
MEMORIAL

—OF—

GEORGE MARVIN, M. D.



NOTE.

THE LATE DR. MARVIN.

Estimate of his Social and Professional Services.

“ At a meeting of the Medical Society of the County of Kings, held January 19, 1875, the following MEMOIR and RESOLUTIONS concerning the late Dr. MARVIN, an ex-President of the Society, were reported by a committee appointed at a previous meeting, and adopted. Dr. MARVIN was one of the most respected, as he was one of the most venerable and influential of the distinguished physicians of Brooklyn.”—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

~~BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.~~

Who died in B. W. V.

~~Dr. GEORGE, MARVIN, whose long and useful life came to its close in this city, on the 23d of December, 1874, was born in Norwalk, in Fairfield County, Connecticut, on the 23d of February, 1798. He was, consequently, nearly seventy-seven years of age at the time of his death. Dr. MARVIN graduated from Yale College, in 1817, with a class of sixty-one members. This college class appears to have included an unusual number of men who became distinguished, honored and useful in after life. Of their number, sixteen became Christian ministers, twenty-five were lawyers, and five physicians. Three-fourths of the number were thus professional men. Of these, two were presidents of a university or a college, one a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, five were professors in colleges, one a professor in a theological seminary, one a professor in a medical college, two were judges of a supreme court (State), four judges of subordinate courts, three representatives in Congress (of the United States), one a representative in a foreign court, and two were mayors of cities. Who~~

will doubt that under the guidance of one of the most successful educators who ever presided over the affairs of an American college (the renowned president, Dr. TIMOTHY DWIGHT), the association of young MARVIN with such men, during the formative years of his character, did much to develop and strengthen those traits which distinguished him through life?

On leaving college, Mr. MARVIN took charge of an academy in Maryland, for six months, and commenced the study of medicine, and, in 1821, graduated in the University of Pennsylvania, receiving the degree of Doctor in Medicine, then far less common, and a far higher evidence of advanced comparative attainment in medical knowledge than at the present day. In July of that year (1821), he settled in the city of Rochester, N. Y., and engaged in a profitable practice in co-partnership with Dr. BACKUS, a prominent and highly reputable physician of that city, a son of the celebrated Rev. Dr. ASAHEL BACKUS, President of Hamilton College, in Central New York, and himself afterwards a senator of this State for one or two terms.

In 1824, Dr. MARVIN was married to Miss AGNES PLATT, of Westport, Connecticut. This union, which proved to be the source of more than ordinary happiness to both parties, continued for 46 years,—Mrs. MARVIN preceding her husband to the grave in May, 1870.

Dr. MARVIN resided in Rochester seven years, when, in consequence of the ill health of Mrs. MARVIN, it was

deemed advisable that she should return to her native town, ~~in the hope that she would find in the atmosphere in which she was born, the health of which she had been deprived since her residence in Rochester.~~

This hope having been in a measure realized, Dr. MARVIN removed to the city of New York, and soon thereafter, in 1831, at the urgent solicitation of friends residing here, came to ~~this city~~, and thenceforth devoted himself to the active pursuits of his professional calling until the day of his death, a period of almost forty-four years.

~~Two, only, of the fifteen or twenty physicians residing in this city or county at the time of his removal here, survive him.~~

A prominent trait in the character of Dr. MARVIN, was his modest estimate of himself. His judgment—a faculty of vast importance to a medical man, and one for want of which not a few men of brilliant and large literary and scientific acquirements fail in practical life—was sound. He arrived at his conclusions after deliberate examination, and his decisions were usually correct.

This carefulness in diagnosis, and an unwonted facility in the adaptation of remedial measures, made him a very successful practitioner. Dr. MARVIN was a man of indefatigable industry, never resting when duty called him to labor, and apparently happiest when most fully employed. To these characteristics, he added the strict-

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est integrity and a practical sympathy, which endeared him to his patients, and secured their entire confidence. Nor was that confidence misplaced, for Dr. MARVIN was not a mere active, attentive, faithful, routine physician. He was fully aware of the vast, rapid, and numerous changes going on in the profession. He kept himself well informed in the periodical literature of the day, and by intercourse with intelligent members of his profession, hailed every well established improvement with genuine satisfaction, and, to his latest day, availed himself of the aids which science and practical observation contributed to the healing art.

