound respect, we remain,

Yours, &c.,

HENRY D. ATWOOD,
E. D. CONE,
C. H. BARTLETT,
G. P. COOK,

G. W. COLE,
C. H. KELLEY,
DANIEL MOORE,
A. M. JACKSON.

GENEVA, June 11th, 1849.

Messrs. ATWOOD, CONE, BARTLETT, COOK, COLE, KELLEY, MOORE, JACKSON, *Committee*:

GENTLEMEN: I have the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of your note of the 9th inst., soliciting, in behalf of the Class, a copy of my Valedictory Address for publication.

As the sentiments therein set forth are such as I desire to have promulgated, and especially adopted and acted upon, by those just entering upon the profession, I am tempted to sacrifice the scruples which I honestly entertain against the publication of such performances, although by so doing I place myself at the mercy of the critics.

Be pleased, Gentlemen, to accept for yourselves individually, and convey to the Class, my sincere and affectionate regards, as well as my ardent wishes for your and their success, prosperity and happiness.

CHARLES A. LEE.

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VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN: The Science of Medicine, in whatever aspect it may be viewed, presents the strongest claims to the first place in the range of human pursuits. Earliest in point of time—for it originated with the very first introduction of physical evil into our world—it is first in point of dignity and usefulness; and as long as pain, sickness and death are regarded as evils to be alleviated or prevented, so long will medicine be considered as one of the great pillars and blessings of the social state. If we look back into the most remote periods of which we have any authentic history, we find that physicians were held in the highest esteem, and deemed indispensable to the public welfare. Homer tells us, that a good physician was deemed more important than armies to the public weal. It must have been that great and manifest benefits sprung from the medical art; else, how came every nation of antiquity to refer the origin of medicine to the immediate inspiration of the gods? Why was it, that Esculapius and other celebrated physicians came to be regarded as divinities, and worshipped with divine honors? Why were temples consecrated to their memory, and their walls decorated with votive tablets of the most costly kind?

The wise son of Sirach utters sentiments on this subject which have always met with a willing response in every candid mind: "Honor a physician with the honor due unto him, for the uses which ye may have of him, for the Lord hath created him, for the Most High cometh healing, and he shall receive honor of the king! Give place to the physician, for the Lord hath created him; let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him; there is a time when in their hands there is good success!"

The illustrious Sydenham had a just conception of the dignity and value of our science, when he said that "the art of medicine is the best of all worldly gifts, and so much more preferable to all others, as life surpasses all the enjoyments it brings with it." It is no exaggeration of truth to say that the investigation of the causes, progress, nature, seat and termination of disease; the powers which nature has placed in our hands to remedy devia-

tions from health, form one of the most useful and interesting occupations of an intellectual being, and are objects worthy of the highest degree of mental cultivation.

When we look back along the extended track of time, we see that Philosophy and Medicine have gone hand in hand—that the greatest men in every age have consecrated themselves to its study. We hear the voices of Theophrastus and Aristotle in the Lyceum, discoursing on the nature and mysteries of our science. We listen to Plato in the Academy, pouring forth a pure stream of living eloquence, teaching the inspired doctrine of the soul's immortality. We see the generous, ardent youth of Crotona, thronging around the immortal Pythagorus, while he reveals the mysteries of our nature, and inculcates the delight of learning and of truth. We hear the divine Hippocrates, as he stands in the school of Cos, unfolding the phenomena of disease, and pronouncing those splendid aphorisms; which have been admired in every age, as the results of acute sagacity, mature reflection, careful observation, and sound judgment. We listen, with delight, to the renowned Galen, in the first introductory lecture of which we have any record, pointing out, in a sublime strain of eloquence, the superiority of mental power over all earthly gifts, and ranking medicine far above geometry, astronomy, jurisprudence, sculpture, painting, *any*, and *all* the other arts and sciences combined. Not to dwell upon the illustrious names that have adorned our profession in every age—Celsus and Haller, Boerhave, Sydenham, Morgagni, Hunter, Fordyce, Cullen, Rush, and a host of others equally deserving of mention—you perceive that from the earliest historic periods down to our own time, medicine has been regarded as standing at the very head of all human science. And whether you regard its antiquity, coeval with the first dawn of knowledge; the vast acquirements necessary for its successful cultivation; or the splendid intellects which have adorned and advanced it; you will agree with me that its prosecution may gratify the loftiest ambition, while it furnishes a field for displaying the highest and best feelings of our nature—the purest and most disinterested benevolence! Need I say, Gentlemen, that there is no science requiring higher intellectual capacity, or purer moral character, than that of medicine? It embraces within its comprehensive range nearly the whole circle of the sciences; it investigates the nature, operation and effects of all causes, material and immaterial, that influence the human body. *Meteorology* teaches us the value of climatic influences—their effects in health and disease. *Geology* reveals to us the connection between locality and endemic causes, as malaria. *Botany* lays open her store-house of medicinal plants, from

