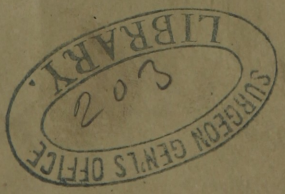
Gardner (A.K.)

Eulogy on John W. Francis.

EULOGY

ON

JOHN W. FRANCIS, M.D., LL.D.



EULOGY

ON

JOHN W. FRANCIS, M.D., LL.D.

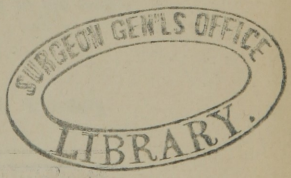
DELIVERED BEFORE

The New York Medico-Chirurgical College,

MARCH 7, 1861,

By AUGUSTUS K. GARDNER, A.M., M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF CLINICAL MIDWIFERY AND DISEASES OF FEMALES, IN THE NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE, &C., &C.



NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE COLLEGE.
1861.

HALL, CLAYTON & CO., *Printers*,
46 *Pine Street, N. Y.*

EXTRACTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS.

At a regular meeting of the New York Medico-Chirurgical College, held March 7, 1861, on motion of Dr. J. W. RICHARDS, it was

Resolved, That the thanks of the College be presented to Dr. GARDNER for the tribute to the memory of our lamented professional brother, Dr. J. W. FRANCIS, just read, and that a copy be requested for preservation in its archives.

On motion of Dr. H. P. DEWEES, it was

Resolved, That the Eulogy on Dr. FRANCIS be referred to the Executive Committee, with power to publish, and that copies be presented to the family of the deceased, in the name of the College.

J. H. DOUGLAS, M.D., *Secretary.*

EULOGY

ON

JOHN W. FRANCIS, M.D., LL.D.

Travelers in foreign lands, returning full of enthusiasm, have given us gorgeous descriptions of the snow-capped glories of Mont Blanc. The man of business and figures has told us of its wondrous height; the geologist has given us the dispositions of its trap and sienite, has laid out its water-courses, described the heavings and motions of its *mer de glace;* the farmer has wondered at its fertile fields, with its fruit-laden strawberry vines beside the everlasting ice; the botanist finds enthusiasm in the mosses and algæ of its rocky cliffs; the painter tells you of the sublimity of the view when the setting sun pours its resplendent rays upon its heaven-piercing peak ; the poet breathes out his immortal verse at its inspiration; the dreamer gazed and gazed,

> "Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused
> Into the mighty vision passing—there,
> As in her natural form, swelled vast to heaven."

As the Swiss mountain in the physical world, so rose the snow-crowned head of the late Dr. John Wakefield Francis among his peers. Colossal, towering above the range of lofty intellects among which he stood—not comparatively great by isolation—many-sided, every per-

son who knew him has formed of him an estimate more or less varied in accordance with his powers of observation, the density of the atmosphere through which he gazed, and the clearness of vision to which he attained, whether seeing only the exterior man, or after gaining access to the intimacy which enabled him to feel that great heart pulsating ardently for every noble aim, and every enterprise where the good of our common humanity was to be subserved.

The speaker of to-day for years gazed from afar upon the rugged lineaments of this hoar apostle of medicine; later was warmed into new life by the radiant sunshine ever playing around his genial front, daily feeling ever-renewed evidences of that interior warmth which melted the thin outhanging ice-crusts, producing beauty, and life, and joy in its path. He has seen the interior man, noted the inexhaustible stores of native and acquired intellectual wealth, the kind heart, the generous hand. He must fail in attempting to portray them. If he can but catch the, alas! already vanished picture of one side of this huge polygonal and daguerreotype it for your observation, he will be content; leaving to those of more extended grasp to seize the whole man, and instead of the simple picture which is now to be presented to you, shall carve out a colossal statue, wanting but the Promethean spark, to be the very form and figure of him whose like we shall never look upon again.

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE.

