

BACON. (Fr.)

al

SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

MEDICAL PROFESSION IN NEW HAVEN,

AS WRITTEN BY

DR. FRANCIS BACON

FOR

"A History of the City of New Haven to the Present Time,

BY AN ASSOCIATION OF WRITERS."



NEW YORK:

W. W. MUNSELL & Co., PUBLISHERS, 208 BROADWAY.

1887.





SOME ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
MEDICAL PROFESSION IN NEW HAVEN.

AS WRITTEN BY  
DR. FRANCIS BACON ✓

FOR  
"A HISTORY OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN TO THE PRESENT TIME,  
BY AN ASSOCIATION OF WRITERS."

NEW YORK: W. W. MUNSELL & Co. 1887.

[Dr. Henry Bronson, by his personal recollections, extending over many years, by his familiarity with local traditions, by his careful study of such documents as survive, as well as by his literary facility, is better qualified than any one else to write a history of the medical profession in New Haven. That he could not be persuaded to undertake the business is a cause of sincere regret to the writer of the following pages, and must be so to all who read them, especially if they are familiar with the work Dr. Bronson has already done in that direction in his "History of the Intermittent Fever in the New Haven Region," and in the numerous biographical sketches he has contributed to the publications of the New Haven Historical Society and the Connecticut Medical Society.

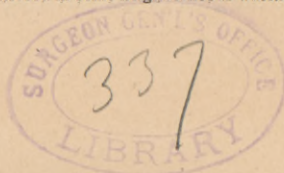
These productions show everywhere a conscientious industry in the collection of obscure materials, an intelligent skill in the use of them, and an unswerving justice in estimates of character that make them models for that kind of work.

The writer of this chapter will have constant need to help himself from these historical sketches, and will do it with the less scruple in that the quality of Dr. Bronson's work cheapens that of any successor he is likely to have in the same field.]

It must be counted as a somewhat exceptional thing in the history of New Haven, that at no time, even during the early days of the colony, did the ministers of religion add the practice of medicine to their functions of spiritual guides and instructors. Doubtless in those days of hardship there was sharp and frequent need of medical help. For a while the people were ill sheltered from a climate new and untried, and often inclement. Some of them were lodged in poor huts, some in half subterranean burrows.\* The perilous change of old habits for new and unfamiliar modes of life, and the stress of such manifold pri-

\* Like the "cellar" wherein poor little Michael Wigglesworth so nearly caught his death, when the "great rain brake in upon us and drencht me so in my bed, being asleep, that I fell sick upon it." The first trace of sanitary legislation to be found in the Records (it was probably in the interest of health as well as of morality) is directed against these "cellars," "2<sup>d</sup> Decr, 1640. It was ordered yt all thatt live in cellars and have famylyes, shall have liberty for three months to provide for themselves, butt all single persons are to betake themselves forthwith to some famylyes except the magistrate see cause to respite them for a time."

This were a wholesome order still, if it could be enforced in some neighborhoods which might be pointed out.



vations as are inevitable in the subduing of a wilderness, must certainly have made themselves felt as the cause of unusual sickness. No such terrible mortality as that which disheartened the first pilgrims at Plymouth, or later ravaged the companies of Endicott and Winthrop in "the Massachusetts," ever afflicted the New Haven colonists. But very early certainly, and probably from the outset, they felt the withering touch of that morbid cause to which our later ignorance gives the name malaria.

There is nothing however to show that either the Rev. John Davenport, or the Rev. Samuel Eaton, or the Rev. William Hooke, learned men and university-trained scholars as they were, ever were credited with any more medical skill than their fellow adventurers possessed. Had they not been town-bred gentlemen, accustomed to live within easy call of physicians, or had they very long anticipated the emergencies of an abode in the wilderness, it is probable that they, like many English clergymen of their time, and many New England clergymen after them through the following century, might have studied medicine as a part of their education, and practiced it as a useful and acceptable adjunct to their spiritual vocation. The essential elements of medical science in those days were not so bulky but that they might be tacked on as an ornamental and, in case of emergency, a useful appendage to that more sacred learning which was to vanquish the spiritual enemy of mankind. The first American contribution to medical literature was "A Brief Rule to Guide the Common People in Small-pox and Measles, 1674," by the Rev. Thomas Thacher, first minister of the Old South Church in Boston. "He that for his lively ministry was justly reckoned among 'the Angels of the Churches,' might for his medical acquaintances, experiences and performances, be truly called a Raphael," says Cotton Mather, who lets not his reader escape without much more about Ægidius Atheniensis and Constantinus Afer, and other like practitioners of "the angelical conjunction" of phisic and divinity, in the style so sadly familiar in the pages of the "Magnalia."

The physicians themselves of that day, if they were learned, as some of them were, found their learning for the most part in a certain debatable ground outside of the strict limits of medical literature. The admirable Sir Thomas Browne, for instance, was a learned physician, and so, in less degree and in a different line, was his son, Edward. Sir Thomas was copious in Latin and Greek, and had more Hebrew than most theologians of this day have time to get or need to use. Their natural science was that of Aristotle and Pliny, with some recent additions in chemistry from Paracelsus and Van Helmont. Doubtless it was well for them to be learned. What more comforting for a patient roaring in a fit of the gout than that his doctor should have the "Encomium Podagræ" of Cardanus at his tongue's end? How tranquilizing in the delirium of fever to show the mystical correspondence of the signs of the zodiac with those of the twelve tribes of Israel! But with all our admiration for the devout eloquence of the *Religio Medici*, we must admit that it is less likely to be helpful to the sick man than to soothe the grief of his surviving friends.



Though the most skillful physician of that period would cut but a poor figure among the average of his brethren of this day for the paucity of his resources, yet the seventeenth century was one of great progress in medical science and art.

My Lord of Verulam's pregnant suggestions were quickening inquiry in every branch of knowledge, and thoughtful men were asking of every fact if it were not a key that might unlock some never yet opened door.

The great epoch-making discovery of the circulation of the blood, which had stopped short of completeness seventy-five years before in Geneva, owing to the irresistible warmth of John Calvin's argument with poor Michael Servetus, was carried to its inevitable result by William Harvey.

The century through the first third of which Van Helmont dreamily groped after truth, was able to show at its close the work of Thomas Sydenham as its gain in the way of accurate observation, sagacious experiment and sound reasoning.

New Haven Colony managed to be born and to pass some years of life without the help of any doctor of its own. Neither was there a conveniently neighboring practitioner who could run in upon occasion or periodically and do a compendious stroke of medication and phlebotomy, as good Dr. Samuel Fuller, of Plymouth, Mayflower pilgrim and deacon in John Robinson's church, and "the first regularly educated physician that visited New England," used to do. "I have been to Matapan," he writes to Governor Bradford, "and let some twenty of those people blood." "What disease prevailed among those people that required loss of blood in the warm season of June, we are unable to determine," says the judicious Dr. Thacher ("Medical Biography") in recounting this incident. Probably it was a proceeding *nunc pro tunc*, like some of the discipline in Dotheboys Hall. Matapan was an outlying corner of the Doctor's field, and who could tell what distemper might get afoot and make headway before his next visit.

In sore straits as our ancestors often found themselves, it is certain that they never thought of availing themselves of the skill of those Indian "medicine men" who could not have been far to seek, and concerning whose powers the unlearned in these later days have entertained such strange conceits. To receive the ministrations of a "medicine man," with his somewhat crude and limited resources in the way of *materia medica*, and his unlimited *armamentarium diabolicum*, whooping, rattling, dancing, steaming and stenchful, by all accounts could have been little short of a personal interview with Hobbamocke himself, a personage between whom and the old orthodox Apollyon there was no greater room for choice than is afforded by the eccentricities of individual taste. And yet, frankly admits William Wood ("New England's Prospect," 1634), "sometimes the Devill for requittal of their worship, recovers the partie, to nuzzle them up in their divelish Religion."\*

\* If these simple thaumaturgists were now to reappear in the pomp of bears' claws, catamounts' heads, eagles' talons, rattlesnakes' skins, and the like, which served instead of diplomas to

The earliest allusion to any medical matter in the New Haven Records is of date December 3, 1645, when Mr. Pell appeared to testify to the Court concerning a wound which he had treated, inflicted by the bursting of a gun, whereby Stephen Medcalf, a cutler, had one of his eyes destroyed. He speaks of "the great chardge of the cure, affirming it was worth £10." From this time, until about 1654, Mr. Pell is occasionally mentioned in the Records as engaged in medical practice. He was in New Haven as early as 1642. It is probable that he had some qualifications, according to the standard of that time, to be a physician, both by education, for he was a gentleman by birth, of a good English family,\* and by experience, for he had been surgeon to the Saybrook Fort in 1636, and had gone in the same capacity with Captain Underhill to the Pequot War in 1637. Mr. Pell's name, however, appears much oftener in connection with various business affairs than with medical matters, and it seems probable that he did not devote himself thoroughly to the work of a physician. He was a man of enterprise, not to say intrepidity, for not only did he engage in that risky Pequot War, but he married the Widow Brewster. After this latter event it is perhaps not surprising that in a matter of certain accountings he should have persisted in maintaining a contumacious attitude towards the New Haven Court, with which his bride had, during her previous widowhood, waged so lively a controversy. There are domestic experiences in the light of which the terrors of the law grow pale.

Mr. Pell removed from New Haven about 1654, and became, by purchase, the first proprietor of that estate in Westchester County, N. Y., which has ever since borne the name of Pelham Manor. He died in Fairfield in 1669. The inventory of his property shows nothing of a medical character, except "Culpeper's Dispensatory," which was rather a work for popular use than a scientific authority.

The name of Nicholas Auger first appears in the Records in 1643, as grantee of that desirable lot "reserved for an Elder," which is now occupied by the St. John block on the corner of Church and Elm streets. Mr. Auger (his name is always accompanied with that respectful prefix) seems to have followed the practice of medicine with more assiduity than Mr. Pell, and to have prospered correspondingly less in his worldly affairs. Although, like Mr. Pell, Mr. Auger was much occupied in other business, probably the main dependence of New Haven in medical matters was upon him, except at some intervals when other help was at hand, until 1676, when he sailed upon a voyage from which he never returned. There is some reason to

---

establish their claims to the confidence of the public, and were to take their place with their legitimate successors among the irregular practitioners of the present day, their special Satanophany would at least add a picturesque vivacity to a somewhat monotonous waste of ignorance and imposture. And, as there is absolutely nothing in the existing statutes of Connecticut, and less than one could wish in the state of public opinion, to prevent it, it is probable that they would secure a share of that imperishable *clientele* which is not for a day but for all time, and which, believing that recovery from disease or injury is due not to natural law, but to supernatural interference, consequently prefers that its physician shall be ignorant, and insists that he shall be irrational, sometimes withal reckoning it a crowning grace if he is tipsy at off times.

\* His brother, the Rev. John Pell, D.D., eminent as a mathematician, was appointed by the Lord Protector, in April, 1654, ambassador to the Swiss Cantons, and resided at Zurich in that capacity.



suppose that his medical career was not wholly satisfactory either to himself or to the public. He experienced great difficulty in collecting his dues, a difficulty not entirely peculiar to himself or to the time in which he lived. He was discouraged nearly to the point of throwing up his practice, or at least of threatening to do so. It is interesting to his successors of the present day to find that the General Court took the trials of this ill-starred pioneer seriously to heart, and gave him what comfort they could by "witnessing against" the delinquency of his patients "as an act of unrighteousness," on one occasion. And again, January 29, 1660: "Mr. Auger declared that (it having pleased God to visit the town sorely by sickness the two last years) his stock of physic is gone, and how to procure more out of his returns he saw not, being disabled by the non-payment of some and the unsuitable payment of others. To get supplies, those that were Mr. Auger's debtors were called upon to attend their duty. It was also declared that if Mr. Auger see cause to bring any of them to the Court it will be witnessed against as a wrong to the public that a physician should be discouraged."

Earlier than this, February 4, 1650, the Court ordered "that Mr. Auger should be paid his claim of 44s. 10d. for physic to Mr. Malbon's servants, and for something to a man that was bitten by a rattlesnake."

It does not clearly appear from the Records that the rattlesnake bit the man by way of warning for his share in the prevailing slackness of Mr. Auger's debtors; but if, as the medical mind is fain to believe, that is the true explanation of the matter, it is much to be deplored that this reptile, so useful as a persuader to pecuniary punctuality, has long since disappeared from this region.

June 17, 1650, the Governor mentions to the General Court that one Mr. Besthup, "a surgeon or physician that was lately passed through the town to the Dutch," "had lived some time in Plymouth patent, and hath been of good use there." And the Governor suggests that as "Mr. Pell is now going away, whether it may not be good for this town to use some means that he may be staid here." "The Court liked well of what was done, and by vote declared that they desire he should stay here." Mr. Besthup, on this encouragement, staid. In a few days he and Mr. Auger had a surgical case on their hands. Wash, an Indian, had been beaten and had his arm broken by a sailor "that went in Michael Taynter's vessel," and he appealed for justice to the Court, and would not be bought off with wampum, which was urged upon him, "but said he desired it might be healed at the man's charge." It is pleasant to read that the Court sustained this very reasonable demand. Poor Wash was turned over to the care of the surgeons, and the arm-breaker was sent to mend his ways in prison.\*

\*That the early New England authorities did not hold the belief recently formulated in the statement, "No good Indian but a dead Indian," there are numerous instances to show.

"There is £28 charged to account which is for an Indian whose skull and jawbone was broken by the fall of a piece of timber as he was sawing for the meeting-house [this was John Eliot's meeting-house], sorely bruised and wounded, lying senseless many days; for which cure the chirurgeon hath £20, and his diet and attendance £8."—Records of the United Colonies, September 10, 1652.



Mr. Besthup's stay in New Haven seems to have been brief, for he makes no further appearance upon the Records.