whence we gather remedies for every malady. *Mineralogy* conducts us into the bowels of the earth, and shows us many of the most valuable agents for the cure of the sick. *Chemistry* lends us her aid in the manufacture of powerful medicines, as well as in detecting their active principles, while she points to her living laboratory, the human body, wherein the most wonderful and diversified processes are carried on, under the control of the vital principle. *Mechanical science* assists us in understanding the reciprocal action of the muscular and osseous systems. *Pneumatics* and *hydrostatics* throw much light on the action of the heart, the lungs and the blood-vessels. The science of *optics* teaches us the nice adaptation of that wonderful instrument, the human eye, to the laws of light, as well as the means of rectifying its defects. *Acoustics* reveals the laws of sound, and their adaptation to the mechanism of the ear. In short, there is no science, scarcely, which does not serve as the handmaid of medicine, and assist us in exploring its mysteries. The mechanical, the chemical, and the astronomical philosopher, deal only with the properties of brute, inert matter. In these, it is true, they find marks of wisdom, and the footsteps of an all-wise Designer: but the physician takes a loftier range, and a nobler flight. He explores the mysteries of the living organism, and investigates the laws which govern that wonderful microcosm, the human body, endowed with the higher attribute of life, as manifested not only in the processes of nutrition, growth, secretion, motion and sensation; but with the nobler attributes of reason, volition and thought. He studies matter in connection not only with life—a power to which the ordinary laws of matter are wholly subordinated—but matter in union with an immortal soul, which, with peculiar faculties and susceptibilities, is capable of modifying the usual succession of phenomena, resulting from the co-operation of the chemical, mechanical and vital laws which govern merely the animal portion of man. In short, it is the province of our profession to study the entire man, *physical, moral and intellectual*; and thus it happens, that “modern medicine is the study of human nature; and that there are no questions concerning humanity which it may not assist to solve.” I need not, on this occasion, dwell on what our profession has done for science and humanity; how it has always sought out the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, and poured into their bosoms the balm of consolation and relief; how it has explored the sources of physical and moral evils—for they go together—and suggested means for their removal and prevention; how it has increased the value of human life, as well as contributed to its comforts, by its important discoveries and improvements; how it has thrown its ægis over the

insane, and restored them to reason ; how it has divested that foul scourge of our race, the smallpox, of its horrors and its fatality, by furnishing to all, who will avail themselves of its advantages, a safe preventive ; how it has always been the friend of humanity, of peace, good morals, education and religion ; how it has contributed to the advancement of civilization and refinement, of philanthropy, science and social intercourse ; how it has made surgical operations a pastime, and lapped the soul in Elysium, while the knife and the cautery are doing their unheeded work ; how it has fostered a taste for the ornamental and the useful arts—increased the fire-side joys—gladdened the domestic hearth—frowned upon every species of charlatantry and imposture—elevated the general tone of society—founded colleges and institutions of learning—built hospitals and alms-houses, and ministered gratuitously to their inmates ; how it has encouraged and helped onward the temperance reform—the great moral feature of the age ; how it has built asylums for the blind and the deaf and dumb, and proved the educability of idiots. When did it ever happen that the physician fled at the approach of “the pestilence that walketh in darkness,” or feared “the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.” When did his step ever falter, or his face blanch, when exploring dens of infection and contagion, although the danger was ten-fold greater than in storming the batteries of Chapultepec ? When did he ever turn a deaf ear to the cries of the sick, though ever so sunken, and steeped in infamy, degradation and poverty ? When did he ever leave the sick and wounded behind him ? When did he ever fail to recognize in the most abject human being a fellow-man, or minister to his necessities ? And why should it not be so ? Is not the life of the physician a course of moral training throughout ? Is not his vocation the constant acting out of the generous and benevolent propensities—a benevolence not circumscribed by circumstances, but as broad as the limits of mankind, and comprehensive as human suffering ? From the proud palace, at whose gilded door death knocks, as well as at that of the squalid tenement of misery, the counsel, skill and sympathy of the physician are equally required, and with equal alacrity rendered ! Let it not be said, then, that our profession has done but little for humanity, or science, or the social state ; or that it has few claims upon the gratitude, the respect, and the veneration of mankind.