John Wakefield Francis was born in the City of New York, November 17th, 1789. His father, Melchior Francis, was a native of Nuremburg, Germany, who came to this country shortly after the establishment of the American Independence. He followed the business of a grocer, in the neighborhood of Pearl and Fulton Streets, where the doctor was born, and was distinguished for integrity and enterprise. He fell a victim to yellow fever. Dr. Francis's mother was from Philadelphia. Her maiden name was Sommers, of a family originally from Berne, in Switzerland. It was one of the favorite

historical reminiscences of her son, that she remembered when those spirits of the Revolution, Franklin, Paine, and Rush, passed her door on their daily associations, that the children in the neighborhood would cry out, "There go Poor Richard, Common Sense, and the Doctor."

Those familiar with our deceased friend well remember the bursts of enthusiasm with which he ever greeted the mention of the name of Franklin, and particularly that ebullition of feeling and oratorical expressions, when, after his return from the annual meeting of the American Medical Association in 1849, in Philadelphia, he described his visit with Drs. V. Mott and R. H. Kissam to the quiet and unostentatious grave of this great patriot and sage. It was with him a pleasing fancy, that in personal appearance he bore a considerable resemblance to one whom he so reverenced, and who, like him, had commenced life at the printer's galley, earning his daily bread setting type and handling the composing-stick. Thus this association is not merely a matter of fancy, for in early youth Francis was apprenticed to the trade of a printer, in the office of the strong-minded, intelligent, and ever-industrious George Long, at that time a prominent bookseller and publisher. In after years he related the anecdote of the hours stolen by the young Francis from meal-time and recreation, as, sitting under his frame, he partook of a frugal apple and cracker, at the same time eagerly conning a Latin grammar. Even at this date he was one of the few subscribers to the slowly issuing English edition of Rees's Cyclopædia, to which he afterwards contributed valuable articles, to the benefit of the work and markedly to his own literary reputation.

The love of letters was, however, not limited to mere type; but, ambitious of higher duties and occupations, by the kindness of his master his indentures were canceled, that he might pursue the career to which his taste urged him, and which, fortunately, the easy circumstances of his then widowed mother rendered feasible, and he fitted himself for college under the charge of the learned preceptors, Rev.

George Strebeck, and the classical Rev. John Conroy, of Trinity, Dublin. He was thus enabled to enter an advanced class of Columbia College, graduating in 1809, receiving his degree of A.M. in 1812

In 1807, while yet an undergraduate, he entered the office of the renowned Dr. Hosack, then in the prime of life and height of metropolitan reputation. The remarkable assiduity, zeal, and untiring perseverance, which his later cotemporaries have noted with wonder, may be seen to be characteristic of the man, and no occasional freak or exception, stimulated by a peculiar and remarkable ambition. Dr. Hosack gave his warm approbation to this assiduous devotion, and stated that, "during the period of his professional studies for four collegiate years, he never absented himself from a single lecture, nor attended one without making notes or abstracts on the subject taught by the lecturer." "What an example is this," well says Allibone's very valuable Dictionary of American Authors, "to the students of the present day, and how great has been the reward in large stores of professional erudition, in public esteem, and national reputation, for the hours thus devoted to the acquisition of useful knowledge!"

In 1811 Dr. Francis received his degree of M.D., from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, which had been established in 1807, under the presidency of Dr. Romaine, and which had been reorganized, with Dr. Bard at its head. Francis's name was the first recorded on the list of graduates of the new institution. His thesis upon the *use of mercury* was afterwards published in the *Medical and Philosophical Register*, and gained the author much reputation. It was full of medical research, and was the pioneer of the long train of writings and labors which has given so much eclat to his name.

With his professor, Dr. Hosack, he was much esteemed, who immediately proposed a medical copartnership, which flattering testimonial to his talents and acquirements was, of course, accepted, and continued till 1820; and the fruits of which were not limited to his profession, but their names were united in many schemes for literary and social improvements.

In compliment to his acquirements, Dr. Francis was appointed, in 1813, Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Materia Medica, when the medical faculty of Columbia College and of the College of Physicians and Surgeons were united; and shortly after his popularity with the students gained him the position of President of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, in which he succeeded his friend, Dr. McNevin, whose biographical notice he furnished, but a few months prior to his death, for *Gross's American Medical Biography*, just issued.

AS A TEACHER.