In the next year, November 14, 1651, "The Governor acquainted the Court that there is a physician come to the town, who, he thinks, is willing to stay here, if he may have encouragement. He is a Frenchman, but hath lived in England and in Holland a great while, and hath good testimonials from both places." This was Dr. Chais, a real Doctor "from the University of Franeker," and the earliest person in New Haven to bear that title, which in those days had some significance, and was used with scrupulousness accordingly. Mr. Davenport had examined him and said "that his abilities answer the testimony given," and the townspeople were moved to extraordinary efforts to secure so valuable an accession to their community. £10 in money was voted him, together with a house, and he was to be "encouraged in provisions."

Thereupon Dr. Chais remained, but it soon appeared that he was not satisfied with his subsidy. He wanted more money and a better house. March 11, 1652, the Court was informed what "sundry of the Brethren of the Church have proposed to do concerning the Doctor, namely, to give him £25 to provide him of Physical things necessary for his calling." "After much debate they agree to let him have Mr. Malbon's house if it can be got." This must have been one of the better sort of houses. It was afterward offered by the town to John Winthrop as a gift, and became his home while he abode here.

Poor Mr. Auger must have felt himself suffering eclipse. At the same Court he sought to know on what terms his house was given him, if he can dispose of it if he goes away. To whom the Court soothingly replies: "It was given him freely as other men's lots were given them at first," and "The Town would not have him discouraged in his way." The French Doctor did not discourage him very long. After about a year, during which time there was some chaffering between him and the authorities, they complaining of his high charges "for his visiting of sick folk," the graduate of Franeker betook his skill and his title elsewhere, and Mr. Auger was left in possession of the field.

In 1654, when "the undertaking against the Dutch" was on foot, Mr. Auger and John Brocket were appointed surgeons to the New Haven contingent. They were afterward remunerated for the trouble and expense they were at "in providing things for the soldiers if they had gone out to war." This John Brocket was a surveyor, and probably his medical qualifications were of the slightest. At any rate, in 1647, when Mr. Pell and Mr. Auger\* were freed from watching and warding, an immunity due to them as practicing medicine, "John Brocket propounded that he might be freed," "but the Court saw no cause to grant it."

The story of Mr. Auger's death, as told at length by Cotton Mather ("Magnalia," vi, 1), is a tragic one. He sailed from New Haven,

\* And Mr. William Westerhouse, the Dutch merchant, who also at another time had a fine for selling "stronge water" remitted, "the courts considering how useful hee hath bine in the towne by giving physicke to many persons, and to some of them freely."



August 25, 1676, with Ephraim How and his two sons "in a small ketch of about seventeen tons" for Boston. Attempting to return in September, they were driven far out of their course and, after drifting helplessly about for seven weeks, were wrecked upon "a dismal, doleful, rocky island" near Cape Sable, and Mr. How, Mr. Auger and a lad (the rest of the party having perished), got ashore and prepared for starvation with "a barrel of wine and half a barrel of mollosa's." Mr. Auger died after twelve weeks of this wretchedness, the lad some months later, and solitary Mr. How was at last rescued and made his way home to New Haven the next summer.

Mr. Auger's small property went mainly to his sister, Mrs. Ellen Costar, and that explains why Guilford held a special town-meeting "July 3, 1679, to consider whether the inhabitants would buy Mrs. Cosster's Physic and Physicall drugs," which by that time, it may be feared, had grown musty enough to make it a dubious bargain for "the inhabitants" to give all the beef and peas for them which they unani- mously voted in payment.

When, in 1655 or 1656, the worshipful John Winthrop, Esq., came to live in New Haven, it was the fulfillment of hopes which had often been urgently expressed by Governor Eaton and Mr. Davenport, and which had long been entertained by many other people. Beside all the other admirable qualities which made him so desirable a citizen, Mr. Winthrop was very widely known as unusually learned and skillful in medical affairs, and, at his home in Pequot, his advice and medicines had for years been sought for by patients from long distances on every side. It seems likely, from his education and from his pursuits, that he was more familiar with the chemistry of that day, such as it was, than any other man on this side of the ocean. He kept eyes of observation open for important facts in the New World around him, gathering interesting specimens for the Royal Society, of which he was one of the earliest Fellows. He sent them stones and shells and silk- weed pods and "a humming-bird's nest with two eggs in it," upon which the sacred eyes of the King's Majesty rested with gracious approval. He sent them a horse-foot crab, which seems to have filled them with mingled emotions of perplexity and delight, for the com- bined force of the Society was brought to bear upon the humble crus- tacean, with the result of misinterpreting his tail and accusing him of strabismus.\*

He searched diligently for mines among the rocky hills of Connecti- cut, and set iron-works afoot; he invented a wind-mill which he hoped would help out the short-handed young colony in its work.

He corresponded with philosophers in the old country; with the great Robert Boyle and with Sir Kenelme Digby, from the latter of whom he got that dainty device for curing agues which, in the dearth

---

\* "What you call the sharp tail of the horse-foot, is rather the forepart and nose of the fish ; \* \* \* having also found that two of the knobs on the shell, now dried up, had been the places of the eyes, and did still by the manner of their ductuss express that they had looked towards the said nose when the animal was living."—Henry Oldenburg, to John Winthrop, Jr., Mass. Hist. Coll., 3d Series, Vol. X.



of Jesuit's bark, he had opportunity enough to test in those days at New Haven had he been so minded.\*

It is to be regretted that he never put hand to that work which was repeatedly urged upon him by some of his learned correspondents in England as "an undertaking worthy of Mr. Winthrop and a member of the Royal Society"—the writing of a natural and political history of his adopted country. An intelligent and authentic account, such as he would have given, of the first acquaintance made by the white men with the wild nature which surrounded them in their new homes, would have possessed an interest constantly increasing as the experience it recorded recedes into the past. †

The Winthrop Papers, published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, contain numerous allusions to the medical practice of Mr. Winthrop. There is also extant, in his own manuscript, a collection of cases treated by him, mostly while he was Governor of Connecticut and living at Hartford. From these materials Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes ("Medical Essays—'The Medical Profession in Massachusetts'") has produced a sketch of the therapeutics of Mr. Winthrop and of his contemporaries, to which all who desire to see that subject presented in the most charming way may be referred.

He seems to have had a fair command of the *materia medica* of the period, showing special favor to two or three articles, as most doctors fall into the habit of doing after a few years of trial. Nitre he dispensed with a free hand, sharing herein the preference of so illustrious a valetudinarian as Lord Bacon, who dosed himself almost daily for many years with that salt. Antimony he prescribed very often, in a combination to which he gave the alluring name of "rubila," and which seems to have been an imitation of the old "Jovial Diaphoretic" or "Antihectic of Poterius," and to have been potent by virtue of at least one of its ingredients. "Rubila," forsooth! But "Look you, the worm will do his kind." Governor Newman tried it once and was shy of it afterward, and the Rev. Nicholas Street, in his quotidian ague, would not so much as hear of it. ‡

\* "Pare the patient's nayles when the fitt is coming on and put the parings into a little bagge of fine linen or sarsenet, and tye that about a live eele's necke in a tubbe of water. The eele will dye and the patient will recover. And if a dog or a hog eate that eele, they will also dye."—Kenelme Digby to John Winthrop, Jr.

† No important knowledge of the medicinal properties of indigenous plants appears to have been gained by the earliest settlers. The simples which had been familiar in their mouths in England, they held in higher esteem than any that the American forest had to offer them. They rejoiced to see that many of those old friends migrated in their company, and, taking kindly to the new soil, "prospered notably" and "flourished exceedingly." Mr. John Josselyn who, in 1672, made the first essay toward a medical botany of the country ("New England's Rarities Discovered") gives at that early date a long list of such introduced plants, and, making a single venture into the realm of metaphysics, inquires, "What became of the influence of the planets that produce and govern these plants before this time?" What indeed! Mr. Winthrop, skilled in occult lore, and having the advantage of being on the ground at the time, might have been able to answer this weighty question, but, as he failed to do so, it must perhaps be let drop into that comprehensive category of my Lord Dundreary's, "Things that no fellow can find out."

‡ There is this entry in the New Haven Records, May 23, 1653: "It is agreed that every man shall cut up the great, stinking, poisonous weed which grows against his own ground, and for that which grows in the Market-place or other common place about the Town, that it be cut by some man appointed at the Town's charge." This weed can scarcely be else than that undesirable datura (stramonium) which has from an early date shown such unaccountable persistence in linking its fortunes with that of the white man upon this continent, winning the name of "Jimson" (Jamestown) weed, in the South, from its prompt appearance in the earliest English settlement in Virginia.

‡ "Once he [Governor Newman] took the Rubila, but finding himself sundrie times ready to



Beside these, and some other chemical substances which were then comparatively new in the list of medicines, Mr. Winthrop often used some of the old Galenical preparations, theriaca, mithridate and the like, which were then universally regarded with the respect due to their ancient origin and long renown. And whatever help there was to be got from a unicorn's horn, he was able to afford his patients. That picturesque article he seems to have tried for Mrs. Eaton, the Governor's wife, or widow, with what success is not recorded; judging from the story of her contentions at home and in the church, there were times when nothing short of "the voyage to Anticyra" would have helped the poor lady.

Though Mr. Winthrop did not leave to us that history so greatly desiderated by the Royal Society, there is at least one bit of his manuscript extant that reflects credit upon him, to wit, a broad line of erasure which he drew through the name of a brother medical practitioner mentioned with expressions of distrust by Mr. Davenport in one of his letters. Mr. Winthrop was a gentleman conspicuously amiable and noble, and it is probably due to his early example that from that day to this there are no traces of that unhappy vice, the *odium medicum*, among the physicians of New Haven. This is the more remarkable in that he dwelt here only about two years, removing then to Hartford, where, for the rest of his life, as Governor of the Commonwealth and as physician, he more than justified the old saying applied to him by Cotton Mather, "Magistratus est Civitatis Medicus."

Mention is made in the early records of New Haven of Widow Potter and Goodwife Beecher the midwives, and of other women following the same calling, indicating that an important function affecting the indigenous growth of the colony was confided to their hands, which, in later days, by a change in manners of questionable advantage, has passed over to practitioners of the opposite sex. Those worthy women are commonly spoken of in connection with some abatement of taxes or other easement, implying the esteem in which their services were held by the town. The frequency with which their fences are recorded to have been repaired at the public expense, suggests the idea that these frail barriers of the temple of Lucina may have been sometimes overthrown by the too impetuous onset of marital anxiety at critical moments and in the darkness of the night.

It is probable that for some time after the departure of Mr. Auger, New Haven was destitute of a resident physician. The town records make no mention of any for several years. At several town-meetings during the winter of 1687-88, "the need of the town being great" there was debate concerning the inducements to be offered to Dr. Richard Williams, then living at Hartford, to remove to New Haven.

---

faint away, hath not been willing to take it again, nor his wife that he should, though we persuaded and encouraged him thereunto. \* \* \* I persuaded him [Mr. Street] what I could, to take the Rubila, but doe not find him inclinable."—Letter of Rev. John Davenport, Winthrop Papers.

He was said to be "an able or licensed physician, \* a man of very good report, and one that might be of good use in the place." The Rev. Mr. Pierpont and Mr. Hudson were joined with the authority and townsmen to consider of the matter. They "reported that they would allow him £8 for his house rent for five years to come." Small as this subsidy was, the town, after "much debate in confusion" voted "that they did not see it in their way to grant any yearly allowance or salary in the case, yet by a full vote (*nemine contradicente*) did declare that if Dr. Williams pleased to remove and come to New Haven, he shall be welcome and well accepted in the place." Dr. Williams thereupon came and took up his abode here. He makes no further appearance in the records, except as resolutely upholding "the dignity of the profession" from the profane touch of local politics. December 26, 1692, he was chosen constable, "but refused the choice, counting it an affront, and alledging that he knew neither law nor custom to justify the choosing him." "His return not satisfying the Town left him to the law and pay as others in like case;" a decision which, however imperfect in its grammar, indicated clearly enough an intention to get 40s. out of Dr. Williams' pocket and into the town treasury. But once more, and for the last time, nearly two years later, in 1694, the eye of the historian rests admiringly upon the figure of the inflexible doctor receding into the dim inane of oblivion, with "the dignity of the profession" unimpaired and the forfeited 40s. still somewhere about him. "Voted," the record stands, with a perceptible tinge of hopelessness, "That the Townsmen on the Town's behalf manage the case respecting Dr. Williams' fine for refusing to stand Constable, and that they see the law attended *as much as in them lies*."

After Dr. Williams, the instructive and entertaining old Town Records shed no further light upon the practice of medicine in New Haven. The government became constantly less paternal and more democratic, and the law of demand and supply was left to regulate the relations between physicians and patients. Practitioners of the healing art undoubtedly multiplied with the growth of the town and improved with the advance of science, but so little record survives of them, or of their doings, that even the microscopic research of Dr. Bronson has discovered little of interest until toward the last quarter of the following century.

The names, and little more than the names, of two physicians of that intermediate period are preserved in the *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy*. There is a foreign flavor about them which must have distinguished them at that time, when the first great wave of immigration was spent and the second had not begun, more than it would at present.

Dr. Johann Rohde, a native of Heiligenbad, Prussia, was in New Haven as early as September 23, 1756, for on that auspicious day he married the Widow Rebecca Tyler. A very desirable widow she, four

\* An "able," "licensed" or "allowed" physician was one whose qualifications had been examined and approved by the General Court. The government of this State was actually solicitous then to protect the lives of its citizens from the ignorance of worthless pretenders—a curious example of the simplicity of that uncultured age!



times a widow before she became as the angels in heaven. Traditions of her comeliness survive among her posterity yet.

Nothing more concerning the Doctor until January 25, 1775, when the *Connecticut Journal* remarks: "Yesterday afternoon, departed this life, Dr. John Rhode [name anglicized by this time], for many years a noted physician and surgeon in this town." Benighted times were those, when wisdom, in the person of the reporter, eager for items and for the tributary cigar, did not cry at the gates, and "a noted physician and surgeon" could go for nineteen years without having his achievements and the sufferings of his patients trumpeted from week to week in the local newspaper.