It is a very common, but a very erroneous opinion, that medicine has not kept pace with the other sciences ; that it has not participated in the onward progress of the age ; but that it is the same empirical art, that it was in ages long since past—such a belief, by whomsoever entertained, is founded in ignorance

of what modern medicine is, and what it has accomplished. We might well retort, and ask whether this charge will not much better apply to some of the other arts and sciences, than to medicine? Has *Oratory* advanced since the days of Demosthenes and Cicero? or *Poetry* since the time of Homer and Virgil?—Has *History* found any abler pens than those of Herodotus, Livy, Tacitus, and Xenophon? Can modern *Mathematical* science boast of greater names than those of Euclid or Archimedes? We point to the Venus de Medici or the Phidian Apollo for the finest specimens of the sculptor's art; and the highest merit of the moderns is to approximate, though they never attain the perfection of the ancient model. In *Painting*, the old masters, Titian, Corregio, Rafael, still bear away the palm. Our *Architects* content themselves with attempts to give us imitations of Athenian porticoes, Corinthian, Doric and Ionic pillars and capitals, and exhaust their powers in re-producing poor imitations of that splendid specimen of medieval art—a Gothic Church!

In *Legal Science* progress has doubtless been made; and the spirit of reform is rapidly accomplishing changes more in accordance with the spirit of the age, and the common sense notions of mankind, however repugnant to the lover of antiquated modes and forms of procedure. The days of quaint formulæ, technical niceties and legal homœopathic quibbles and verbiage are fortunately nearly at an end; and we are to be blessed with an administration of justice founded on the principles of natural rights and duties, drawn from the immortal Institutes of Justinian and the authority of the Pandects!

In *Theology* what evidence have we of advancement? Look at the multitude of discordant sects, and clashing systems of divinity which characterize modern times! Christianity, with its life-inspiring doctrines, came perfect from the hand of its divine founder, incapable of improvement—its principles and duties, so clearly set forth, that “the way-fairing man, though a fool, need not err therein.” But human speculation, vain philosophy, and science, falsely so called, have served to mystify and obscure the plain and simple truths of religion. Millerism, Mormonism, Scepticism and a thousand heresies, are rampant throughout the land; while a new revelation, proceeding from the somnambulist dreams of a mesmerized ignoramus, is openly proclaimed as about to supersede that contained in Holy Scripture!

But, gentlemen, *Medicine* can boast of real progress. There has been no retrograde march here; every step gained has been a positive advance!

Aided by the microscope and organic chemistry, the physician has pushed his researches into the inmost recesses of nature,

and brought to light secrets hidden from the foundation of the world! He has explored the mysterious causes of epidemic, endemic and contagious diseases, and stripped them of a great portion of their terrors. He has ransacked ocean, earth, and air for agents with which to combat disease, and has multiplied his resources, till his armory is filled with potent weapons! Anatomy, physiology, pathology and therapeutics, all have made the most rapid and astonishing advancement within the last quarter of a century; while physical diagnosis has lessened mortality from pulmonary complaints, by rendering our knowledge more exact, thus adding more certainty to therapeutical indications! The discovery of quinine has alone peopled vast regions of our malarious districts which were otherwise uninhabitable! Acute as well as chronic diseases are far more successfully managed than ever before. The statistics of our insane hospitals show that nearly ninety per cent. of all recent cases of mental derangement are permanently cured; whereas, in former times a recovery from insanity was a rare occurrence. *Medical Jurisprudence* is a science of modern times; and it has added ten fold security to life, liberty and property. The question of suicide was formerly determined by throwing the body into water, if it floated it was believed that the death was caused by violence, not self-inflicted. So little understood were the signs of insanity, that thousands have been deprived of life for no other reason, than that they were afflicted with madness! Lord Coke defines an *idiot*, to be "one who cannot count twenty pence; or tell who was his father and mother, or how old he is, or what is for his profit or loss! But if he can learn his letters, or how to read, by teaching or information, he is not an idiot!" And now, we have schools for the education of idiots; teaching them reading, writing, and many useful branches of knowledge, as well as the mechanical arts.