And now fairly began that life of labor and love conspicuous to the end of Dr. Francis's career. A graceful, though not eloquent talker, clear and cogent in his teachings, and free in his diverging utterances to catch up happy and remote conceits, he became a pleasing and popular lecturer. His whole soul was in his work. Between lecturing, visiting patients, and writing for medical quarterlies, he was kept incessantly busy; for at this time, besides his professorial duties, he was co-editor, with Hosack, of the *American Medical and Philosophical Register*, founded by them in 1820, and attending to the largest practice then in the city. The receipts from his profession were for many years $15,000; and considering the fact that at the time he commenced practice the population of New York was but 68,000 souls, it may well be compared even with the apocryphal sums of more modern days. He taxed his energies beyond their strength. His friends advised him to visit Europe. He went to Europe, undermined by toil and disease, and with the enthusiasm of his profession, went hunting after the medical celebrities of the Old World. He became acquainted with Abernethy, Brewster, and Sir Astley Cooper. For literary men his penchant showed itself thus early. He saw and conversed with Byron, whose passionate verses and lyrical revelations of a dark, gloomy, and restless life were the theme of every tongue. To Sir Walter Scott, the mighty magician of romance, he was introduced, and he has since written a charming account of his visit to the Scottish bard and novelist. His pen while abroad was not unemployed, as

during his stay he wrote several articles for Rees's Cyclopædia, those on New York and Rush being the most memorable. These articles contributed greatly to the literary and professional reputation of Dr. Francis, and perhaps were the seal required to convince the skeptical of his great natural and acquired powers; for at that period none abroad read an American book, nor at home believed in anything indigenous.

After extended travels in Europe, with visits to its most remarkable places, acquaintanceship with its renowned men, he returned to this country, bringing with him renewed health, a fund of anecdote, reminiscence and valuable knowledge, most remarkable and unfailing. Those only who have enjoyed the delicious privilege of the unrestrained communications of personal friendship can fully recognize the benefits acquired by this transatlantic experience.

Any narrowness of mind, so natural to one ignorant of all save the peculiarities of a provincial town, any petty conceit of home and its various productions, or even more snobbish idea that for all excellence we must look abroad—that none originated in our own country and nation—did any such feeling exist in the mind of Dr. Francis, ever after there was no evidence of it. Catholic, comprehensive, discriminating and honest, with him the mind had no country, and literature and science were cosmopolitan. Before their possessors he bowed himself in deep respect, while the mere holder of sordid wealth, especially if ignobly gained, penuriously hoarded or profligately spent, he passed with the least possible recognition of their existence. As the poet Tuckerman has stated in his beautiful obituary, "For genius and worth he reserved his best sympathy, caring nothing for luxury, show, or riches. The society of an intellectual friend, the comfort of domestic love, the acquisition of a memorial of genius, the advancement of a patriotic, charitable, scientific, or literary cause, were to him the great charm and privilege of life."

Upon the return of the young traveler to New York with many choice works, the foundation of his now renowned library, he was appointed Professor of the Institutes of Medicine in the College of

Physicians and Surgeons, and in 1817, on the resignation of Dr. Stringham, he also succeeded to the department of Medical Jurisprudence. Two years later, in addition to his former duties, he also became Professor of Obstetrics, and filled this post till 1826, when he resigned, with his colleagues, Drs. Hosack, Mott, McNevin, and Mitchell. A majority of the faculty organized a new school, called the Rutger's Medical College, in which Dr. F. held the chair of Obstetrics and Forensic Medicine. The classes were large and the success of the school most satisfactory, but in consequence of discussions and quarrels with the rival school, in which it is not necessary here to enter, by legislative enactment the school was dissolved, after a successful career of four years. With this ended Dr. Francis's twenty years' labors as a public teacher.

AS A MEDICAL WRITER.

His career as a writer was, however, far from finished, and, except in a professional way, but scarce begun. Up to this period, the following list enumerates the most labored and enduring of his writings: Articles in different medical periodicals on obstetrics, vitriolic emetics in the membranous stage of croup, *Sanguinaria Canadensis*, Iodine, the goitre of Western New York and Canada, on medical jurisprudence, yellow fever, death by lightning, caries of the jaws of children, elaterium, ovarian disease, &c. He has published an essay on the "Use of Mercury," (8vo, New York, 1811;) "Cases of Morbid Anatomy," (4to, 1814;) "Febrile Contagion," (8vo, 1816;) "Notice of Thomas Eddy the Philanthropist," (12mo, 1823;) "Denman's Practice of Midwifery, with Notes," (8vo, 1825;) "Address before the New York Horticultural Society," (1830;) "Address before the Phillolexian Society," (1831;) "Letter on Cholera Asphyxia in 1832," (8vo, 1832;) "Observation on the Mineral Waters of Avon," (1834.)