In the *Connecticut Journal and New Haven Post Boy* of February 1, 1771, "The subscriber takes this method of informing the Public that he proposes to pursue the practice of Physick in this Place. Likewise Surgery in all its branches, as Bone Setting, etc., and Midwifery. Daniel Bonticou."

Dr. Bonticou was of the good old Huguenot family so well known in New Haven, and was born there in 1737. After his graduation at Yale College, in 1757, he went to France to study medicine. He staid abroad several years, and is said to have been a surgeon in the French army.

With such advantages, unusual in that day, it would seem that he should have become eminent among the less favored physicians around him. His early death, in 1778, gave but brief opportunity for that.

He married the widow of his predecessor, Dr. Rhode. She became in turn the Widow Bonticou, and ultimately, surviving her fourth husband, died a different widow still.

It is worthy of remark, as an illustration of the social changes that have been wrought, and especially of the relative decline in importance of rural pursuits in Connecticut, that, until about the beginning of the present century, the most renowned physicians were as likely to be found in little farming neighborhoods as in either of the two chief towns of the State.

During a period, from 1686 to 1713, when neither New Haven nor Hartford had a physician who left any striking impress upon local history, the little cluster of farms which is now Glastonbury, was the home of Dr. Gershom Bulkeley, whose medical learning and reputation, and probably whose skill, surpassed that of any other man in Connecticut. After him came Dr. Jared Eliot, "unquestionably the first physician of his day in Connecticut," as well as an uncommonly useful and distinguished citizen in many other ways. From 1709 to 1763 he lived in Killingworth, his influence and activity radiating thence over the whole State.

Still later, his son-in-law, Dr. Benjamin Gale, not less eminent as a physician, had his home in the same little village, until his death in 1790. In his turn Dr. Jared Potter, in Wallingford, from 1772 to 1810, kept up the succession of great country doctors, being regarded for much of that time as the leading practitioner in the State. He put

society still further in his debt by teaching in medicine a succession of pupils who resorted to him, the earliest and perhaps the most noted among them being Dr. Lemuel Hopkins, of Hartford.

It may fairly be taken as showing a remarkably good condition of the profession in this region, that in December, 1783, there should have been a concerted public movement to organize a Medical Society in New Haven County.\*

At that time there were very few such societies in the United States. The Massachusetts Medical Society was formed in 1781, and it would appear from an advertisement in the *Connecticut Courant* that in the same year there was a similar body in Dutchess County, N. Y. In 1783 the New Jersey Medical Society had its beginning. And remarkably enough, as early as 1767, there was a Medical Society in Litchfield County, which was probably the oldest in this country by at least fourteen years. But this completes the list of those which antedated the New Haven County Society.

It was, from the outset, the plan of the New Haven Physicians to make their voluntary association the starting point of a chartered organization which should cover the State and include all qualified and reputable medical practitioners. How they labored to this end and how, in 1792, they attained it, merging their local society in the larger body, has been so fully told by Dr. Bronson (Papers of the New Haven Historical Society, Vol. II) that nothing can here be added to his account. During the eight years of the independent existence of the New Haven County Medical Society it exhibited a creditable show of vitality. Besides holding its regular and occasional meetings and transacting its routine business, it published, in 1788, a collection of Cases and Observations, containing eighty-six pages, which is still not without value.

Among the sixty-one original members of the society, the best remembered names are those of Dr. Jared Potter, of Wallingford, already spoken of; Dr. Eneas Munson, and Dr. Levi Ives, who will be more fully mentioned in another connection; and Drs. Leverett Hubbard and Ebenezer Beardsley, who, both as physicians and as citizens, were of high local repute and influence.

Dr. Hubbard was the first president of the Society and afterward the first president of the Connecticut Medical Society. By all accounts he was a type of the energetic, self-reliant, successful physician and man of affairs, rejoicing in the double title of Doctor and Colonel, *iam*

---

\*In 1763 a memorial was presented to the General Assembly by physicians of Norwich, praying for the establishment of a State Medical Society. It is a quaint but well-meaning document, equally bewildering by its indiscriminate profusion of capital letters and its absolute indigence of all punctuation. Although it begins with the impressive statement that "Life is the most Desirable of all Sublunary Enjoyments and Health so Invaluable a Blessing that without it in some Degree Life is little Worth," and ends with the names of eleven physicians "who as in duty bound shall ever pray," yet nothing ever came of it except the disappointment of the respectable petitioners.

If they escaped without much contumelious eloquence to boot from some politician of the period, their fate was milder than that of some petitioners of later date, who meekly hoping for the discouragement of some specially pestilent fraud, have discovered all too late that they were "attempting to establish a chartered and grasping monopoly and to trample upon the sacred rights of the individual."



*Marti quam Mercurio*, driving a multiplicity of horses in his large practice ("four good horses!" exclaimed the admiring public); building for his dwelling the square hammered-stone house which, though fallen upon evil days of exotic squalor and lager beer, is still a land-mark at the head of Meadow street; and finally leaving a handsome estate to his heirs. He died in his seventieth year, October 1, 1794, being one of the latest victims of the yellow-fever epidemic, which combined with one of "putrid sore throat" to make that year a gloomy one in the city's annals.

Dr. Ebenezer Beardsley was one of the younger members of the society at its foundation, but he had already won a high rank among the New Haven physicians. He was a clear-headed and thoughtful man, with more literary accomplishments than most of his professional brethren. Dr. Bronson is "inclined to think that in natural and valuable gifts, and perhaps in the knowledge which comes from observation and study, he stood at the head of the profession in New Haven." At any rate, before his much-lamented death in 1791, at the age of forty-five, he had come to be "considered as the most popular physician in the place, particularly among fashionable people." It is probable that the "fashionable people" of that day, in the little city of 3,000 souls, were not so wholly given to frivolity as to make it utterly disgraceful for a doctor to be popular among them.

One thing at least deserves to be recorded of Dr. Beardsley—that he had in his office, as his pupil in medicine, an uncommonly bright and attractive young man, recently graduated from Yale College at the age of eighteen years, who must even then have given to the observant eye of his teacher indications of the excellent qualities which twenty years later made him not only one of the leading physicians, but also one of the most influential and widely-known citizens of Hartford.

Eli Todd proved to be one of that sort of men who not only lay in a good working stock of accomplishments for ordinary use, but who, beyond and better than that, by force of character compel trust and helpfulness and, more or less, obedience from other men. Had he not been a doctor—he was not a man to run to waste—those good serviceable traits of his would surely have inured to the benefit of society in some other distinguished way. As it was, more than any other man he was the founder of that noble institution, the Hartford Retreat for the Insane. He was its first superintendent, and during his remarkably wise and successful administration of ten years, the most critical period of its history, he established its hold upon the confidence of the public as one of the best places of its kind in this country. To this day Dr. Todd's memory is recalled with respect and gratitude by the friends of the Retreat and of that unhappy class for whose benefit it was intended, and it is meet that New Haven, the city of his birth and education, should take pride in the good work he accomplished.

In January, 1803, the physicians of the City of New Haven, for various reasons (the medical care of the town poor being one of the more important) feeling that a closer professional organization other than the Connecticut Medical Society was desirable among themselves, met together and formed the New Haven Medical Association.

The thirteen names which stand upon the record of the Association as its original members,\* represent probably all the reputable practitioners in the city in 1803. If there were any who failed to be attracted by the formally declared purpose of the Association "to establish the practice of physic in this city on a respectable footing; to enable ourselves to live by the profession; to promote a good understanding and harmonious intercourse with each other," it is possible that to such, another clause in the articles of agreement may have proved more cogent, which, with its threat of non-intercourse, conveys to the reader of to-day a distinct flavor of trades-unionism and even of the boycott.

A brief tariff of charges in the original agreement contains some items which illustrate certain changes that have come to pass in the four-score years since they were written: "Two shillings for a day visit in the city; four shillings for a night visit; one shilling for a puke; one do. for a purge; one do. for bleeding; one do. for a mile travel; three do. for a visit to the hospital [pest-house] for common cases, and four do. for small-pox and yellow fever." Changes in the public health—of the two diseases mentioned one was then an ever-present terror, now by the mild potency of vaccination shrunk into insignificance in every enlightened and well-ordered community, and the other was a periodical menace, whose malign fury as an invader of this and neighboring cities was then fresh in the memory of all, though now, thanks to quarantine and improved sanitation, it ranks with such far-away and dimly imagined horrors of the tropics as slave-ships, crocodiles and typhoons. Changes in the values of money and personal services—he would be but a humble laborer who would now be content with such day's wages as he could earn on such a scale of prices. Changes in medical practice—blood-letting, which was then a deed of daily commission, inflicted upon an unresisting public by the shilling's-worth, has become a surgical operation rarer than some which would then have been regarded as impracticable. Changes in the English language as well—nothing short of historic fidelity justifies to-day the writing of those two medical monosyllables which were so familiar in the mouths of our forefathers, but which are now condemned to a deeper ignominy than small-pox and yellow fever, and superseded by seemly Greek derivatives.

The New Haven Medical Association has fairly maintained to the present day the character and purposes with which it began. Its intention is to include in its membership the reputable regular practitioners of the city. Whenever it has found itself harboring an undesirable member it has commonly relieved itself of his presence with little delay or ado; fortunately this necessity has been rare. Its meetings are semi-monthly, except during the heat of summer, when feeling the partial torpor which overtakes civic life at that season, it meets but once a month. These gatherings are partly scientific and partly social,

---

\* Eneas Munson, Levi Ives, Obadiah Hotchkiss, Elisha Chapman, Joel Northrop, John Barker, John Skinner, Elijah Munson, Eli Ives, Nathaniel Hubbard, John Spalding, Thomas Goodsell, James Gilbert.



but wholly practical. For many years they were held from house to house of the members, but with the increasing size of the association, which now numbers about sixty, it is sometimes found more convenient to resort to a public room. The observations and experiences of members form a mass of material constantly increasing in extent and variety, and the discussions growing out of them are often of much interest and importance.

The establishment of the Medical Institution of Yale College marked, at least, if it did not create, an advance in the standing of the medical profession in Connecticut. There were already six medical colleges in the United States,\* one in Philadelphia, one in New York, one in Boston, one in Baltimore, and the remaining two, oddly enough, it would seem at first sight, were strictly "fresh-water colleges," in small and somewhat inaccessible villages, one of them the Medical Department of Dartmouth College, in Hanover, N. H., and the other the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of the State of New York, in Fairfield, Herkimer County, N. Y. The difficulties of travel at that time made all these places too remote for most students in Connecticut.

"The greater portion of students," says Dr. Knight,† "contented themselves with the means of instruction which were afforded them by some neighboring physician. These means were for the most part inconsiderable." The criticism does not err by over-statement. Too many of this "greater portion of students" got their science less by systematic effort than by an occult absorptive or osmotic process, continued in the mysteriously scented precincts of a "respectable physician or surgeon" for two years "if the student had a college education," and for three years if he was not thus favored; after which a brief and usually not formidable interview, called an examination, with a committee of three members of the Connecticut Medical Society, entitled him to a license to practice medicine. "The pupils of Dr. Whistlewind were rather accustomed to *ride* into medical skill than to attain it by the harder course of study."‡

Those were bright and resolute spirits who rose above the poverty of their educational opportunities, and qualified themselves for really good service in their day and generation, and ultimately for the mild apotheosis of Thacher's Medical Biography. Fit praise of them can be spoken only by the teacher who, with all the appliances of to-day at his command, too often finds *alma mater* no match for the impervious *dura mater* of some crass student.

---

\* Dr. Knight, in two different printed addresses (1838 and 1853) counts his own college as the fifth in the United States in order of seniority. In enumerating its elders he omits the Baltimore school, a large and flourishing one from almost its beginning, and the school at Fairfield, which "was organized" in 1812, though whether it was in a prolific state before the New Haven school is uncertain.

† Introductory Lecture, 1838.

‡ The Life and Adventures of Dr. Dodimus Duckworth. By Dr. Asa Greene, 1833. The book has passed into unmerited oblivion. It is an unmistakable study from life in rural New England in the early part of the present century, and although drawn with too broadly farcical a touch, exhibits keen observation and genuine humor.

In the year 1801, the corporation of Yale College, upon the motion of the Rev. Dr. Nathan Strong, of Hartford, voted to establish a medical professorship.\* Nothing further appears to have been done in this direction until 1810, when "the Legislature of the State," upon the joint application of the Corporation of the College and of the President and Fellows of the Connecticut Medical Society, passed an act to establish the Medical Institution of Yale College. Under this law the institution went into operation, and the first course of lectures was delivered in the winter of 1813-14.

At that time an unfinished building, square, massive, stuccoed and whitewashed, standing exactly across the head of College street, looked down the whole length of that thoroughfare. To-day it is recognizable by its old acquaintances as the nucleus around which have gathered, by successive accretions, the laboratories, lecture-rooms and observatory of the Sheffield Scientific School.

It was the property of the Hon. James Hillhouse, and had been intended by him, it is said, for an hotel. If such was his original purpose in building so large and expensive a structure at what was then the unfrequented verge of the city, it is likely that by the time the Medical School proposed to take it off his hands, he was in a state of mind and purse to listen without excessive coyness to the offer. Here, at any rate, with a large and almost tenantless cemetery on its right as a stimulus to unremitting activity in its labors, and on its left a convenient field to be used as a botanic garden, the Medical School found its first home.

There were thirty-three pupils in attendance upon the first course of lectures; two years later the number had increased to sixty-three; in 1822 there were ninety-three. This was the high water-mark. At this time, certainly, the school showed in its catalogue a valid *raison d'être*, but from that period until now, owing largely to the superior attractions of schools and hospitals in the greater cities, and sometimes because of the shameful ease with which diplomas could be procured elsewhere, the number of students has, with some fluctuation, pretty continuously ebbed to the present list of some twenty odd. The painful exiguity of their numbers for the last few years is hardly compensated by the large numerical growth of the force of instructors during the same period. If both these movements are to continue, it can be but a short time before the much-instructed last pupil, contemplating the subdivision of his intellectual powers among some dozens of teachers, will be in a position to exclaim: "How are they increased that trouble me; many are they that rise up against me!"