When that awfully devastating epidemic, the black plague, prevailed in Europe in the fourteenth century, the College of Physicians of Paris were called upon to give their opinion relative to its causes. They replied after long deliberation, that the "constellations which combatted the rays of the sun, had struggled with the waters of the great sea and originated vapors; that the sun and fire had attracted a great portion of the sea to themselves; that the waters were corrupted, and the fish died, and the vapor overspread the earth like a fog; and the like would continue as long as the sun remained in the sign Leo!"

With respect to the means of prevention, this learned college stated that they relied on "constellations, striving with the aid of nature, by virtue of their divine might, to protect and heal the human race"—and sagely advised, that, "fat men should not sit in the sun," nor "rain water be used in cooking!"

Five centuries have not elapsed since these, and other equally absurd and superstitious opinions were held by the most learned body of physicians on the globe; and even up to a comparatively recent date, hypothesis and speculation were substituted in the place of experience, observation and experiment.

There have been those in every age, who, like Moliere and Montaigne, have denied the utility of our art, and even made it a subject for railery, wit and sarcasm. But even these individuals, when the iron grasp of disease has seized them, have been as anxious as others to avail themselves of medical advice and skill—the best within their reach; thus proving by their acts, the insincerity of their words.

Imperfect as medicine is, and perhaps ever will be, it will be cherished by the wise and good, as a most merciful boon to man; it will ever be deemed a dignified, useful, and honorable calling; the spirit of true Christianity in action; carrying comfort and relief to the inmates of the wretched hovel, as well as to the abodes of opulence; withholding its blessings from none of the poor suffering children of woe; raising up the fallen; cheering the broken-hearted; comforting the afflicted; and bringing back to the pallid, sunken cheek, the bright and rosy hues of health. In what estimation should services like these be held in a Christian community. How should that profession be honored and esteemed that ever stands ready to fly at the call of distress; at whatever hour, or from whatever quarter it may come!

Look at the number of physicians who have perished during the last year alone from febrile contagion, caught during attendance upon poor immigrants. Hundreds of our ablest men have fallen victims to this destroyer, and no sooner does one fall than another steps forward to take his place. The ranks close up, as those in front disappear, and no one stops to ask even what is his duty; our very instincts urge us on. The post of danger is ever the post of duty and of honor; and yet no public rewards are offered to the medical man. Our officers who distinguished themselves in the recent Mexican war, have been brevetted and rewarded by costly testimonials of merit and of honor from our National and State Legislatures. But what has been done for those faithful, fearless, devoted medical men, whose conservative triumphs even transcend in brilliancy the destructive deeds of the military hero? Passed by, and forgotten!

How mistaken the notion that brute force is the strongest weapon man can wield! Its greatest achievements pale before the splendor of those acts which spring from the pure fount of human kindness. This it is, that exerts the strongest influence, does the most good; accomplishes the mightiest deeds; receives

the brightest rewards! "I win nothing but battles" said Napoleon, "but Josephine, by her goodness wins all hearts." See how the gentleness of the weak controls the passions of the strongest and manliest natures; how soft pity, "entering at an iron gate," exerts a commanding sway, in every gloomy retreat of penury and despair. How true it is that "a soft answer turneth away wrath!" The illustrious Pinel understood the power of kindness when he entered alone the gloomy cells of the Bicetre, and unrivited the manacles and the chains of the raving maniac, and let him go free. This act of pity and philanthropy, proved far more powerful in taming the violence of the insane, than all the physical restraints ever employed. Follow too our chaplains to the bloody fields of war—arrayed only in the meek panoply of their holy religion. See them every where welcomed—every where powerful. See how in their presence, the fiery passions of the rude soldier are softened, and gentle emotions rule the fiercest breasts! The rule of the universe, it has been truly said, is the royal law of affection—and no eloquence; no power is so efficient as goodness—the benevolence of a gentle and loving heart! She speaks a universal language, promptly read, and comprehended by all. It is the lovely vernacular of Heaven; the language which speaks in the daily walk and acts of the good physician who is true to his profession, and not ruled by a mercenary spirit. You may witness its perfect embodiment in those angels of mercy; the devoted SISTERS OF CHARITY; who leave the refinements, comforts, and elegancies of life—quitting home with all its fond endearments—parents, brothers, sisters—the friends and scenes of childhood, and the attachments of riper years—to devote themselves, for life, to the care and nursing of the sick! Follow them in their visits to the suffering poor, and see what tears of gratitude bedew the cheek of the invalid, as he finds himself still an object of human kindness and sympathy! See them at midnight and the early dawn, bending over the bed of the sick, ministering to their wants, and fanning the expiring flame of life—manifesting, in short, a charity as comprehensive as human suffering, and wide as the limits of the race!