Of these, the doctor himself thought most highly of those on vitriolic emetics in croup, an original and successful practice on his part; those on croton oil, elaterium and iodine, which he introduced to the American community; and that dated London, 1816, in which he first

noted the rare susceptibility of the human constitution to a second attack of pestilential yellow fever; but among the profession his erudite labors in editing the Midwifery of Denman, far behind the present knowledge in this branch as it is in some respects, yet is in itself so marked in its advance upon previous knowledge, and so greatly increased in value by the expansive intellect of its American annotator, that it is very properly rebaptized Francis's Denman, and will long remain an enduring monument of the professional zeal, acumen, research and industry of its editor.

Released from the mill-horse routine of professional duties, the doctor found time for the more congenial employment of the leisure which could be enjoyed in the intervals of an ever large professional business. Not, like most men, relying upon a local, family practice, Dr. F's *clientelle* were the men of all climes and places, who, sojourning in the city, suddenly taken ill, sent for the physician whose fame had penetrated into the remote quarters whence they came. He delivered numerous addresses before societies of all descriptions; among them, on Anatomy of Drunkenness, a Discourse before the New York Lyceum of Natural History, (1841.)

In 1846, Dr. Francis united with Drs. Mott and Stearns in forming the New York Academy of Medicine. Owing to the existence of numerous cliques among the members of the profession, the first President was selected from among those who were aloof from all such organizations; and accordingly, Dr. John Stearns, the discoverer of the parturient virtues of ergot, a comparatively recent resident, a man of considerable legislative ability, and the oldest practitioner in the city, was elected to fill this high office and inaugurate the career of the Academy, and his term expiring by limitation, Dr. Francis, in 1847, was elected the second President of the Academy, and again at a subsequent period, when eligible by statute, was re-elected. He delivered several addresses before this body, (1847–8–9,) but his anniversary oration, the first of a series, since annually delivered by various members of the Academy, did much, by historic reminiscences and high-toned charac-

ter, to elevate the Academy to the important position it has held in this community and the country. Delivered in the old Tabernacle—now itself become historical—the building, large as it was, could admit but a small portion of the crowds that were attracted by the fame of the speaker. It was estimated that 10,000 came to listen, while the building held but 3,000 when completely full.

The pursuits of his early days were not forgotten, and in recognition, he delivered addresses replete with historical associations before the Typographical Society of New York "On Dr. Franklin," (1850,) and "On the Publishers, Printers, and Editors of New York," (1859.)

The most elaborate of his historical recollections formed the subject of a double lecture before the New York Historical Society, (1858,) on "Old New York, or Reminiscences of the last Sixty Years." This was one of the happiest of his literary productions; rich in reminiscence, minute in detail, humorous, quaint and genial, redolent with kind feeling, and pervaded throughout with the characteristic *bonhomie* of the doctor, it will undoubtedly remain the most enduring of the productions of its erudite author.

A memoir of an eccentric New Yorker, of some ability, descriptive of Old New York, its appearance, and some of its most noted inhabitants, some discourses at Bellevue Hospital, (of the Medical Board of which he was President ever since its present organization, and to which he was elected Honorary President when upon his death-bed,) and some later memoirs of his old associates, Drs. McNevin and Mitchell, complete the long and honorable list of the literary achievements of the illustrious deceased.

HONORS.

These various labors were not without recognition from the world. Besides those already alluded to, he had the high and rarely accorded honor of being chosen Foreign Associate of the Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society of London, and, with De Witt Clinton, member of the Wernerian Society of Edinburgh, and other scientific associations abroad.

