

Peters (G. A.)

AN
ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
OF THE

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS,

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK,

BY
GEORGE A. PETERS, M.D.,

FEBRUARY 28TH, 1871.

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A year ago to-night I was not here; some of you were; you who were, are to blame for my appearance here to-night in this guise. Perhaps it would have been better for all of us had I been here. I should, at any rate, have escaped the labor-pains of composition, and you would not have been obliged to listen to the feeble cry of the child born.

A year ago to-morrow morning, or thereabout, while seated in my easy chair waiting for the "coming man," my eye, roaming lazily over the morning paper, fell upon a paragraph announcing that the Alumni Association of the College of Physicians and Surgeons had met the evening before and had a good time generally.

Suspecting no evil, I regretted my absence from the meeting, and was rather disposed to blame the secretary for not taking more pains to jog the memory of at least one alumna who would have greatly enjoyed the reunion.

On reading further, you who dread such things as I do, can readily imagine my surprise when I learned that I had been elected your president for the coming year.

What had I done that this thing should befall me? Although always meaning to attend, I had almost universally been absent from your meetings. Living, as I supposed, at peace with all my professional brethren, I began to fear that I had an enemy, and that he had caused this thing to be done unto me.

At my earliest convenience I sought out one of the committee and asked him, why this? He replied that friends had thus

used me and not an enemy. He said other things, from all of which I gathered that the office was not much "hankered after" by the brethren, and that I being absent, consequently not able to decline, and supposed to be good-natured, should be elected and the entire matter left to chance and the future.

I asked what were the emoluments and penalties pertaining to the high position? To which he replied, blandly, that the emoluments were not large, and maliciously, as I thought, that the penalty was to "speak a piece."

As the time was a year off in the future, and as under such circumstances one year seems very like a thousand; likewise as so many things may and often do happen in a year to postpone and derange our best laid plans, in a weak moment I accepted.

Spring came, and if you recollect, it was not such an one as Thomson sings in melodious measure, and the hottest of all hot summers followed, such as was known not in the memory of the oldest. All recollection of what I was to do melted out of me, and I was happy. Then came a lovely autumn, the only really enjoyable season vouchsafed to us who dwell in these latitudes, and my peace of mind continued, and the end of the year, if an occasional glimpse of it was revealed, seemed yet afar off. Finally rude winter and a rapidly returning spring reminded me that the time to "speak my piece" approached.

What shall it be? I know it will not be a song; I hope it may not "turn out a sermon."

It is the custom at family gatherings for those assembled to recite the glories of a common ancestry, and to especially magnify the beauties and accomplishments of their nourishing mother. Let us imitate so worthy an example, and sing the praises of our Alma Mater. I say our mother only, for we seem to be the product of an "immaculate conception," having no father whom we know of or can discover, being sort of half orphans.

The records tell us that our mother was born about sixty-four years ago, in a respectable neighborhood in this city, I was

about to say of poor but honest parents; she seems, however, not to have been born after the manner of men, but rather to have sprung into being in the full vigor of her womanhood, like glorious Athena from the head of Zeus, clad in helmet and shield, full armed and ready for the fray.

Infancy she had none, and so escaped the perils and sequelæ of dentition, measles, and scarlet fever.

She conceived early, for do we not read that under the care of such distinguished physicians and accoucheurs as Mitchell, Miller, Hossack, and Macneven, she gave birth; as early as 1811, to eight sturdy boys, among whom were T. Romeyn Beck and John W. Francis, who, though they be dead, yet speak.

The conscript fathers seem to have treated our mother with some consideration and respect, and to have endeavored to free her from the pinching pangs of poverty; for they granted an endowment of twenty thousand dollars, which enabled her trustees to purchase for her a dwelling-place, in Pearl street, since which time she has never been without a local habitation, although several times obliged to change, crowded northward by the steady march of trade.