"The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rains from Heaven,
Upon the place beneath! It is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest?"

This has been called a mechanical age—the age of discovery in physical science, and the useful arts; of steam power; the telegraph; the cotton-gin; the daguerreotype, and the printing press. But there is no department of art or science, in which

inventive genius and mental activity are not strikingly manifested. Guided by the philosophy of Bacon, man has learned to control the laws of nature, by studying and obeying them. No where is this intellectual activity more displayed than among the members of our profession, and in no science is more diligence required to keep pace with its progress. The same rigid method of observation and philosophical induction which led Newton to discover the law of gravity, leads the physician to the generalization of vital phenomena. The only difference is, that the laws of natural philosophy are modified by a small number of easily appreciated conditions, while the laws of life are subject to thousands, not so well understood—constantly changing, often inappreciable.

This necessarily imposes upon us the necessity of greater labor—greater care—a more extended sphere of observation—a more rigid analysis of facts. The chemist, for example, studies the composition, and the mutual relations existing between all substances in nature. He makes himself acquainted with their affinities and properties; and after ascertaining these elements of knowledge, he brings judgment and comprehension to act upon them, and thus learns to apply them to the uses and convenience of mankind. And thus it is that truth is investigated and discovered in every branch of physical and natural science.

And when we turn to the organic world, matter endowed with vitality—matter, instinct with a spark of divinity—matter, in union with an ever-active, immortal essence—how sublime the study—what a field for the exercise of the highest intellect! Though we may not penetrate the inmost recesses, or discover the hidden nature or essence of vital action, yet we can learn its phenomena, and the laws which regulate and govern them. Beginning with the very germ of the lowest form of organized matter—the simple monad, of a single cell—we ascend through all the grades of living things up to that paragon of creation, man—a little lower than the angels; and we see in all the manifestations of that subtle principle, the vital force, working under various conditions; and thus we are enabled to get some insight into the plan of the living, organic world, and understand something of the laws of living matter! Our studies take hold on that mysterious endowment, the principle of life—that life which adorns, animates and quickens the world; which beautifies the face of earth with its rare and variegated productions; furnishes food for man; endows creation with an object; and peoples earth, air and sea with their countless denizens! The investigation of its actions and its varied manifestations belong peculiarly, exclusively, I may say, to our profession. The various phenomena which

they manifest; the processes of which they are the seat; the laws which regulate these processes, in health and disease, as well as the modes of correcting them, by remedial agents—these it is that constitute our study—a study vast as creation in its range; difficult, as the subjects on which it is employed are noble and sublime!

A body of facts, deduced from an investigation of the structure of organized bodies, and the conditions under which the various organs perform their functions with ease and regularity, together with all the circumstances connected with the actions of living structures—these facts, set forth in proper order, constitute the sciences of anatomy and physiology. The same careful course of induction is pursued in investigating the changes which occur in these structures and functions, under unfavorable conditions; and the facts connected with these derangements, their causes, nature, seat and symptoms, constitute the science of disease, or pathology! And so, too, the varied methods of correcting these derangements, as modified by age, sex, constitution, temperament, climate, locality, idiosyncrasy, and state of the mind, &c.—these facts systematized and correlated, make up the science of therapeutics; the process of building up these sciences, is thus a purely inductive one throughout. The difficulties which we have to encounter, from the infinite variety and combination of these qualifying circumstances, would be sufficient to discourage the most ardent and inquisitive mind, were it not that although the differences in physiological action and in susceptibility to disease are almost infinite, yet they may be classed under general laws, as diseases arrange themselves into orders and varieties; and notwithstanding we thus labor under difficulties, unknown to the natural philosopher, the student of pure physics—difficulties which prevent us from arriving at the mathematical certainty attained in other branches of science—nevertheless we are ready to show that there is a constant advance; and that the application of the rules of our art may be carried to the highest degree of rational precision!