In 1850 he received the degree of LL.D. from Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut; and in 1860 this honor was duplicated by his much esteemed Alma Mater, Columbia College, of this city. This distinction, so charily bestowed by Columbia, was feelingly welcomed by the recipient, who reflected back the honor conferred upon him; yet still the duplex doctor continued to distribute his immemorial triplex pills. He was, from its foundation, President, and most actively engaged in promoting by every means in his power the noblest of modern charities, the Woman's Hospital of this city; and a week before his death he was elected President of the State Inebriate Asylum, at Binghamton. It is believed he had in a state of advanced preparation the addresses to be delivered at the laying of the corner-stone of the one, and the celebration of the completion of the other. It is to be hoped that these papers will not be lost; and I will suggest as a fitting compliment to the memory of the departed, that if such addresses exist, they be read by the highly educated and talented sons of him whose spirit will be with them on those eventful days.

We have thus rapidly sketched the principal public literary incidents in Dr. Francis's career. A few other more personal events are to be noted. In 1829, he was married to Miss Maria Eliza Cutler; a union which not only united him with a family of extended reputation, wide connection, and ample means, but which in itself was all that could be attained by mortals below. Those who are favored by the personal acquaintance with his bereaved widow well know how intimate was that union, how perfect was the assimilation of soul, and how entirely the life of the one was blended into that of the other. That Dr. Francis achieved all that he did, is in no small degree owing to the opportunity afforded for the expansion of his genius, by the freedom from domestic cares, by the methodical disposition of household matters, by the relief from many of the annoyances, petty vexations, and harassing disturbances incident to the life of a practicing physician. She it was who attended to the innumerable callers desirous of the doctor's signature to petitions, influence with parties, or mere loungers, aiming only to pass off their vacant hours agreeably. She

received his professional calls, arranged his numerous consultations, remembered the ages of the children in his practice, provided virus, and saw that they were duly vaccinated. She attended to the nightly calls, thus preventing the exposure which, to the doctor, was so apt to be followed by most serious laryngitis. I have necessarily alluded to these facts, because to them the doctor owed so much of the time which he used to such good purpose, and because it seemed due to pay a passing tribute to the exemplary, devoted, genial, beloved woman, the pattern doctor's wife.

Three sons were the fruit of this happy union; boys that any parent might proudly claim as Cornelian jewels. One, alas! has preceded his father to the unknown world—taken away in the prime of life, in the first flush of earthly honors undoubtedly within his reach, conspicuous for unusual talents, unwonted attainments, kindly heart, and manly beauty; the cold tomb has early received this extraordinary promise, and the father and son are now reunited.

AS A PUBLIC BENEFACTOR.

Thus far we have performed but the easy task of cataloguing the perfected results of a life of threescore years and ten, in little more than a single point of view, and that a literary one. In this *résumé* no mention has been made of the ever-ready assistance rendered to the writers, historians, and orators of the time, many of whose sonorous periods have been pointed by his assistance, and their value enhanced and truthfulness authenticated by his retentive memory; were these recognized, pages and chapters from many a noble work would pass to his credit.

The labors in other directions—the encouragement by thought, personal attention, and personal influence, which have stimulated others in like situations, and which have resulted in glorious fruitions—their record is to be found in the existence of many noble and beneficial institutions. Not referring to the New York Academy of Medicine, the Binghamton Inebriate Asylum, or the Woman's Hospital, already al-

luded to, we can see their fruits in the Historical Society, in which he officiated in its early days as librarian and general director, whose ornate library building attests his energy, enriched as it is by treasures of almost antediluvian antiquity, obtained in consequence of his untiring zeal and persistent entreaty.

Large as is this enumeration, multitudinous and comprehensive as are the details, we feel that it all together conveys but a poor idea of the mental powers of the man; and even when it is recognized that for very many years his daily sleep was only from two to four hours at the most, can we appreciate the indefatigable industry which enabled him to compass so much.

MENTAL ANALYSIS.

The faculty of industry, however, is a more common and less conspicuous gift than memory. This was, if not the pre-eminent, certainly the most astonishing, characteristic of the venerable deceased. Observation must have been almost as well marked among the cranial developments; for had he not noted the pimple upon the right ala of the nose, the scar on the left ear, or the want of a fifth brass button on one side of a green coat, as narrated by Dr. Sims—had he not noticed these trifling peculiarities, how could he have recalled them twenty, and even forty, years afterwards? Indeed, he has stated that he was oppressed by the minutiæ of his remembrance, and that forgetfulness would sometimes have been welcomed.