There have been some critical moments when this institution has seemed ready to add one to the long list of defunct American medical colleges, but its possession of a small fund and something of the necessary plant in the way of apparatus and building, has served not so much to make continuance in life satisfactory, as to make dying inconvenient. So it has outlived many of its more youthful rivals,

---

\* Dr. Knight's Introductory Lecture, 1838.



though the activity of its later years has sometimes appeared not unlike that of "the pensive exile" of the poet,

To stop too fearful and too faint to go.

To one familiar with the manners and customs of medical students of a later date, and especially in the less favored parts of our country, there is a sense of quaintness in the fact that, for a number of its early years, the pupils of this institution lived beneath a government more paternal than any that the most rigid of college dons would now venture to apply to a class of medical students.

"According to this plan, as many of the students as would be thus accommodated had rooms in the college building, while others took rooms in the immediate neighborhood; commons were established at which they took their meals, and morning and evening prayers were regularly attended. A code of laws similar to those of the academical department was enacted by the corporation for the regulation of their conduct, with suitable penalties annexed, and to the observance of these laws every student was required to give his assent. \* \* \* This was done in accordance with the strongly expressed wishes of the late President Dwight. He urged its adoption upon the ground that in this way the character of the young men who came here, in morals and good conduct, could be more efficiently preserved and improved than in any other."\* An acquaintance with some medical schools of the present day might have moved the great theologian to feel less solicitude for the preservation, and correspondingly more for the improvement, of "the character in morals and good conduct" of the ingenuous youth who resort to them.

This plan continued in effect for several years. "It was found to be too cumbersome," says Dr. Knight, "and one portion of it after another fell into disuse, until the system itself gradually disappeared."†

"The principal projectors of this enterprise were Dr. Eneas Munson, President Dwight, Professor Silliman and Dr. Eli Ives. They were aided by their medical friends in various parts of the States, and the project received the official sanction of the State Medical Society, and the hearty co-operation and support of a great portion of its members. "A degree of reluctance was felt on the part of some of the members of the Connecticut Medical Society to relinquish to this school the power of granting licenses and degrees, which had been enjoyed by the society for many years. To allay this, it was agreed that the Board of Examiners should consist, in addition to the professors, of an equal number appointed by the Connecticut Medical Society, of whom the president of the society should be one, with a vote at all times and a casting vote if there should be a tie; thus virtually placing

\* Dr. Knight, Introductory Lecture, 1853.

† A distinct sensation of cumbersomeness was felt one day, as tradition goes, by Dr. Nathan Smith as he was taking his turn in conducting the public devotions of the class. Great surgeon and teacher as he was, his command of the conventional phrases used in such service was for this time at least, inadequate. After a hesitation, a pause, and a moment of embarrassing silence, the professor opened his eyes to encounter the sympathetic gaze of his pupils. Finally he solved the quandary with, "Sit down, sit down, sit down!" enforcing the words with an energetic gesticulation, and, to the relief of his audience, plunged abruptly into surgery.

the power of granting the degree in the hands of the society."\* The society also reserved to itself the power to nominate professors in the school, and to appoint yearly two deserving indigent students from each county, who were to receive their lecture tickets gratis. On this basis harmonious relations between the medical society and the new school were established and long maintained.

The hold of the society upon the school was visibly, though gradually, relaxed during successive years, pretty nearly corresponding with the waning market value of medical degrees, one may infer, until in 1885 the last connection between the two, a sort of marsupial semi-attachment, was divided by act of Legislature.

The issuing of licenses, which were in the gift of the society alone, and which were granted after a shorter period of study than was required for the doctor's degree, went on at such a rate during the first twenty-four years, that at the end of that time there were about 300 licentiates to 400 graduates. Then, as now, the general public was more confiding than critical, and did not too curiously consider the difference between the vernacular on the paper of the medical society and the Latin on the college parchment. After that time the license was less frequently sought from year to year. The last one issued, a solitary one for many years before, seems to have been in 1877.

At the outset the institution was entirely destitute of funds. To meet some urgent needs, a loan of a few hundred dollars was made from the academic treasury, which was soon refunded. But in 1814, "by the personal exertions of Dr. Nathan Smith," says Dr. Knight, "funds to the amount of \$20 000 were obtained by a grant from the Legislature of the State."† The sum was large for that day, and the object of its bestowal unusual. That it should have been secured by Dr. Smith, then a new-comer and nearly a stranger in the State, is an evidence of the energy and "personal magnetism" which characterized him.

The body of teachers with which the medical school began life, when compared with the usual faculty of similar institutions at the present time, appears numerically inadequate. But its *personnel* is noteworthy.

In the order of age they were as follows: Eneas Munson, Professor of *Materia Medica* and Botany; Nathan Smith, Professor of Medicine and Surgery; Benjamin Silliman, Professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy; Eli Ives, Adjunct Professor of *Materia Medica* and Botany; Jonathan Knight, Professor of Anatomy and Physiology.

Dr. Eneas Munson‡ was at this time in his eightieth year, but so unimpaired were his mental powers and so active was he in matters of

---

\* Dr. Knight, *passim*.

† This was the only public gift ever bestowed upon the institution. It was a portion of that *causa teterrima belli*, the Phoenix Bank bonus.

‡ Eneas Munson, born in New Haven June 13, 1734. Son of Benjamin and Abigail Punderson) Munson. Died in New Haven June 16, 1826.



professional interest, that it was hoped that he would be able to perform, in part at least, the duties of the office to which he was appointed. At any rate he was a person of such reputation and influence throughout the State, that it was both wise and graceful formally to recognize it by counting him as a member of the faculty. "It is generally believed," says Dr. Bronson, "that, up to the early part of the present century, Dr. Munson was the ablest physician that ever practiced for a long time in New Haven." Coming of an ancient New Haven family, the only one of his parent's children surviving early childhood, he was educated in Yale College, graduating in 1753. Subsequently, by the study of divinity, having for his teacher Ezra Stiles, then tutor, afterward the renowned president of the College, he qualified himself to be licensed to preach as a Congregational clergyman. Considering the aptitude he afterward showed for natural science, and the excellent qualities he developed as a physician, it would seem as if he should have added another to the instances, so common in earlier days, of Cotton Mather's "Angelical Conjunction" of phisic and divinity. But there were impediments in the way of his success as a minister. Ill-health, dyspepsia, hypochondria, fear "of being struck by lightning if he rode out," these were bad enough, yet against such foes as these saintly ministers have victoriously striven and come off the better for the fight. But there was an innate, probably hereditary, oddity of the man, which, like a sixth sense or a divining rod, showed him a vein of fun in situations where ordinary men did not suspect its existence. He called this his infirmity, and regretted it, "but said he could not help it." His portrait, an engraving from which adorns the pages of Thacher's Medical Biography, looks as if he could not help it.

However much this quality may afterward have enlivened his daily walk and conversation as a physician, it appears from certain legends still extant to have been not always to the edification of those who "sat under" him as a preacher. To have a strange young minister read out all the old "notices" that he found left over from previous years beneath the pulpit cushion, possibly including "intentions of marriage" between parties who may have spent later years in regretting that they ever entertained them, and appointments of Dorcas societies to meet with matrons long since withdrawn from earthly labors, must have impaired the effect of any sermon that might follow.

Many of Dr. Munson's witticisms, chiefly in the way of repartee, have come fluttering down through a century to this day, some of them with little stings in their tails.\* If traditions are to be trusted, it is clear that he was a man to have made some entirely new jokes, if all the jokes had not been made in the dawn of history before he had a chance.

---

\* A single typical specimen, culled from many, shows that neither personal nor official majesty were always safe from his thrust. "He was once dining with the corporation at Commencement dinner, when President Dwight, who was a good trencherman, remarked, preparatory to some observation on diet: 'You observe, gentlemen, that I eat a great deal of bread with my meat,' 'Yes,' said the doctor instantly, and 'we notice that you eat much meat with your bread.'" (Dr. Bronson's Biographical Sketch).

It is impossible for didactic eloquence to prosper when such ribaldry as this is allowed.



When, after a very few years, he turned from divinity to physic, it became clear that he was in the right way to use his good natural endowments to the best advantage. "His instructors were Dr. John Darby, of East Hampton, L. I., and Dr. Townsend, of Gardiner's Island. The advantages which were afforded him for gaining a knowledge of his profession were probably very limited; for many years afterwards he remarked that no one ought to enter upon the profession with so little knowledge of it as he had obtained, or as he could obtain when he was a student." "He entered upon the practice of his profession at Bedford, N. Y., where he remained about two years." Then he removed to New Haven, where he continued until his death, at the age of 92. He was a practicing physician for seventy years. There is a good deal of a history in that statement alone. When a doctor ceases to learn he very soon shrivels up and becomes, as a doctor, quite intolerable, and the people at large "see to it that the republic takes no detriment" from him. We have good evidence that, however imperfect Dr. Munson's early medical instruction was, he kept on strengthening its weak spots during the rest of that long life of his. Botany, such as it was after Ray and before Linnæus, less like to the modern science bearing that name than to the old English wort-cunning, and busying itself not so much in the pursuit of new species as in trying to find out what the known ones were good for, he mastered. "To Dr. Munson the faculty of this country were more indebted for the introduction of new articles and valuable modes of practice than to any other individual." (Dr. Eli Ives' Historical Sketches, *passim*.) From his correspondent Baron Störck, of Vienna, who resuscitated from oblivion and restored to medical activity the famous old poison that assisted at the euthanasia of Socrates, he received some of its seeds in a letter, by which means *Conium maculatum*, taking the Munson garden for its port of entry, now loafs along our road-sides, graceful, lurid and malodorous, like an Italian tramp.

Dr. Munson's attainments in chemistry and mineralogy added to his local renown. "Upon these subjects he was the oracle of all this portion of the country," says Dr. Knight, much sought after by bucolic finders of iron pyrites and other showy stones. It gives an agreeable flavor of antiquity to the Medical College to say that its oldest professor was an experimental alchemist, and that the "powder of projection," effecting the transmutation of metals, that acme of the black art, was a matter of earnest interest to him.\*

---

\* Dr. Bronson quotes from President Stiles' Diary the following passages, which he believes refers to Dr. Munson.

"1789. March second.—This afternoon Dr. — visited me to discourse on Chemistry and inquire concerning the hermetic Philosophy. March third — Dr. — visited me again to-day to converse about the transmutation of metals, which he says Dr. Koon [Kuhn perhaps, a fellow-countryman, may be, of the celebrated Dousterswivel] performed at Wallingford last December. He is infatuated with the notion that I know something about it. I told him that I knew nothing but what is in the books; that I had never possessed the secret, if there was any; that I never saw or conversed with any one that I thought had it; that I had never made or seen the preparation, if that thing was possible; that I had never performed transmutation nor seen it performed; and that I held the whole to be a vain and illusory pursuit."

"*Eruditionis cufusvis generis semper studiosissimus*" though he was, the President was evidently bored before the second visit was ended.



Dr. Munson was as active and influential as any other man in founding the New Haven County Medical Society, and eight years later the Connecticut Medical Society. Of this latter body he was the first vice-president and the second president, holding the highest office by annual election for seven successive years. In those days the society had not yet learned from politicians the two mischievous notions of periodical rotation in office and "geographical claims" of candidates, and so there was nothing to prevent its holding itself in honor and dignity in the choosing and keeping of its officers. In spite of Dr. Munson's invalidism in early life and frequent sicknesses in later years, his vitality was of a tough fiber, so that it took a long time for an old man's malady to weary him out at the age of ninety-two—the oldest inhabitant then of the city.

There is no indication that his researches touching the transmutation of metals were successful. "About \$4,000, net value, was the whole amount of his estate," says Dr. Bronson, "showing that his large and long practice and plain way of living were in his case not profitable, or else that he lacked the usual dollar-hoarding instinct." But if a man lives a long life of integrity and eminent usefulness, and supports and educates creditably a large family, and dies in his old age in nobody's debt, and with the universal esteem of his neighbors, and having gained that approbation of his life's work, which only those can give who are specially qualified to judge of it, he may be called a successful man. There is little need for him to leave a large estate.

A distinguished medical ancestor is very apt to beget doctors. Since Dr. Eneas, the vocation has been hereditary in the Munson stock. New Haven has never been without some of his lineal descendants maintaining the family reputation in the medical profession, and the old saw, *dat Galenus opes*, has been less set at naught than it was by the experience of the first of the line.

It was at first the design of the promoters of the Medical College that the chair of surgery should be filled by a gentleman who, at that time, was probably the most distinguished surgeon living in Connecticut. Dr. Mason Fitch Cogswell, of Hartford, was then in his fifty-third year. He was in the enjoyment of a large and lucrative practice in all branches of his profession, and his social and professional relations were altogether of the most satisfactory nature. He seems to have presented a rare and happy combination of all the moral, intellectual and physical qualities that should go to the making of a good surgeon. He was the first in America, it is said, to tie the carotid artery. This he did in November, 1803, without the knowledge that the same operation had shortly before been done once by Abernethy in England, and once by a less famous surgeon in Germany. "He possessed, in a greater degree than any surgeon whom I have ever known, that happy dexterity in the use of instruments which gave him the power of operating with great accuracy, neatness and rapidity. I have been told that he amputated the thigh in forty seconds," says Dr. Knight. *Laudari a laudato*. Dr. Knight was ever careful and discriminating whether in praise or in censure.

As "an assiduous and successful cultivator of polite literature, especially of poetry," Dr. Cogswell was reckoned one of that famous circle of "Hartford wits" which had for one of its brightest ornaments another member of the same profession, Dr. Lemuel Hopkins.