These remarks, gentlemen, may serve to indicate the nature of the pursuits in which you are about to engage; the nature of the difficulties you may expect to encounter; and the spirit that should influence you in their prosecution. Medicine is not only an intellectual, but a high and holy calling; consecrated to benevolence, and dear to the best affections of the heart! Regard it not in the light of a *trade*—a money-making business; for thus regarded, and thus pursued, it is shorn of its dignity; sinks from its high position, and becomes a positive evil instead of a blessing to society. If prosecuted from mercenary views alone, it will infallibly hold out promises it can never perform; aim to inspire

confidence by falsehood and deceit; concealing danger lest it may excite alarm; or magnifying the disease, in order to increase the merit of the cure; making merchandize of the obligations of duty; sacrificing conscience, truth, every thing sacred, at the shrine of mammon. Such are the inevitable consequences of practising your profession for the mere pecuniary profit it may yield; applying to it, as a matter of necessity, the same rules which custom has sanctioned in trade, but which *there* do not involve such momentous results!

Gentlemen, you have been taught the science of medicine, as founded on observation, experiment and induction. You have been instructed in the art of healing disease rationally. You have acquired a sufficient amount of knowledge to improve by your future experience, and profit from that of others. You thus stand upon a vantage ground far above many who enter the profession, and it will be your own fault if you do not prove successful practitioners. How many have engaged in the responsible duties of our calling, whose acquirements have not enabled them to grow wiser by experience, or draw useful deductions from facts falling under their observation! Time only seems to confirm such individuals in their errors. From a want of success, consequent on defective education, they lose confidence in scientific medicine, and fall off into rank empiricism. Such practitioners have never mastered the great and leading facts and principles of our science. They are but partially acquainted with the human functions in health, and how should they properly estimate the nature of the changes wrought by disease. They become routinists by necessity, and it is but a step from this to bold, unblushing quackery. A good medical education, and a true and honest heart, furnish the only security against such a danger!

If medicine be such a profession as I have set before you; the duties growing out of the new relation in which you will soon stand, are sufficiently obvious. Founded in the physical sufferings of the race—evils common to humanity, in all its conditions; the main spring of action must be a portion of that spirit which actuated the Great Physician; which dwelt in the breast of the good Samaritan, who ministered to him who fell among thieves, and lay wounded by the way-side; of Howard, who devoted his life to ameliorating the condition of imprisoned criminals; in short, it must be that noble principle of our nature, which impels us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

This bright and immortal spirit, which invests humanity with all its grace and loveliness, and gives to the intercourse of man all that renders such intercourse desirable, constitutes the only true basis of our profession, as it is its highest ornament. Go forth

then, and illustrate in your future career the self-sacrificing spirit of those, who have given dignity to their calling, and left their names among the true benefactors of the race!

No holiday life is before you, cares and anxieties; mental and bodily toil; the sacrifice of personal comfort, health and repose; these must necessarily be encountered by those who aim at a life of usefulness and honor in our calling; and great energy, moral courage, and self-denial, are indispensable to those who mean not to shrink from any duties and responsibilities which belong to it.

I would certainly hope, that no one will cease to prosecute his studies, now commenced, or imagine for a moment, that his education is completed. You have laid a foundation, on which you are to build a future superstructure. You have planted a few seed, which, with proper cultivation, may germinate, and at some future day bring forth a golden harvest! You are prepared to profit from opportunities of witnessing disease, and testing the value of instruction received during your pupilage. So rapid is the advancement of our science, that dilligent study is necessary even to keep pace with its progress; and without this study the mind itself grows torpid, and becomes incapable of investigating truth. You are only initiated, as it were, into the elements of medical science. The most important part of your education remains to be accomplished. Shun not mental labor, for it is the peculiar distinction and privilege of man. You hear of self-educated men, but every man who has an education has educated himself. The teacher may draw forth the latent powers of the mind, and set them at work; he may point out the sources and means of obtaining knowledge; he may arouse and guide the awakened intellect into the best path for attaining the end desired. All the rest is self-performed! The materials are given you, to be wrought and shaped by yourselves, to your own individual purposes. Facts are furnished you, which you are to co-ordinate, and from which you are to deduce general principles. A torpid, inactive, uninquisitive mind, in a physician, is an anomaly, a monstrosity, hateful to gods and men! To practise medicine successfully, without study and close reflection, is as impossible as it would be for the lawyer to make a skillful plea, without acquainting himself with the facts of the case; or for the navigator to determine his latitude and longitude without keeping any reckoning, or taking observations of the heavenly bodies. Let no day pass over your heads without making some positive additions to your stock of knowledge. Your present attainments may serve as a nucleus for future accretions, or, as the *key* to the vast store-houses of riches, which may be opened for your enjoy-