> "Through the shadowy past,
> Like a tomb-searcher, memory ran;
> Lifting each shroud that time had cast
> O'er buried hopes."

The readers of his varied works, and far more those who enjoyed his society, will ever remember the daguerreotype clearness with which he painted the portraits of the men of past times and bygone days.

Nor was it solely forms and events that his tenacious memory held in its iron grasp; places and dates precise to the minute, and the exact

sequence of long-past actions—so many wonderful examples of this priceless gift are on record and in remembrance, that it is unnecessary to record them here. Is was to this marvelous faculty that he owed much of his greatness. He never forgot the pages of science or poetry, the remarks of sages and philosophers; the appearance of objects were impressed upon his memory, and stood out as plainly after years had rolled by, as do the tracks of birds, and the anatomical characteristics of the fern-leaf in the now everlasting rocks of the mountain. It was to this faculty that he owed the power of interesting, often instructing, even the most erudite in their own special branch of knowledge, by reference to the works of writers of past days, who, superseded by newer lights, had, with all their richness of detail, been thrust aside for newer gods.

To industry and memory add enthusiasm—perhaps the key to the former, and the assistant of the latter—certainly that which made the orator, the warm friend, the genial companion. "Whatever his head found to do, he did with his might:" was it the simple greeting of a friend, or a distinguished stranger; was it the advocacy of a political opinion, the arrest of a murderous swill-milk traffic, a discussion on the communicability of yellow fever, or the erection of a charity, Dr. Francis's whole soul was enlisted, and he stopped not at any obstacle. How his energetic greeting has cheered the heart of many a despondent doctor, fainting by the wayside, weary of the long days preceding tardy success! "My dear doctor," he would say, "don't despair, there is a great deal in you. Take care of your precious health; that last production of yours has crowned you with immortal honor; you will be remembered when poor Dr. Francis is under the sod. Go on, my dear doctor; I see all you do, and what you can and will effect." How cheering fell these gracious words upon the desponding ear! How many, while well knowing that there was a certain amount of exaggeration in these encouraging remarks, yet in his heart hoped, perhaps believed, that they were not all exaggeration! and that half-thought, that hope, was a cordial to his disappointed soul. The reflec-

tion that the clear-sighted, the renowned Dr. Francis had uttered such like words as these—why, one could almost point to the very flag-stone where he once stood, and, sunning in his presence, drank in his honeyed words.

It was the enthusiasm flowing from his freshness of heart that belied his venerable looks. He was thus ever young; never too old to learn; never too old to teach; never too old to enter heart and soul, body and mind, laboriously and pecuniarily into any scheme for advancing the great interests of humanity, the good of his country, or the service of an individual.

"He had a genuine public spirit, such as distinguished our early race of statesmen; he loved his country, he loved knowledge, he loved eminent men—his native city, institutions, characters and places—with the ardent feelings of an enthusiast, and the loyalty of a faithful citizen. It was this going out of a limited personal sphere—this identification of himself with what he admired and loved, that kept him morally alive to the last, and endeared him to so many friends of widely different stations and pursuits. While men of letters sought encouragement in their lonely and often profitless toils from his active beneficence and warm praise, the ignorant and the poor blessed him as a kind healer of their infirmities. In our age of material prosperity and self-absorption, this generous and genial type of character has become rare."—[TUCKERMAN.]

AT HOME.

If thus, in his public career, he appeared to be every inch a man, his true place was in his own house; in the old, long-to-be-remembered residence, whose solid walls, which had witnessed so much joy, and alas! in the death of his son, so profound a grief—which had welcomed the greatest of modern rulers, the orators, statesmen, poets, professional men of all grades, lands, and tongues, the fairest of earth's creatures, poetesses, sculptors, painters, sages, mere antiquaries,

delving and collaborating historians, the great, and those to be renowned. Here the doctor was himself—acting upon the spur of the moment, speaking the words which the occasion suggested; now to a blooming miss, anon to an academician, to an astronomer, a conchologist, a foreign traveler, the discoverer of the North Pole; he advanced no theme which he could not discuss understandingly and elaborately—his mind, like a diamond from its numerous facets, showered streams of glowing, prismatic light, refracted and gorgeous, illuminating and developing. However erratic and wandering in his discourse, in home conversations, or in the discussions of learned assemblies, he was ever luminous and interesting, like those divergent rockets, called "chasers" by the boys, which, though uncertain in their aim, and tortuous in their course, still flashing, carry the beams of new light into regions before darkened and obscure.