Not only for his excellence as a physician, but for his noble personal character and his admirable social qualities, he was held in uncommon affection by the people among whom he lived, and among whose descendants his memory is still fragrant. He listened, somewhat reluctantly it may be believed, to the call made on behalf of the new college, and was appointed professor of surgery. There can be no doubt that had he entered upon the duties of that office he would have performed them well. New Haven would have made in him a more valuable acquisition than it has been her wont to gain at the expense of her sister city, and with him in all probability she would have won that noble fruit of his enterprising benevolence, the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb.

But when, shortly after this appointment had been made, it was found that Professor Nathan Smith, of Dartmouth College, would accept the place if it were offered to him, Dr. Cogswell readily relinquished it in his favor, and Hartford was the gainer thereby.

The name of Nathan Smith, \* Professor of Medicine and Surgery, follows that of Dr. Munson, by right of age, on the early catalogues of the college.

There was no hesitation at that time, there can be none now, in reckoning Dr. Smith as the most eminent man whom the medical profession in New Haven has ever counted among its members. The wide popular celebrity which he enjoyed kept only an even pace with the confidence and esteem in which he was held by his professional contemporaries, while the contributions which he made to advance the art of medicine in both its principal branches, were such that his name deserves to be a lasting one.

The history of his life is remarkable and inspiring. "Truly American" as we are apt complacently to say, as if genius were of one nationality!

To be born poor, in an obscure farming town, as farming towns were in Massachusetts a century and a quarter ago; to be taken in early childhood into the mountain wilderness of Vermont, there to grow up to manhood working with his own hands in the rough agriculture and woodcraft of that time and region, with episodic hunting of Indians and being hunted by them, and starvation into the scurvy—this seems an unlikely training to bring up the first surgeon and medical teacher of his day in New England.

But when he was twenty-four years old, "almost without design on his part," he saw Dr. Josiah Goodhue, of Putney, Vt., do a surgical operation.

What the operation was is not recorded, nor what became of the

---

\* Nathan Smith, born in Rehoboth, Mass., September 30, 1762. Died in New Haven, December 26, 1828.



patient; the important fact is, the keen-eyed, quick-witted young farmer who stood by was having his genius awakened. Genuine love at first sight it was for that beneficent skill—an unmistakable vocation to bear a hand in that particular way of helpfulness; so that with brief delay he asked Dr. Goodhue to take him for a student. Judicious Goodhue, sadly mindful of the rude and bushwhacking warfare with disease waged by the generality of his medical neighbors, asks the young enthusiast as to his previous course of life and his acquirements. The reply is, "Until last night I have labored with my hands during my life." Honest and modest, but not otherwise an encouraging statement for the teacher, surely, and perhaps he meant to discourage the aspirant, when he told him, "Fit yourself to enter Harvard College and then I will receive you as a student." No discouragement in that for the resolute young man, only a wholesome stimulus. He takes his prescribed dose of *literæ humaniores* from a neighboring minister, laboring with his hands to pay his way, and in due time presents himself again, qualified as a medical student, to Dr. Goodhue. For three years he continued a pupil in the office of that gentleman to their mutual satisfaction, and then removed to Cornish, N. H., to practice his profession.

Two or three years later he found himself by his earnings able to enter the Medical School of Harvard University, where he was graduated Bachelor of Medicine. Returning thence to Cornish, with much improvement of his scientific equipment for work, he soon found his practice growing large and himself rising to the rank of an authority in the profession.

In 1797, being then thirty-five years old, and a practitioner of about seven years standing probably, he organized a school which has ever since been known as the Medical Department of Dartmouth College. It was a truly missionary undertaking. In that then remote region the practice of medicine and surgery was for the most part in the hands of men who, by no fault of their own, were destitute of the education needful to fit them for their work. The country was poor and thinly populated, travel was difficult and costly, the nearest schools of medicine, at Boston and New York, were practically inaccessible to most of them. In this state of things Dr. Smith's enterprise deserved and gained a measure of immediate success. For several successive years he was the sole professor of the new college, lecturing more or less on all the branches of science then usually taught in medical schools.

That one man, however competent and zealous, could do this, is a striking illustration of the state of medical education at that time. Beside this he rode far and wide over rough roads, pursuing an extensive practice among the sparse population of a half wilderness. After some years of this work, his finances having improved and his labors in teaching having been lightened by the association of other professors with him, he crossed the Atlantic and spent about a year abroad, dividing the time between attendance upon a full course of lectures in the famous Medical School of Edinburgh and in "walking" the hospitals of London.

It was a rare and precious privilege for an American physician in those days, and probably not one could have been found to profit more by it than did Nathan Smith.

Dartmouth Medical School, when he returned to it with the accomplishments and the prestige of his foreign pupilage, flourished apace. It seems never to have lost the headway it got under its founder, but to this day has maintained its reputation as a practical, productive institution. Dr. Smith continued to be its mainstay until he left it to come to New Haven. After that he returned one year to Dartmouth and delivered a course of lectures there, and in other years did a similar service once for the school in Burlington, Vt., and twice for that in Brunswick, Me. These peripatetic professorships have been more common since Nathan Smith's day. Perhaps he was the first to practice such itineracy. But what would he have said if he had been told that a grandson of his would practice medicine in Springfield and make a daily visit to New Haven to lecture, doing half his day's work before leaving home and the other half after finishing his lecture and his journey of 126 miles!

While the reputation which Nathan Smith brought with him to New Haven as an expert teacher, was most helpful to the nascent college, his renown as a successful surgeon was more directly useful to himself, soon giving him his hands full of work, especially as a consultant and operator, in all parts of Connecticut. In a neighboring town he tied the external iliac artery, an important operation, and at that time, 1820, an extremely rare one.

Very largely we owe it to his thoughtful ingenuity that dislocations of the hip-joint are now reduced *arte, non vi*, by dexterous manipulation rather than by the irresistible and dangerous force of machinery.

The greatest triumph of operative surgery for several centuries is that ovariectomy has been established in the rank of the most beneficent and successful operations. By it, during the last thirty years, thousands of women have been saved from a death of peculiar misery. Nathan Smith performed this operation in 1821, supposing himself to be the first to do it, and actuated by all the courage of a discoverer. It was unknown to him and to the medical world at large, so slow was the spread of such intelligence at that time, that several years before, another American, Dr. Ephraim McDowell, had done the same operation in Kentucky. But it must be said that in Dr. Smith's case for the first time, in the most important detail, the management of the pedicle, that method was applied which later surgeons, after the experience of thousands of cases, have fixed upon as the best.

Dr. Smith's contributions to medical literature were not large nor numerous—smaller and fewer, indeed, than every reader of them would wish. The most important of them, "A Practical Essay on Typhus Fever," is still consulted with profit by the studious. It is the work of one capable of making original observations and of reasoning soundly upon them,

Dr. Smith was just the sort of strong-featured character to have a small anthology of anecdotes grow up about him. Among those



which have floated down to us, not one can be found to cast discredit upon him, unless we call such those which refer to his carelessness of money, which kept him, and at his death left his family, destitute of one of the just rewards of his skill and industry. Most of them go to show him a man of inexhaustible resources, of admirable tact in the management of patients and their friends, of a shrewd and kindly humor, and of a tender generosity. It is late enough now to put into print, without offense, the story, long current, of a consultation to which Dr. Smith was called in another town. The patient, a valuable and well-known citizen, his physician a very learned and very positive doctor, big with unfavorable prognosis. The disease duly labeled after the manner of nosologists, with Greek generic and Latin specific, *Typhus syncopalis*, a name fashionable in these parts about those days, deeply impressive to the popular ear, and apt to be interpreted by the laity as meaning "sit up with him so many nights and then come to his funeral." "Humph," remarks the consultant, after an attentive inquiry into the symptoms and the doses given. "I would give him an emetic." "In *Typhus syncopalis* an emetic is certain death," responds the attendant doctor, "the only safety, if there be any safety, is in brandy and opium." Dead-lock in the consultation; leave it to the family. What comes, alas, to despondent Learning, however positive, when pitted against hopeful Tact? Learning retires in indignant sorrow, radiating the visible darkness of his unfavorable prognosis all about him. Tact, bearing the potent draught, enters the darkened chamber of the sick man and shuts the door. Soon there are sounds familiar to those who go down to the sea in ships. Then there is a long, long period of perfect silence and anxious suspense for the waiting family outside. Then—do our ears deceive us, or do we hear chuckles from the *Typhus syncopalis* subject? It is even so; stupor and delirium have gone with opium and brandy, and the old doctor from New Haven is telling lively stories to the reviving patient.

The Medical College possesses a fine portrait of Dr. Smith in his latter years by Professor S. F. B. Morse. It is full of character and is considered an accurate likeness. It shows that one of the best American portrait painters of that day had to be sacrificed that the world might be the richer by the electric telegraph.

The venerable Dr. S. C. Johnson, of Seymour, relates that, being a medical student at the time, he was one of a committee to present the portrait on its completion to Dr. Smith. "Set it down, gentlemen," said the great surgeon, rather grimly, "it's an excellent likeness." And then, with a twinkle, "It's as ugly as the witch of Endor."

Another reminiscence of Dr. Johnson relates to the "dissection riot" of January, 1824, one of the most threatening disturbances orderly New Haven has known, and which for a while menaced the destruction of the Medical College.

There was a dramatic scene when the outraged and indignant neighbors of the poor girl whose body had been stolen from a rural cemetery, made their way at last into the cellar of the college. There had been nothing to reward their search through the upper part of the

building, except such shreds and tatters of mortality as such places always can show to feed the fury of suspicion, and here in the empty cellar they had apparently come to the end of their clue. But there was a persistent man with a crow-bar, whose manners must have been most unpleasant to any guilty observer, if such an one was there, for he went about trying the flag-stones in the pavement, and at last found one that was loose. This was quickly torn up, and there in the freshly disturbed earth lay the ghastly object of the quest, fortunately not yet mutilated by the scalpel. Drs. Smith and Knight were both there, honestly and anxiously aiding in the search. "Dr. Knight looked as if he would die, he was so faint and pale [he was a man of great sensitiveness], but Dr. Smith looked like a roused lion," said Dr. Johnson.

Of course there was intense popular feeling, which was increased by an exposure of the body to the public view in the streets; there were threats against the college and against individuals connected with it, necessitating a military guard under arms for two days. The rescued body was reinterred in West Haven, in a garden for greater security, and within three weeks one of the guilty parties was tried, convicted and sentenced to sharp punishment in the Superior Court.

A stringent law grew out of this incident, exacting sureties of the Professor of Anatomy against any similar occurrence, and it still continues in force.

The name of Benjamin Silliman, Professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy, which stood third in the list of the original faculty of the Medical College, certainly added much to the renown and prosperity of the institution in its early days. He had great celebrity as an impressive and most agreeable lecturer. It is impossible to conceive of a more deft and painless insinuation of the elementary facts of chemistry into minds not specially avid of that science, than was exhibited in his lectures to the senior classes of the academical department. The medical classes shared the entertaining privilege of listening to their somewhat florid and discursive oratory, as did also numerous young ladies pursuing the more strictly feminine accomplishments in various schools in the city. Laboratory work for students was as yet undreamed of. Physiological chemistry did not invade those peaceful precincts, and the "Loves of the Triangles" could not have been more blameless than the marriage of acids and bases beneath the dexterous hands of the Professor. The medical section of the mixed audience, occupying front seats next the retorts and bell-glasses, were commonly distinguished by their closer attention to the chemistry and their less boisterous hilarity at the jokes which were daily served to them in well-studied proportions. The praises with which the courtly Professor was wont to reward any appearance of proficiency at his weekly review of the progress of the medical class were none the less gratifying in that they were largely at the expense of "the young gentlemen yonder [the academical students] who cannot or will not learn anything."



The family name borne by the Adjunct Professor of *Materia Medica* and Botany has been uninterruptedly one of the chief ornaments of the medical profession in New Haven for more than a century. Beginning with Dr. Levi Ives,\* who entered upon practice in 1773, down to the present day, there has been in the direct line of descent a striking perpetuation of those qualities which most insure professional success and attract and retain the popular esteem. During that time there has always been a Dr. Ives, and since 1801 there has always been an "old Dr. Ives,"† the qualifying prefix passing into popular use as each successive member of the family took up the professional title.

The first Dr. Ives, in his day, which was a long one, was a laborious and successful physician who won the reputation of a public-spirited and patriotic citizen in troublous times when that title was no unmeaning phrase. Repeatedly during the Revolutionary War he was in active service as a surgeon to the forces in the field. Once he bore a lieutenant's commission in the line, in a campaign against General Burgoyne, and on that eventful 5th of July when His Britannic Majesty's forces made so weary and unprofitable an expedition from Savin Rock to New Haven, he was one of the hardy *guerilla* band who kept up a waspish resistance to the slow advance, acting that day apparently in the double capacity of sharpshooter and surgeon.

Eli Ives‡ had, as his father before him, Dr. Eneas Munson as his teacher in medicine, but he came vastly better prepared than his father did for his studies in that science. Other things being equal, the medical student whose father is a doctor has the advantage of him who is the son of a farmer. Inherited mental habit is a cumulative force. Beside this, Eli Ives had got the teaching that Yale College could give a diligent and conscientious student. He was a fair Latinist and Grecian, though not an ostentatious one, and for fifteen months following his graduation in arts he was Rector of the Hopkins Grammar School. He was offered a tutorship in Yale College, and as early as 1802, being twenty-three years old, he had such certificate of immortal fame as inheres in the appointment of Phi Beta Kappa orator. He did not take the tutorship, which must be regarded as fortunate, though instances are not wholly wanting of recovery from that condition and subsequent growth to usefulness in the medical profession. He did deliver the Phi Beta Kappa oration, and as he chose that it should be

\* Levi Ives, son of Samuel and Mary (Gilbert) Ives. Born in North Haven, Conn., June 4, 1750. Died in New Haven, October 17, 1826.

† A legend runs: One day, when Dr. N. B. Ives (of the third generation) had been but a short time in practice, a man came to his father's (Dr. Eli Ives) house and insisted upon seeing "the old Doctor." "Why, dear me," responded the mother of the young doctor, her thoughts reverting to her departed father-in-law, "didn't you know old Dr. Ives has been dead these four years!"