~~At the time when Dr. MARVIN came to Brooklyn, there was neither dispensary nor hospital in the city, nor was there any public provision adequate to the proper treatment of the pauper population, then, perhaps, as large, in proportion to the total number of inhabitants, as at present. The medical relief of this class, consequently, fell upon the medical residents of the city. The amount of labor performed in this way was very great, and Dr. MARVIN did his full share of the work. No one, it is believed, who applied to him, was sent away unrelieved, although, as a consequence, the wonderful power of continuous and combined mental and bodily effort connected with his stalwart frame and robust health, was not seldom taxed to its utmost. Dr. MARVIN, we have said, was of singular industry, yet, moderate in his desires. His was not an industry~~

prompted alone by the prospect of pecuniary gain, but mainly by a true professional zeal, and by a kindness of heart too seldom found united in this money-seeking age, in which the lustre of many really good, and even valuable discoveries, is tarnished and dimmed by the too evident desire to divert them to personal advantage.

This love for his profession, and this benevolence toward his fellow men led Dr. MARVIN to prosecute his calling to the last week of his life, although with health impaired by arduous service, and by the hand of time.

~~Free from that spirit of intrigue on which too many rely for advancement, of strict integrity and truthfulness, liberal in his feelings, and just in his intercourse with his professional brethren, he was content to know, and to do his duty, and to await (not impatiently), the result. And he was richly rewarded by the respect, the confidence, and the affection of a large constituency, who for years continued steadfast in their regard, and he had the gratification of ministering, in numerous instances, to the children's children of his early friends. The rich and the cultured respected and confided in him. The poor loved him, and gratefully received his kind ministrations.~~

Dr. MARVIN, although always hesitating to take a prominent position, and never aspiring to the place of a leader, was a most reliable supporter of those movements by which existing institutions in this city have been im-

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proved, and new institutions founded. He was President of this Society for one term, and declined a second election. He was Consulting Physician to the first City Hospital, known better as the Adams Street Hospital, and for several years a Councillor of the Long Island College Hospital, which last office he held at his death.

~~This imperfect sketch of the life and character of our deceased associate would be signally incomplete, did we fail to notice the religious element which influenced and modified them.~~ Dr. MARVIN was, for thirty-five years, a member of the First Presbyterian Church, in ^{Brooklyn} this city, which he joined during the early pastorate of the Rev. Dr. SAMUEL H. COX. His religious character was that of a sincere, unostentatious, consistent Christian.

Thus has passed away the veteran of more than half a century, respected by all who knew him, without an enemy, in the fullness of his age, "before the evil days had come," which have no pleasure in them. "As a shock of corn, fully ripe, is gathered into its garner, so he hath been gathered." Few men in our community have left a better example, or one which it would be safer for us to follow.

The following resolutions were also adopted:

RESOLVED, That the Medical Society of the County of Kings, recognizes in the death of its late associate and one of its former Presidents, Dr. GEORGE MARVIN, the removal from his duties here, of one of its oldest, most honored, and most estimable members.

RESOLVED, That his high integrity, his assiduous discharge of the duties of his profession, his strict regard and unselfish devotion to the welfare of his patients, the liberality and kindness which marked his intercourse with his professional brethren, and with the community in which for so many years he lived, his disposition to put a charitable construction upon the motives of those who differed with him, and even those who injured him, in fine, to do to others as he would they should do to him—all these traits, as excellent as they are rare, and illustrating, in an unusual degree, the principles of our ethical code, commend his memory to the kindest and most respectful recollection of his coevals, and his example as a citizen, a Christian, and a physician, to all the members of this Society.

THEODORE L. MASON, }
S. THORNE, } *Committee.*
J. C. HALSEY, }

The Society, represented by its officers, and a large number of its members, attended the funeral services, directed the Secretary to present an engrossed copy of the foregoing MEMOIR and RESOLUTIONS to the bereaved family, and to publish them in the papers of the city.