ment. Be not satisfied with moderate attainments. The field before you is vast, and much of it unexplored; the incentives to exertion great—appealing to every motive which should influence a rational mind. Eminence in our profession at the present day can only be attained by persevering toil and unflinching energy. The road that leads to it is steep and rugged, with many a pleasant shady by-path leading from it, to flowery arbors and quiet retreats; and where one attains the good for which he set out, thousands loiter by the way, or turn into these devious paths, from which they never retrace their steps. Had they gained a higher position, the prospect would have rewarded them for all their toil; each succeeding step would have become easier, till at last, every obstacle would have disappeared. Success in life, and an honorable standing in the profession, are objects worthy of your ambition, as they will extend your spheres of usefulness, and enlarge your means of doing good. (Covet only the fame that follows high attainments, honorable conduct, and superior skill) that which is sought for its own sake, to gratify personal pride and ambition, is too often based on a sandy foundation, and ends in disappointment. Every medical man should aim to establish a reputation for knowledge, skill and usefulness in his profession; these lead to the attainment of a competency, which, like fame, follows close upon the heels of real merit! The laborer is worthy of his hire! Young men are often discouraged, from a conviction that they lack the necessary mental qualifications for competing with their superiors, or attaining any great distinction in the profession. They forget that genius in a medical man “is only the habit of patient observation,” and that by proper cultivation, even moderate faculties may be so strengthened and improved, as to be capable of making the best and most useful acquisitions in science. John Hunter was not a man of genius, but of plodding, unwearied toil and perseverance; and no physician has ever made more valuable additions to practical medicine than this distinguished surgeon. Cultivate, then, your powers. Remember that industry is necessary to their development, and that humility leads to the highest distinction, for it leads to self-improvement, and is the only true foundation of a just self-confidence.

You have seen that there is no profession which embraces such an extensive range of knowledge, for its proper exercise, as that of medicine; none which requires such a rare combination of physical, moral and intellectual qualifications. To young men just setting out on the journey of life, it opens a wide field for the exercise of the highest talent, blended with pure philanthropy. Remember, it is one of the learned professions; that your studies

are not to be wholly confined to matters connected with medicine, but must embrace all those topics of general and scientific knowledge with which any well-educated man is supposed to be conversant. In this respect the physician is expected to rank with the members of the other learned professions, aye, to rank above them; and to do this he must devote time to intellectual pursuits and the cultivation of his mind. Shun, however, the light and trashy literature of the day—the whole class of novels and works of imagination so called—for they neither strengthen nor instruct. History, biography, theology, and the natural sciences—these should occupy a portion of your attention, for they will expand the intellect, and furnish useful materials for thought.

But learning and skill are not all the qualifications necessary to success. A pure and elevated moral character, temperate habits, prudence, discretion, and common sense; kind and gentle manners, the spontaneous emanation of a benevolent and sympathetic heart; a deportment cheerful, but tempered by the stern duties in which you are engaged, and scenes in which you are to be actors—all these are essential for great success or popularity in our profession. How shocking is coarseness and rudeness of deportment in a physician, or even a light, unfeeling and trivial manner, when a beloved member of a family lies upon the bed, perhaps, of death. “What a ministering angel does the kind physician seem at such a time, and how they hang upon his every word and action; and how he becomes entwined in their inmost affections, if his prescriptions are followed by success; and if not, how grateful, if, as a Christian, he can breathe the last consolation into the ears of the dying, and blend his sympathies with the mourning family!”