‡ The late Dr. Charles L. Ives had for a patient an old gentleman who had previously enjoyed the services of his father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather. It is an obvious and inextinguishable witticism to infer an extraordinary toughness in this patient, who nearly survived four generations of doctors; but it is quite as wise to accept the hale nonagenarian as evidence that pretty sound notions of practice prevailed in the family to whose skill and fidelity he confided himself for so long.

§ Eli Ives, son of Levi and Lydia (Auger) Ives. Born at New Haven, February 7, 1778. Died October 8, 1861.

on botany and chemistry, that august audience for once was exposed to the singular chance of hearing some useful facts plainly stated.

The best instruction which this country could offer to a medical student at the time of Eli Ives' pupilage was in the University of Pennsylvania. "It was the golden time" of Rush and Shippen and Wistar and Barton, and twice the young student repaired thither for their teaching, being probably one of the earliest alumni furnished by Connecticut to that great school. He was not, however, graduated there, but after having been some ten years in practice received the degree of M. D. *causa honoris* from the Connecticut Medical Society in 1811. He was a slender, delicate young man when he began practice, but he had the temperament of an enthusiast, and this, happily combined with a tender generosity of disposition, served at once to impel him to and sustain him in a life of more than common labor for many years, for so long indeed, that for the last quarter century of his life he was regarded as the patriarch of the profession.

Speedily, almost in his youth, his practice became a very large one, and it continued large as long as he would have it so. It was fairly productive too, pecuniarily, though not in proportion to the labor performed. He was not an exemplary collector of his dues, having an easy temper about such matters, for which his heirs must have been the poorer, and being intensely averse to anything savoring of greed or over-reaching.

To a sharp practitioner who was bragging of the heavy fees he had exacted in a certain case, ending with a knowing wink and a "We must live, you know," Dr. Ives replied, "Yes, and we've got to die too." He might have used the trite repartee of the French wit, "I do not see the necessity." But there is a distinct eschatological twang in the Doctor's retort—"subacid," as he used to say in criticising one of his own seedling pears; a flavor not wholly distasteful to a sound Calvinistic palate.

Dr. Ives must have received his first bent toward the study of botany and the indigenous *materia medica* from his teacher, Dr. Munson, but he greatly improved upon the teachings of that worthy, and became, as indeed the times required, a more scientific botanist than Dr. Munson ever was, and gained a knowledge of the medical uses of native plants which was believed to be unequalled in his day. Not to him could the reproach apply due to them who

Love not the plant they pluck, and know it not,  
And all their botany is Latin names.

He loved botany much—he loved plants more, for their own sakes and for the good he could do with them in

Driving the foe and 'stablishing the friend.

"Isn't the old Doctor great on habitats?" admiringly exclaimed a profound botanist one day after listening to his talk; and indeed he seemed incapable of forgetting a place which he had found to be the home of a rare plant. He liked to maintain the claim of New Haven



to be the abode of more adventive naturalized plants than any other region of equal extent in this country.\*

When Dr. Ives began his work in the Medical College, he meant that a garden, what old Gerard calls "a phisike-garden," should be a part of the means of teaching in his department. It was mainly, if not wholly, at his private expense that he started and maintained such a garden on the east side of the college, stocking it well with interesting and important hardy plants, and building a green-house as accessory to it. His enterprise was not properly seconded; after a few years the college sold the ground; the garden disappeared, to the permanent regret of its founder. Many years after, in that spot, a few shy but persistent trilliums, arums, sanguinarias and the like, annually entered a vernal protest against their being crowded out of the medical curriculum, but in vain. Botany is no more to be sought for than Sanskrit among the medical students of the present day. Dr. Ives removed some of his more intimate vegetable friends to the spacious garden which then half surrounded his house on Temple street, where they flourished during the life of their protector.

It was a pleasant sight, impressing one with a sense of the bounty of nature, to see the good doctor lead a patient into this garden and dispense his medicine to him with a spade.

The eagerness of rare plants in that garden to show their appreciation of the care of a medical botanist, and especially the determination of seedling pears to prove themselves worthy of his attention, were enough to convert one to the Manichean doctrine of vegetable souls.

It is not to be inferred, from his fondness for using indigenous simples in many cases, that Dr. Eli Ives's practice was wanting in vigor when in the presence of real danger. His skill in the use of the most energetic articles of the *materia medica* was quite as remarkable as his minute acquaintance with drugs not commonly known.

In his hands and in those of his eldest son, Dr. N. B. Ives, in 1832, that potent agent, chloroform, discovered a year before by Samuel Guthrie, of Sackett's Harbor, was first applied to medical use. In the *Journal of Science* of that year, he describes its valuable qualities, and recommends its employment as well by inhalation as by the stomach. What a little step further he need have taken to have made New Haven, instead of Hartford, the birthplace of anæsthesia and at the same time of an anæsthetic so convenient and so efficient that no one would have dared to try, as in the case of Horace Welles, poor waylaid and plundered messenger of the gods, to filch the glory of bringing such a gift to men! Boston would then have been saved the cost of that curious monument, crowned with an appropriate group setting forth the sad plight of him that fell among thieves, and beneath bearing an inscription which perpetuates the perplexity felt by their contemporaries in

---

\* This opinion was derived, it is believed, from the distinguished botanist, Rafinesque. Dr. Ives used to mention several introduced plants which perhaps are less common now than they were fifty years ago. Dr. Munson's pet hemlock is one of them, and if the henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) ever shows its unamiable head now-a-days after the turning up of long unbroken soil, as Dr. Ives said it used to, it must be very rarely.

deciding which of two Bostonians had shown the greatest alacrity in appropriating to himself the credit of Welles's discovery.

A favorite doctrine with Dr. Eli Ives, one upon which he bestowed much thought, and which largely influenced his practice, was that of epidemic constitutions, changes of diathesis, and the recurrence of certain diseases in wide cycles. In accordance with this, he used confidently to predict, at a time when New Haven had long been free from any prevalence of intermittent fevers, that they would again widely infest this region. He did not live to see how abundantly his prophecy was fulfilled in the latter half of the seventh and during the eighth decade of this century, but during the latter years of his life he watched the progress of those diseases along the coast eastward from the New York frontier with a philanthropic regret which may have been gently tempered with scientific satisfaction.

Of Dr. Ives's activity outside of his strictly professional work as a teacher and practitioner, some indication is given by the facts that he was President both of the Horticultural and Pomological Societies of New Haven, and that of his own seedling pears, five sorts have been deemed worthy of description in "Thomas' Fruit Culturist;" that he was a member of the Convention which framed the first U. S. Pharmacopœia in 1820, and ten years later, at the next meeting of the convention, he was its president; that for three years running from 1824 he was Vice-President of the Connecticut Medical Society; that he was President of the American Medical Association in 1861; and that (a reminder of a curious passage in the politics of more than a half century ago) he was the Anti-Masonic candidate for Lieutenant-Governor of Connecticut in 1831.

Dr. Eli Ives's face was a clear index of his character, showing a charming combination of benevolence, shrewdness and simplicity, and often lighted with mirthfulness. He was plain in his style of living, after the wholesome, conscientious old Connecticut way. Apparently his only luxuries were his many quiet charities, his books, which, during the period of his activity always represented the advance of those branches of science in which he was most interested, and his suburban farm, sloping west from "the Gravel Hill road," now Prospect street, which presumably was as great a source of revenue to him as a farm usually is to a non-resident amateur with his head well busied with other matters.

It was a large part of the happiness of Dr. Eli Ives's serene and beautiful old age, that he was closely surrounded by his two sons and one of his grandsons, all engaged, with conspicuous success, in the calling to which his own life had been so faithfully devoted, and all firmly bound to him not only by ties of family affection, but also by that other regard and veneration due to the teacher and guide in professional matters. Of the surviving son, who is still, as he has been for nearly half a century, active, eminent and beloved among the physicians of New Haven, it is beyond the purpose of this chapter to speak. His elder brother, Dr. Nathan Beers Ives,\* was so long and so intimately

\* Nathan Beers Ives, son of Eli and Maria (Beers) Ives. Born in New Haven June 26, 1806. Died in New Haven June 18, 1869.



connected with his father, that it is impossible to dissociate the two in the memory of those who knew them.

Nathan Beers Ives (graduated A. B. in Yale College in 1825, and M. D. three years later) began the practice of medicine in 1828, being then twenty-two years old. He died at the age of sixty-three, and for several of his latter years was much disabled by ill-health. He left, notwithstanding, an ample estate, much larger than had ever before by any one been accumulated in the practice of medicine in New Haven. There were a good many years when he was regarded as "taking the cream of the practice," and although some of his less fortunate competitors might indulge a not unnatural envy of his success, no one could call it unmerited in view of the qualities which contributed to it.

His perceptive faculties were naturally keen, and his management of his resources showed unusual tact. He devoted himself to his professional duties and to the welfare of his patients with that singleness of purpose which can spring only from the genuine fitness of a man for his calling. Rarely did he enter a household as a physician without becoming permanently bound to it as a friend. He had a vivid enjoyment of good company and bright conversation, in which, with his natural vivacity of temperament, he always bore an active part. There always seemed a certain fitness in it that these gifts should be lodged in a short, slight, alert figure. "His soul," as quaint old Fuller says, "had but a small diocese to visit." It was related of him as a child that he used to climb into the branches of a great stramonium weed that grew in his father's garden. But in Dr. Eli Ives' garden every vegetable thing was apt to take on unwonted dignity and surprising proportions, and the child was certainly a small one.

For a good many years, until his declining health kept him from avoidable labors, Dr. N. B. Ives took part in the private instruction of medical students. It would have been much to the advantage of the Medical College had it succeeded in its attempts to secure those valuable teachings for all its students by adding Dr. N. B. Ives to its faculty, but he was ever averse to anything likely to interfere with what he regarded as his legitimate business, the practice of medicine.

The youngest member of the original faculty of the Medical College, Jonathan Knight,\* was only twenty-four years old when he delivered his first course of lectures upon anatomy and physiology. His possession of the natural gifts for such a position had been remarked two or three years before by Professor Silliman and others who had the establishment of the College at heart, and when the young man was occupying himself in studying medical books in such intervals of leisure as his duty as tutor in Yale College allowed him. Advised and encouraged by those friends, he spent the winters of 1811 and 1812 in the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania, devoting

---

\* Jonathan Knight, son of Jonathan and Anne (Fitch) Knight. Born in Norwalk, Conn., September 4, 1789. Died in New Haven August 25, 1864.

special attention to those branches which it was intended that he should teach at New Haven.

Very speedily in his lectures he began to justify the hopes of those who had selected him for the work. Their expectations must have been exorbitant indeed if the quality of his performance, as known to later generations of students, failed to satisfy them.

Probably every surviving listener to Dr. Knight's lectures remembers them as models of terse and lucid statement, at once full and exact, delivered with forcible and unhesitating elocution, the matter and manner of the whole carrying the impression of perfect mastery of the subject. Yet, be it recorded for the encouragement of diffident merit, the young professor in his early years used to be so oppressed with a distrust of his own powers, that he sometimes wandered away into the fields at the lecture-hour, for actual fear of facing his class. He resolutely subdued this diffidence and learned to regard it as unreasonable.

Many years after, when his successor in the chair of surgery, called abruptly from the rough work of an army surgeon in the field, was writhing with a sense of his unfitness for the new duty, the retiring veteran reassured his junior with: "Don't you think you know more about surgery than those young asses?"—a comforting suggestion, drawn doubtless from his own early experiences.

There were other qualities beside those already mentioned which went to make Dr. Knight the admirable teacher he was. An earnest devotion to the business in hand, which kept him from even a momentary wandering, a sagacious sense of the needs of his audience, which kept him from over-refining and from aiming above their heads, these were combined with certain enviable physical gifts, a manly and graceful figure, erect and agile even in old age, a strikingly handsome face, whose habitual expression was that of gentle dignity and intelligent sympathy, and a voice so clear, musical and pleasantly penetrative, that it needed not to be of great volume to seize and hold the willing attention of every hearer.

How charmingly orderly he was! Said a clear-headed pupil-critic, "He begins at the beginning, goes straight to the end, and [oh joy, oh wonder!] stops when he has finished."

Dr. Knight held the Chair of Anatomy and Physiology until 1838, when he was transferred to that of Surgery, which had been vacated by the death of Dr. Thomas Hubbard. He continued however, during his life, annually to deliver to the senior academical class a course of lectures on anatomy and physiology. The judicious skill with which these topics were adapted to the needs of a non-medical audience, was attested by the good order and willing attentiveness which reigned in the amphitheatre, albeit filled with listeners who had not yet reached "years that bring the philosophic mind," and apt to find hilarity rather than solemnity in their first view of the human skeleton.

Nothing remains to testify to the extraordinary effectiveness of Dr. Knight as a lecturer except the recollections of those who heard him. His few printed productions give no suggestion of that fine combina-



tion of personal forces that carried his unwritten instructions into the minds of his pupils.

From the death of his predecessor, Dr. Thomas Hubbard, in 1838, until the close of his own life, Dr. Knight was unquestionably the leading surgeon in Connecticut. Conscientious, forbearing, conservative, perhaps in all that time he never did an unnecessary or premature operation. His was the wisdom always to know what should *not* be done; his the religious caution to lay only hands of healing upon the body—the sacred ark of man's life. To him the difficult and "brilliant" surgical operation was of small merit if it did not heal his patient, or if it mutilated what might have been spared. How noble his appearance as he stood ready for some serious operation! Long years of familiarity with wounds and suffering had not dulled compassion. The slight change of color as he grasped the knife; the gentle compression of the lips; the instinctive gathering and tension of the muscles; the quickened glow of the eye; his whole demeanor showed that no man more than he, felt "that death everywhere surrounded his knife," nor more endeavored "to convey all his knowledge to its point."