Here was a home indeed. No matter whether at the dearly cherished No. 1 Bond Street, in past days a residence considered almost palatial, and, with its associates, the end of a walk to see the glories of New York architecture—or in the more modern structure of brown stone, with its plate glass, in 16th Street—the place was little; the home consisted in that cherished circle, into which came no bickerings, no heartburnings, no envies—the translation from this to a world on high could scarcely seem abrupt.

In his interior character, Dr. Francis was eminently lovely. Frequent inflammation of the larynx had given his voice a raucous tone, yet his kindly manner, and his warm smile of greeting, soon allayed the fears of children alarmed at his portly figure and his long gray hair, and clothes cut in the style of the fathers.

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS.

In regard to the great questions of the day, the doctor held strong conservative opinions. An old Whig of the Clay and Webster school, having no political ends to subserve, he saw no necessity for changing

his views; but to the last opposed to the agrarian democratic views as developed by Cobb and Floyd, he saw daily new reasons for the propriety of his actions in opposing the election of judges by ballot, in advocating a protective tariff, and the like. At the last Presidential election, fearing the results which have come upon our nation, he voted for the party ostensibly the Union party—Bell and Everett.

In religious matters, in the conflict of views, he was, till within a few years, unsettled in his opinion respecting tenets and dogmas. Possessing among his friends clergymen of all denominations, recognizing in all devotional feeling and true religious actions, yet so divergent in their doctrinal views, the great problem of man's present and future being was inexplicable. "I don't comprehend it," he said once to me, "but it is clear enough to others; my cook and that chimney-sweep understand it; they have no doubts, no misgivings." But the later years of his life were marked with more religious serenity, and he accepted in faith the fundamental doctrines of Christ. This uncertainty made him tolerant of the opinions of others; and while he could listen like a philosopher to the fanatical confidences of Genet, he opened the lecture-room of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Barclay Street to the first Unitarian sermon ever preached in New York, by the pure-minded Channing, when intolerant bigotry had denied to this then feeble denomination every hall in the city.

HIS GENERAL HEALTH.

During the long-protracted life of Dr. Francis, he enjoyed unusual health and vigor; although he had had yellow fever and small-pox, and during his illness with the former he was comforted by the sight of his coffin, brought in to facilitate his removal; till, in the year 1823, he had a serious attack of laryngitis. He had been, prior to this first attack, unusually robust; and, naturally sanguineous, this disease assumed a most acute inflammatory type. Educated in the old-school doctrines, he practiced upon himself the views he had taught, and so earnestly de-

fended ever afterwards, and during this illness had taken from his own arm a quantity of blood which has ever since been quoted as the most ultra carrying out of the depletory doctrine to a successful termination. On the 17th November, venesection to ℥xl.; evening, ℥xx. 18th Nov., ℥xvj.; evening, ℥xvj. 19th Nov., ℥xvj.; evening, ℥xvj. 20th Nov., ℥xvj. 22d Nov., ℥xij. Total, ℥clij. Three or four days after, being still in a precarious condition, venesection was again repeated. Numerous less serious attacks occurred afterwards, and for which he bled himself more than one hundred and fifty times. The first great shock to his system was in consequence of the loss of his eldest son, before alluded to, from which sad dispensation he never fully recovered. His nervous system was again greatly disturbed by the excitement incident to the removal from Bond Street, where he had lived so long, to a more suitable residence, away from the turmoil of business, the noisy street, and the attendant dust and smoke filled air. For many weeks sleep seemed departed from his pillow, and in the week's seven days he slept little more than as many hours.

LAST ILLNESS.

From this, however, he seemed to have quite recovered; for, when fairly settled in Sixteenth Street, cheerfulness, appetite, and vigor returned, and he again entered upon his usual life of activity and beneficence. Early in December last, he was seized with an ominous carbuncle upon his back, in the dorsal region, which attained to the magnitude of six inches in circumference; and when this had reached its maximum, a more huge one still made its appearance in the lumbar region, which swelled to the enormous dimensions of nine by seven inches. Coincidently, numerous smaller ones, from the size of a nut to that of a hen's egg, appeared around. Such a mass of carbuncular disease never fell under the notice of his experienced attendants, Drs. R. H. Kissam, Valentine Mott, and W. H. Van Buren.