In your intercourse with your professional brethren, be courteous, respectful and forbearing: **BE GENTLEMEN!** Seek not to injure their reputation or standing, or treat them otherwise than as co-laborers in the common cause of doing good to your fellow-men. Remember the remark of Hufeland, that “he who degrades a colleague, degrades himself and his art.” Frown with contempt upon all arts, practised by some to raise themselves at the expense of others. He who gives way to jealousy, and harbors unjust suspicions, becomes himself a target for the attacks of others. If you are treated ungenerously—and no one, however pure his motives, or irreproachable his conduct, can expect to escape entirely the shafts of calumny and slander—have the magnanimity to pass it by, and thus shame, while you disarm your enemies. To retaliate by detraction or recrimination, is as unbecoming a gentleman, as it is unworthy of the Christian. The woe denounced against those by whom offences come, will not rest upon them

alone, but be shared by those who retaliate by similar offences ! Remember the example of Him, who, when reviled, reviled not again. Armed with a good conscience, the "*mens conscia recti*," and the panoply of truth and justice, you may bid defiance to the assaults of open or secret enemies, and illustrate in your lives the sentiment of the Roman poet :

" Si pactus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ !"

I would caution you against any high expectations of rapid success in acquiring business. Confidence, it is said, is a plant of slow growth. It is especially so in our profession. Skill is, for the most part, associated with age and experience. This sentiment cannot be reversed. You must, like all who have gone before you, bow to its decision, and bide your time ! Not in idleness ; for your earlier professional years are those in which you will have the most time to devote to study. Improve them to the utmost ; and guard especially against discouragement, despondency, and discontent—those easily-besetting sins of the young physician. Doubt not, if you plant the seed and cultivate the soil, a rich harvest will be yours ! Nothing but a love for medicine, as a philosophical science and a philanthropic calling, connected with moderate expectations of pecuniary emolument ; a temper not easily disturbed by neglect, or by the preference given to quackery, or the privations and sacrifices incident to the practice of medicine, can render our profession a comfortable one, or enable you to avoid the evils incident to discontent with your calling. Despond not, because the community do not immediately discover your fitness for taking charge of their lives and health. The time will come, and that at no distant period, when all your acquisitions will come in play, and when you will not regret that you had leisure to make them. True merit cannot be hidden : it will be duly rewarded. Education and skill are certain to meet with success. There are no difficulties in your path which have not again and again been surmounted, by industry and a resolute will, looking for guidance to Him who holds the destinies of men and nations in his hand, and without whom not even a sparrow falleth to the ground. In His sight, ignorance, carelessness, or inefficiency, in the discharge of your duties, will be no trivial offences : nor will you stand acquitted at the bar of your own consciences, if lives are lost through your neglect, or want of skill ! The names of a galaxy of worthies adorn the annals of our profession, for your imitation ! Their lives and their examples constitute a rich legacy.

"Lives of great men all remind us
 We can make our lives sublime,
 And departing leave behind us,
 Foot-prints on the sands of time!
 Foot-prints, which perchance another,
 Wandering o'er life's weary main,
 Some forlorn and shipwreck'd brother
 Seeing, may take heart again!"

In entering the medical profession, remember that its honor and interests will be, in part, committed to your trust. Guard them with a vigilant eye; defend its reputation when assailed; contribute your share towards its advancement; let your experience and observation add to the common stock of knowledge; do all in your power to extend its usefulness. Dispersed, as you soon will be, over the country, you can accomplish much by investigating the causes of endemic and epidemic diseases, and enriching the materia medica with valuable additions, drawn from our woods and prairies. Keep a history of all cases of disease you are called to treat, and a daily record of meteorological phenomena. You will find it a source of great improvement, contributing to cultivate a habit of observation, without which no one ever attained eminence in any department of knowledge! Thus far, you have been mainly taught from the lips of living teachers; henceforth, you are to learn from the teachings of Nature herself. To profit from them, daily, close and unceasing observation is requisite. Every case of disease, carefully watched, will enlarge the sphere of your knowledge, "by elucidating some principle, correcting some misapprehension, or adding to the collection of facts from which sound conclusions have to be drawn!" But, to make the most of your opportunities, enter upon your task with the simplicity of mind becoming honest enquirers. Lay aside all prejudices—all predilections. Be rational eclectics. Choose whatever is good, and true, and useful, wherever you may find it. Adopt no exclusive dogmas. Enroll yourselves as disciples of no school, or system; detest all hobbies; pin your medical faith to no man's sleeve; shun hypotheses and speculation; hold fast your integrity; pursue the even tenor of your professional career, untrammelled by authority, and free from all other influences, save the love of truth alone.

Gentlemen, in bidding you farewell—many of you a final one—allow me to express the desire of my heart, that your professional career may be prosperous, useful to society, beneficial to yourselves, honorable to your Alma Mater, and not unworthy the protection of Heaven!