It was, perhaps, his habitual aversion to the use of the knife, where it could be avoided, that put him among the earliest who attempted the cure of aneurisms by compression. He was the first surgeon who ever cured this disease by the mild and simple means of manual pressure alone. This he did in 1848, having relays of assistants from among his pupils, who relieved each other at short intervals, until, *tuto, cito, jucunde*, in forty hours the formidable blood-sac had ceased its throbbing and whizzing, and shrunk into a quiet, harmless lump.

Dr. Knight was twice President of the American Medical Association, the unprecedented honor of a second election being due to the admirable way in which he at its first meeting guided that somewhat unwieldy body on its way. His successes in this matter seem to have been the outcome of his natural lucidity, for he disclaimed any but an ordinary familiarity with parliamentary rules.

There were some slight archaisms of speech and dress of which Dr. Knight was one of the last upholders in this neighborhood. His pronunciation of the *u* in unaccented syllables was according to the best standard of a hundred years ago, and its late survival in his fluent speech was far from displeasing to the critical ear. He never appeared to the public eye save in a dress-coat and with a faultless white cravat of a pattern no longer seen upon earth except in certain portraits which are become a part of history. A phrenologist, one of the early professors of that imitation-science, who was trying his skill on Dr. Knight's "organs," said with oracular solemnity, "You are a conservative, with great reverence for the past." "Yes, yes," responded the subject, "do you tell that by the shape of my head or by the tie of my cravat?" The charlatan's guess was true, as far as it went. Dr. Knight's love of tracing a truth back to its original discoverer nicely balanced his contempt for the humbugs which during his long life he saw rise, flourish and decline.

The first accession to the original faculty of the Medical College was in 1829, when Dr. Thomas Hubbard,\* of Pomfret, was called to take the chair of Surgery vacated by the death of Nathan Smith.

Dr. Hubbard was then fifty-three years of age. He was of wide repute as a hard-working successful practitioner of medicine and surgery in the rural community in which he lived. There is reason to believe that he found his labors in his new field of duty to be of the hardest. It was inevitable that comparisons should be drawn between the renowned surgeon just lost to the college and any successor in the same place. Dr. Hubbard was undergoing a late transplantation; he was new to the work of teaching; he had enjoyed smaller advantages of study than any of his colleagues. Yet such was the energetic industry that he applied to his new relations, that during the nine years of his professorship he discharged its duties creditably and satisfactorily. There was a flavor of rusticity in his speech and manner, but he was unaffected, simple, abounding in practical good sense.

The profession and the community at large felt when he died that they had lost a strong and useful man.

In the same year in which Dr. Hubbard joined the faculty, Professor Eli Ives was transferred to the Chair of Theory and Practice of Medicine, and the duties of his previous department of *Materia Medica* and Botany were assigned to Dr. William Tully, † as Professor of *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics.

Dr. Tully was not a stranger in New Haven. He had taken the academical course in Yale College, and was graduated there in 1806. Subsequently he received a considerable part of his tuition in medicine here from Dr. Eli Ives, and here, in 1810, after the usual examination, he was licensed by the Connecticut Medical Society to practice. Still later, in 1816, the degree of M. D. was conferred upon him, *causa honoris*, by Yale College.

He returned now to New Haven with an established reputation as a medical author and instructor. In the then brief list of American medical writers his name was conspicuous as co-author with Dr. Thomas Miner, of Middletown, of "Essays on Fevers and Other Medical Subjects," 1823, a notable work, which in its day provoked not a little discussion and some hostility. A very full, learned and elaborate "Prize Essay on Sanguinaria Canadensis," 1828, was also Dr. Tully's work. "It may be pronounced one of the most important contributions to our vegetable indigenous *Materia Medica* which has yet been offered to the public." (Dr. Bronson, Biographical Sketch, 1861.)

For the five years immediately preceding his appointment here, Dr. Tully was one of the professors in the then new and thriving, but now extinct, medical college at Castleton, Vt. His career as a practitioner, up to the time of his call to Castleton, had been remarkably diversified.

\* Thomas Hubbard, born in Smithfield, R. I., 1776. Died in New Haven June 18, 1838.

† William Tully, only child of William and Eunice Tully. Born at Saybrook Point, Conn., February 18, 1785. Died in Springfield, Mass., February 28, 1859.



From 1811 to 1824 he lived and pursued his calling in five different towns in Connecticut. His duties in the college at Castleton requiring his presence there for only a fraction of the year, he spent the other months in Albany, where he was the partner in practice of the distinguished Dr. Alden March. Probably the atmosphere of a large town was more congenial to him than that of the more rural communities in which he had previously lived, for he prospered in his practice more in Albany than ever before. Still he was not long to remain there, for in 1829 came the call to New Haven, necessitating the abandonment of his Albany residence. He continued, however, for nine years longer to hold his Castleton professorship, the lecture term there coming at such a time of the year as not to interfere with his college duties at New Haven.

Dr. Tully in his mental organization and habits of thought was essentially scholastic. He was happier in his study with his cherished books, and at his lecture-desk with his carefully written and voluminous manuscript, where he maintained a magisterial pomp of manner, than he was in listening to the querulous whine of an invalid, or in assuming a conciliatory show of respect for the therapeutic views of some ancient dame whose fluency of speech did not outrun the copiousness of her misinformation; "*medicina anilis*" he scornfully called such prattle. At that time the clinical thermometer was not in use, that beneficent saver of time and temper, which the physician of to-day places between the lips of a garrulous patient on entering the room, leaving it there as an efficient gag, until, having finished his observations, written his prescription, and given his directions, he is ready to make his escape. When the progress of science supplies an equally mild and certain conversational stopper applicable to bystanding relatives, friends and volunteer nurses, the path of the physician will become roseate and his temper angelic.

With Dr. Tully, study was pursued not as a means but as an end. Books were not tools of his work so much as objects of his affection or animosity; and words, if polysyllabic enough, were things to be loved for their own sakes. That drug which in the common speech is opium, he delighted to call, less concisely, "*succus inspissatus papaveris somniferi*."

His recipes sometimes seemed intended not so much to guide the average apothecary as to leave him groveling in the mire of ignorance while they satisfied their author's yearning for an ideal nomenclature. "There isn't any such medicine," indignantly exclaimed a compounder of drugs as he puzzled over the unfamiliar botanical name of a common herb in one of these prescriptions, "and if there was it wouldn't do to take it."

When the vernacular failed, in Dr. Tully's judgment, to meet the need of the occasion, he was ready, in speech or in writing, to enrich it from his stores of Greek or Latin. "Adenagic," "euphrenic," "parabysma," "proegumenal," "procatartic"—these satisfy every demand of the philologist, and are admirable words—or would have been so if people had only agreed to give them breath and keep them alive.

The Greek lexicon in some hands becomes the most obvious and least laborious of all means of enlarging the domains of science.

Despite the verbal obstacles with which their pathway was beset, the more earnest and intelligent of Dr. Tully's pupils found him a captivating teacher. If his learning was ostentatious it was nevertheless genuine and great, and ready at his call. All his opinions took rank in his mind as irrefragable truths and were announced by him with unstinted positiveness. He was a man after his own heart. This gave a quality to his lectures which did not fail to commend them to weary souls searching for certainty in the most inexact and shifting of the sciences. His conversation shared the same characteristic to such an extent as to make it a doubtful joy to one who objected to having his notions of medical matters or his Latin quantities corrected according to the Tullian standard. "Hyoscy'amus, sir;" "Hama'melis, if you please;" "The word is Ec'zema." In such wise would he deal justice upon some common offenders against the claims of the antepenult.

Dr. Tully was by far the most prolific medical writer ever numbered among the physicians of New Haven. He was a frequent contributor to medical periodicals. His principal work was his "Materia Medica; or, Pharmacology and Therapeutics," published in 1858. The first volume only was finished, for life is short; yet it contained 1534 pages octavo, and was introductory to the treatise of individual articles, which was to fill an indefinite number of successive volumes, for art is long.

The book often shows its author at his best in its copious learning, its clear definitions, its incisive criticisms. It exhibits, too, some of his less admirable characteristics, a whimsical petulance, an inexorable verbosity. He bemoans the perversity of those medical students who "knew the appearance of *Ol. Pyrolæ*, but they had no knowledge that this substance is a true saline *Æther*, the *Spirhylate* or *Oxyspirhylate* of *Protoxyd* of *Methygen*, existing naturally in the plant *Gaultheria procumbens*." Nerveless weaklings, to rest content in the poverty of a druggist's label, and abbreviated at that, when a beautiful name of thirteen syllables, embodying pages of organic chemistry, stood ready to fill their mouths!

There is a touch of simple pathos in the old man's preface, where he speaks of his advanced age, the cares of his family, the scanty emoluments of his profession, and his experience that the medical schools in New England "diminish rather than increase the income of the instructors." "I have wasted my time sixteen years in one institution and fourteen in another." It is painful to record that this versatile and accurate scholar, this bold and industrious investigator, drew to the end of his life in disappointment and unsuccess. It is one thing to know the science of medicine; it is another to understand the art of medicine; it is still another to thrive in the trade of medicine.

Dr. Tully resigned his professorship in Yale College in 1841. In 1851 he removed to Springfield, Mass., where he spent the remainder



of his days occupied somewhat in medical practice and somewhat in authorship. *Pulvis et cinis sumus*. The name of Dr. Tully is preserved among working doctors of to-day by the well-known "Tully's powder," *Pulvis Morphice Compositus* of the U. S. Pharmacopœia, but his erudite treatises, "Works" at once of the author and to the reader are mostly in the ashes of oblivion now.

During the whole of Dr. Smith's professorship, and the first year of Dr. Hubbard's, to lecture on Obstetrics was a part of the duty of the Professor of Surgery. In 1830 a separate chair was devoted to this branch, and Dr. Timothy Phelps Beers\* was called to fill it. Dr. Beers is still affectionately remembered by many surviving friends and patients as a perfect type of the "family doctor," kindly, cheerful, steady and skillful, devoted to his patients, and implicitly trusted and beloved by them. Nature had molded him in her generous mood, and had not stinted the vital juices in his composition. Had his fitness for his professorship been submitted, as certain questions used to be in the Courts, to a jury of matrons, there would have been no delay in a verdict in his favor. During the whole of his long and industrious medical life he had special repute and acceptance in that branch of practice which he taught in the college, and a considerable portion of our citizens who are between seventy-three and twenty-seven years of age, and "town-born," attained that enviable position under his kindly auspices.

His good qualities shone less conspicuously in the lecture-room than at the bedside. There was no doubt about the soundness and good sense of his teachings, but he was painfully diffident where no man had better right to be confident, and his hearers, borrowing a metaphor from the useful art which he professed, were apt to regard his lectures as illustrations of difficult and protracted delivery.

Nevertheless, as even medical students are not proof against the charm of temperament, the good, amiable doctor was beloved and trusted by his pupils as he was by his patients. That he was not without some gift of imagination, sundry excavations, alleged copper mines, made at his expense in the neighboring hills of Orange, still remain to testify. Dr. Beers probably embarked in this venture some time before

---

\*Timothy Phelps Beers, son of Deacon Nathan and Mary Beers. Born in New Haven December 25, 1789. Died in New Haven September 22, 1858. The family of Deacon Beers showed, among its other members, a curious proclivity to connect itself in various ways with the medical profession. His second son, John, died young, while pursuing medical studies. His third son, Isaac, was for many years, and until his death, an apothecary in New Haven. The three daughters of Deacon Beers all married physicians; the eldest, Maria, m. Eli Ives (*vide supra*); Abigail, the second, m. John Titsworth (M.D. Yale College, 1818); who practiced medicine in New Haven and afterwards removed to New Jersey; the youngest, Eliza, m. Charles Hooker (see subsequent memoir). In the next generation the only son of Dr. Beers, T. P. Beers, Jr. (M.D. Yale College, 1847), practiced medicine here and in California, died 1860. Two sons of Isaac, John P. and William L., were for a long time apothecaries here. In the Ives branch, of the three sons of Eli and Maria (Beers) Ives, the first, Nathan Beers (*vide supra*), became a leading practitioner of medicine here for many years; the second, Levi (M.D. Yale College, 1838), has long been at the high tide of activity and public esteem; while the third, Charles Linneus, died as a student of medicine. Their only sister, Maria, m. Henry A. Tomlinson (M.D. Yale College, 1832), who practiced medicine here until his death, 1840. In a still later generation, the only son of Dr. N. B. Ives was Dr. Charles Linneus Ives (see subsequent memoir); the only son of Dr. Levi Ives is Robert Shoemaker Ives (M.D. Yale College, 1866), who is now in active practice here; the only son of Dr. Henry A. Tomlinson is Charles Tomlinson (M.D. Yale College, 1862).

a valuable truth had been formulated in the statement, "There is just enough of every kind of mineral in Connecticut to ruin any man who undertakes to mine for it."

When, in 1838, Dr. Knight was transferred to the chair of Surgery, Dr. Charles Hooker\* succeeded him as Professor of Anatomy and Physiology.

The new professor during his fifteen years of medical life had already distinguished himself as a man of untiring industry and energy, and of a capacity for investigation and independent thought which often led him out of the beaten tracks of routine into paths of enlightened experiment. He was an uncommonly useful man in various ways to the profession and to the public. He had "the courage of his opinions" and his confident *dicta*, outspoken without reserve on all occasions, provoked inquiry. If they did not compel conviction, at least they often generated a wholesome antagonism. It was hard to be dull or uninterested in the face of his vivacity.

Some of his peculiar methods of treatment, involving the use of very large doses of powerful drugs to meet great exigencies, were considered extravagant at the time, but have since received the sanction of many eminent practitioners.

As examples may be mentioned his dram doses of calomel in Asiatic cholera (as long ago as its first invasion of America in 1832, when he seems to have had remarkable success), his half ounce doses of tincture of digitalis in *delirium tremens*, and his free administration of quinine in continued fevers before that practice became common. He was among the earliest cultivators of the diagnostic arts of auscultation and percussion, and assiduously sought to improve them and extend their application, using the stethoscope with an implicit confidence in its revelations that sometimes elicited critical sniffs from older and less enthusiastic doctors, who regarded that instrument as "*inutile lignum*."