While this disease progressed, an aphthous affection of the mouth, throat, fauces, and the entire mucous membrane, as far as the eye

could reach, so disturbed his powers of eating, digestion, and assimilation, that starvation seemed imminent; but after some two weeks' continuance this unpleasant symptom disappeared, and with the return of a good appetite and the assimilation of nutritious food, it was hoped that he would be able to support the reparative process now going on in the diseased parts. But while the hopes seemed about to be crowned by a successful issue, an abscess appeared in the popliteal space, and extended well up the posterior face of the thigh. After some days this was opened, and a large quantity of healthy pus withdrawn, with apparent relief. This additional drain upon his system was, however, too much for his constitution to sustain, and for several days before his final departure he had frequent attacks of exhaustion, and nature was evidently sinking, till, in the course of the night of Thursday, it was apparent that he could not long survive. Serene and calm, as he had been during his whole illness, he expressed his entire resignation to the will of God, and met this trying hour with composure. Seeing his family gathered around his bedside, he said, "It is a very solemn thing to see you all around me—how characteristic of an exit!" Shortly after, turning to his dear friend and attentive physician, Dr. Kissam, he said, "God bless you! Blessed be God! Blessed be Jesus Christ!" He then asked if he could turn over, and immediately after being assisted to do this, he said, "I'm gone! I'm dead!" These were his last words, for in less than three minutes from this time, at the close of nine weeks of great suffering, at a few minutes before three o'clock of Friday morning, February 8th, Dr. John W. Francis calmly, and without a struggle, entered the unknown world.

—— like a time-worn clock,
His weary wheels of life at last stood still.

Dr. Francis was essentially a representative man. Many looked upon him as a type of the Knickerbocker settlers of New Amsterdam, with whom it is seen he had no affinity; yet still his short, thick-set frame, which weighed about one hundred and ninety pounds, his straight-bodied coat and vest, his white neckerchief, broad-brimmed hat, insep-

arable cane, and gold spectacles, made a unity in look which fancy associates to the early Dutch settlers. This pleasant figure will be henceforward missed from our streets. To the medical profession his loss is irreparable. Among our silent members his ever-ready utterance, his quaint ideas and historical reminiscences, his polysyllabic, Johnsonian language, will no more be heard. He who was ever ready to say kind words of others now needs others to speak for him. To the literary world his departure will be mourned. No needy writer ever failed to get his subscription and his influential name to his list; and if among the choice works which compose the large library he has left behind there be found a few deserving to be called trash, be assured that his head did not select if his heart paid for them. It would be curious to know the number of books and pamphlets dedicated to him! They must exceed a hundred in number, of all characters and descriptions; books of prose and poetry, on medicine and other sciences, pamphlets, and sheets of music. Within a year, one day's issue of the ever-teeming press brought three inscribed to him in words of admiration and affection.

Finally, the poor will sadly miss him. It has been well said, "that beneath a lively and off-hand address" he kept a heart "open as day to melting charity." His purse was never closed to the needy even in seeming, while his professional toils were freely given to soldiers who had battled for their country's honor; artists who had perhaps once been something, or belonged to the professions of Cooke, Siddons, Garcia, De Begnis, Malibran, Sontag, or Grisi, whom he so much loved to see and hear; to the clergy of all denominations, to the sons of the sons of an old friend, or to a favorite household servant—these he attended, in larger numbers than any other professional man that I know, with a fidelity unsurpassed by that accorded to the wealthy and those in high positions, and whose tears of gratitude dropped upon his bier was all the return he received in this world.

And what is the result we arrive at by this contemplation? We see on the one hand incessant devotion to duty, persistent toil, a

kindly heart, a generous hand; and on the other a quiet mind, honor, the love of one's fellows, the tears of the poor, the gates of heaven.

> Can that man be dead
> Whose spiritual influence is on his kind?
> He lives in glory; and his speaking dust
> Has more of life than half its breathing moulds.