Dr. Hooker's mental alertness found expression in a somewhat tumultuous speech, a mixture of hesitation and precipitancy. His lectures, consequently, were not always easy to listen to. There was an odd, jerky, flitting unexpectedness in his movements which used to remind bystanders of some of the more agile rodents, and which gave a startling effect to his surgical operations.

Beside his industrious studies of certain subjects upon which he felt that more light needed to be shed (the mechanism of the sounds of the heart, and the proper system of dietetics in health and in sickness, may be mentioned as two which specially engaged his powers of investigation), he devoted himself to the every-day and every-night duties of his calling with an enthusiasm that never flagged through forty years of incessant work,

No summons mocked by chill delay,  
No petty gain disdained by pride.

---

\* Charles Hooker, son of William and Hannah Hooker. Born in Berlin; Conn., March 22, 1799. Died in New Haven March 19, 1863.



No man whom New Haven has known, better deserved the honorable title of "physician of the poor," and his hold upon the affections of that class was touchingly exhibited at the public services at his funeral. An emperor might have looked with envy at the tearful concourse that crowded around the coffin of their dead benefactor.

The list of doctors who have taught the people of New Haven to regard their profession as one of philanthropy rather than of money-making is not a short one. It was lengthened by Dr. Hooker. The very modest estate which, after so many years of incessant toil, he left to his heirs, had certainly not been diminished by any extravagance in his way of living. Even the indulgence in fast and showy horse-flesh, which is so often the solitary luxury of doctors of moderate means, was a weakness to which he rose superior. The somewhat ungainly, though useful brutes which, acquiring something of the temperament of their master, drew his buggy with a sort of fidgety gambol, and which he was apt to regard as endowed with uncommon sagacity and fidelity, were to some of his medical brethren objects of contumelious criticism. Witness the following dialogue :

*Scene.* "Apothecaries Hall," in those days a frequent rendezvous for the medical fraternity in leisure moments. *Time.* Just after the parade of a menagerie having a led rhinoceros for one of its features.

DR. HOOKER.—"I expected the formidable beast to frighten all the horses on the street, but my Dolly went by him fearlessly."

DR. K.—"I dare say, but how did the rhinoceros stand it?"

In 1852, the chair of *Materia Medica*, which had been most ably filled for ten years by Professor Henry Bronson, became vacant by his resignation, to the regret of all friends of the college. Dr. Worthington Hooker,\* of Norwich, was invited to join the Faculty. It was arranged that he should become Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine, Dr. Eli Ives exchanging that place for his old Professorship of *Materia Medica*, which he held at the foundation of the college. Dr. Worthington Hooker was a remote kinsman of Dr. Charles Hooker, both having as their earliest American ancestor the Rev. Thomas Hooker, the pastor and leader of the first settlers of Hartford. For twenty-three years Dr. Worthington Hooker had been engaged in the practice of medicine in Norwich. He stood well as a man of general culture, and an enlightened and successful physician, and had beside won a peculiar celebrity as an essayist. The titles of some of his productions, "Physician and Patient," 12mo, pp. 422; "Lessons from the History of Medical Delusions," 8vo, pp. 105, indicate that his ventures in this direction were less scientific than literary. While he was an undergraduate in Yale College, indeed he became known as an easy and correct writer, and he maintained and increased this reputation in after life. The gift of a fluent pen is rare enough in the medical profession to make its possessor conspicuous, and to entail upon him some odd jobs, reports, addresses, biographical sketches and

\* Worthington Hooker, son of John and Sarah (Dwight) Hooker. Born in Springfield, Mass., March 2, 1806. Died in New Haven November 6, 1867.

the like, that the generality of doctors will shirk. Dr. Hooker seemed to enjoy this sort of occupation. The gentle current of his thought and the easy pace of his pen involved no great attrition of cerebral cells nor much manual fatigue. He found his writing become the source of "praise and pudding." Between 1853 and 1865 he produced a series of elementary text-books in various departments of natural science, human physiology, natural history, chemistry, natural philosophy, mineralogy, geology, etc., which attained a merited popularity for their simple and attractive presentation to the youthful mind of the topics treated, and which brought their author a handsome income. He was also an abundant contributor of articles of a scientific, or semi-scientific, character to the periodical press. The editors of the literary and so-called religious weeklies and monthlies came to know him as one upon whom they could rely to furnish matter of that sort in an intelligible and attractive form at short notice. It is commonly the case that this kind of work is done in the shabbiest way, out of the abundance of ignorance, and from a motive as lofty as that which inspires the advertisements of patent medicines in the neighboring columns. It is high praise to say that Dr. Hooker's productions of this sort did not discredit him or the profession to which he belonged.

It is probable that his strictly professional work after his removal to New Haven was never so large or so remunerative as it had been in Norwich. He might perhaps have felt a sense of disappointment at the change, had not the leisure which it gave him been occupied with these not onerous literary pursuits which in their turn yielded him a substantial solace for the diminution of his fees.

The vacancy left by the unexpected death of Dr. Worthington Hooker was filled by the appointment of Dr. Charles Linneus Ives,\* as Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine.

Dr. Ives' advantages of birth and education were great. For three generations before him his ancestors on the paternal side had formed an unbroken line of high authority among the physicians of New Haven. In Yale College, in the professional schools of Philadelphia, and in the great hospitals of New York, he had had the best opportunities America could offer to prepare him for his life's work. During this period of his pupilage, as throughout his life, it was characteristic of him that whatever his hand found to do, he did it with his might. There was a bright alacrity in his way of work and living always, and if natural zest ever failed to attract him, an inexorable sense of duty always stood ready to supply motive power.

He was a devoutly religious man, with an intense feeling of responsibility for himself and for other people, by which, rather than by considerations of expediency or comfort, he was actuated. He had a curiously unhesitating way of attacking situations which men are apt to fight shy of as being knotty and unproductive, or involving troublesome collisions.

\* Charles Linneus Ives, son of Nathan Beers and Sarah (Badger) Ives. Born in New Haven June 22, 1831. Died in Burlington, N. J., March 21, 1879.



Dr. Ives was in his thirty-eighth year when he took this new duty of teaching upon him. He had been for some thirteen years in practice in his native city, and had gained a large share of the respect and confidence of his professional fellows, as well as that more common popular favor which makes itself visible in the length of a doctor's visiting list.

To his intercourse with his pupils, accordingly, he brought a considerable wealth of observation and experience, as well as that native enthusiasm which was one of his most striking traits. It is a trait which greatly endears a teacher to his pupils, an elder to his juniors. Sharp statements, if not of fact, at least of opinion, with no trimming of qualifications, apt to stick fast in the memory, easy to jot down in the note-book—these are the delight of the learner, especially in medicine, where as yet there are too many regions in which of necessity he wanders darkling.

That agnosticism in therapeutics, which was somewhat fashionable for a while not long since, and which its apostles seemed to regard with complacency as a mark of intellectual superiority, has never prevailed in New Haven. Dr. Ives at least was free from it—it was foreign to his nature to be lacking in positive convictions on any subject to which he turned his serious attention.

Satisfactory as his relations in the college were to his colleagues and to his pupils, it was often painfully obvious that his eager and generous spirit "o'er informed its tenement of clay." Ever since his youth he had striven resolutely against falling into an acknowledged state of invalidism. His ill-health led him to resign his professorship in 1873, after five years of occupancy.

On the same account he shortly afterward removed from New Haven and withdrew from medical practice. He accepted, however, the offered professorship of Diseases of the Nervous System in the University Medical College of New York, and went to Europe to make special study of that subject. Owing to the continued failure of his health, he was never able to enter upon the duties of that appointment.

Dr. Ives found a congenial occupation during the latter years of his life in the production of a book, "The Bible Doctrine of the Soul," embodying the results of some theological study and speculation to which he was long addicted. His taste for this sort of mental occupation might perhaps be referred back to his sound Puritan ancestry, though the outcome of it as exhibited in his book would scarcely have satisfied the orthodox of a century earlier.

As early as May 8, 1826, at a meeting of the New Haven Medical Association, held at the house of Dr. John Skinner, formal action was taken in regard to "the hospital." A committee of six members of the association was appointed to solicit subscriptions for the projected institution, and certain resolutions descriptive of it and providing for its organization were voted upon.

It was especially declared at the outset that "the hospital shall be

a charitable institution, and no physician or surgeon shall receive any compensation for his services."

It is probable that already, before this meeting, a petition for a charter for this hospital had been presented to the Legislature, for, on the 26th of the same month, "An Act to Establish a State Hospital" was passed by that body. In it were named as corporators ten well-known gentlemen, all but one of them being members of the Connecticut Medical Society, four of them being of the faculty of the Medical College as well. When, nearly a year later, these corporators first met for the purpose of organizing, they elected a board of twelve directors, of whom only one was not a member of the Connecticut Medical Society. Still later, in the next year, an application to the Legislature for a grant of money in behalf of this hospital having proved futile, the public were urgently appealed to for help. Here, too, the initiative was in the medical fraternity. Four of the faculty of the Medical College headed the subscription list, three of them giving each \$500, and the fourth, who had just become a resident of New Haven, and been added to the faculty, giving \$120. In the entire list of subscriptions from all over the State of Connecticut, there was but one other of \$500.

It was a day of small things; money came in the scantiest dribbles, and during the more than four years which elapsed before the hopes of the enterprising and persevering projectors began to be materialized in stone and mortar, there must have been some times when they felt themselves weighed upon with the heaviness of discouragement.

The criticism was freely offered that the undertaking was quite unwarranted by any present need of New Haven or of Connecticut, and indeed something of a prophetic spirit was required to animate the promoters to such an extensive discounting of the future. There are always some advantages, however, in being in advance of the times in such a business. The chief of these advantages is obvious to-day in the noble and well-situated tract of land upon which the hospital stands, and which the founders of this institution bought for a sum which now seems incredibly small. If the acquisition of a site had been delayed many years, it is probable that the hospital would have been given either less ample breathing room or a less central position.

Somewhat countervailing this advantage was the fact that the science and art of hospital building was then undeveloped. It was a time when architecture fondly supposed itself to be Grecian, and the merits of any considerable building were largely determined by the extent of portico that it could offer to the admiring gaze of the public. Commonly the portico, however massive in dimensions, was so airily constructed of pine boards as to give little trouble to subsequent generations; but the majestic Doric structure *in antis* which prefaces the entrance to the New Haven Hospital was built of the same solid masonry as the walls of the building which it was intended to adorn, so that, in spite of all objurgations directed against it as an obstructor of air and light, it still remains,

Like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved.



The original hospital building, including the portico, cost something less than \$13,000. Inconsiderable as this sum now appears, the capacity of the building was so greatly in excess of all demands upon it for many years, as almost to justify the caviling of those who had found convenient excuses for not lending a helping hand at the outset. The directors gained a small revenue by renting some of the rooms for the storage of household furniture. In January, 1843, they were glad to rent the upper story of the south wing to Dr. James Gates Percival. This remarkable man established his abode there, fortifying his castle against intrusion in a sort of Robinson Crusoe fashion, and for some eight years continued there unmolested in his favorite pursuits, the study of languages and geology, and the production of copious and fluent rythmical compositions which were by many confidently believed to be in the nature of immortal verse. Some of these may still be read by those curious in such matters in the "Poetical Works of J. G. Percival," or scattered here and there through certain "Poets of Connecticut," "Poets of America," and the like compilations.

The demand of the community slowly grew up to the supply of the hospital, so that in 1851 the directors requested the owners of furniture stored in the hospital to remove it, as it was occupying rooms needed for patients; and in the same year, and for the same reason, a committee was appointed "to secure the removal of Dr. Percival." The wording of the record would seem to indicate that his departure was not without a degree of reluctance, and that

The parting Genius was with sighing sent.

Few hospitals, it may be confidently asserted, can claim the distinction of having kept a poet in the upper story in a state of siege for eight years.

It is not intended to give here even a brief account of the changes and vicissitudes in the history of the hospital to the present day; suffice it to say that its career has been one of pretty continuous growth and improvement.

The great enlargement of the hospital in 1873 attracted attention to the importance of the institution as a factor in society. The establishment in connection with it, about the same time, of the Connecticut Training School for Nurses, bringing in a radical and most necessary improvement in its care of the sick, has won for it of late years a large measure of the popular interest and favor which was long withheld from it, so that it is now generally recognized as one of the most deserving, as well as indispensable, of the local charities.

It is true of most hospitals, however richly endowed with funds they may be, that the services gratuitously rendered them by their surgeons and physicians, if reckoned at the ordinary market rates, are from that point of view merely, a greater gift than all money donations. This rule applies with peculiar force to the New Haven Hospital, which in its early life never felt the stimulus of any large individual bounty, but which was originally the child, and for many chill and

anxious years the nursling of the medical fraternity almost exclusively.

There is a peculiar pleasure, too, in saying that among the many generous gifts of money to the hospital of late, some of the most munificent come from a physician whose good-will to the institution may be due partly to his own service on its medical staff in his more active days, and partly to the devoted fidelity in the same cause of his lamented son, Dr. Stephen Henry Bronson,

Whose virtues Death mistook for years,

and whose untimely removal in the midst of his labors must be counted one of the heaviest personal losses ever suffered by the medical profession in New Haven.

During the few years of the younger Dr. Bronson's service in the hospital he learned to value the institution justly for the opportunities it afforded him for that orderly and systematic investigation which was the pleasure of his life, and he loved it for the beneficent work in the relief of suffering it enabled him to do. Throughout a large part of his short but useful and honorable career, and up to the very day of his sudden demise, much of his time and energy was spent in and for the hospital.

In the esteem of those who knew him best, his name, shadowed though it is with the pathos of unfulfilled hopes, stands fitly and gracefully at the close of this brief record of the departed worthies of the medical profession in New Haven.