Our parent has always been possessed of an even temper, accompanying as it does sound physical and mental health; nevertheless, her trustees and advisers would sometimes quarrel amongst themselves, and with others; and as a result, we find that, "to the discussions between the College and the New York County Medical Society, which began in 1819, there succeeded new causes of discord between the trustees and the faculty. These culminated in the resignation of the entire faculty, in April, 1826, and the appointment of a new corps of professors a few months afterwards." Such discord and misfortune could not tame the spirit of her who was destined to nurse wise men and heroes. By a new provision in the constitution, the faculty were excluded from the board of trustees, and both bodies have since worked in harmony. The College removed from Barclay to Crosby street, in November, 1837,

where it remained for nearly twenty years, and where myself, and many of you with me here to-night, were born into the profession; let us hope to a life of usefulness and honor. The spacious and convenient edifice, in which we are now assembled, has been the homestead since January, 1856, and now bears the title of "The College of Physicians and Surgeons in the City of New York, Medical Department of Columbia College."

The next hegira will be made, I trust, to the neighborhood of some large hospital, in intimate connection with which the sphere of usefulness may be enlarged, and greater facilities afforded for the broadest and deepest teaching of our noble art.

Except we pause in the march, look back and reflect, we can hardly appreciate the wonderful changes and improvements which have come to pass, in the teaching and practice of medicine and surgery, since the formation of this College.

It cannot be said of those who have taught, and toiled, and practiced in our profession, during the past century, that "the forms of the fathers' thoughts were the forms of the sons," and they have not been employed in "merely treading into paths the foot-prints of their distant ancestors." They have made broad avenues, opened new vistas, explored territories before unknown, and made discoveries, the mere mention of which causes a thrill of satisfaction, and we rejoice that our lives have fallen in these times.

Three centuries ago, when Elizabeth, the proudest of England's sovereigns, reigned—an age in which literature and science made gigantic strides—where stood our profession? It is narrated that "Elizabeth, in 1566, went on progress to Oxford University. The days of her stay were spent in * * * attending the exercises of the University. The Professor of Medicine maintained, in the Queen's presence, that it was not the province of the physician to cure disease, because diseases were infinite, and the infinite was beyond the reach of art; or, again, because medicine could not retard age, and age ended in death, and, therefore, medicine could not preserve life."

In our day, the art of medicine is so far advanced that we can affirm with confidence that many diseases are cured; not left to run their course until they are run out, but checked midway in their career and cured. The physician of to-day has no fear of miasma, for he knows that with quinine it can be vanquished. Hence, the traveller goes upon scientific journeyings, into the tropical jungle, with the assurance that he will escape the perils by disease and return laden with material for increasing the general fund of knowledge. The hardy pioneer fears not to march onward and rapidly extend the area of civilization. Even the "Star of Empire," with more confidence, takes "its westward way."

When some of you who now hear me, graduated years ago, what were the advantages of the student as compared with now? Our teachers were diligent, faithful men, but were obliged to rely chiefly on didactic teaching, with only occasional clinical instruction. The microscope, as applied to medicine, was in its infancy, and its wonderful revelations, which have shed such floods of light upon the physiological and pathological condition of tissues and organs, and, consequently, so simplified the treatment of many diseases, were hardly dreamed of by the wildest enthusiast. Now the student of a year sees with his eyes, and reads intelligently, what to you was a sealed book.

Then the records of disease and experience were clear for the times, but auscultation and percussion have forced the cavity of the human chest to reveal secrets which were only guessed at. The thermometer and sphygmometer, in their daily record, have a chart, with the voyages of those who have preceded us marked out for our guidance, showing the hidden rocks and quicksands, and "conducting us in safety to the haven where we would be."

One clinique a week, and that a surgical one, was all we had. Now each department in medicine and surgery, and almost every day in the week, has its clinique, and abundant matter

is furnished for the careful study and observation of disease. The faculty is well represented in our hospitals, and crowds of students follow them in their daily rounds, and at the bed-side apply the rules and teachings of the lecture-room.

Dispensaries, infirmaries, and asylums, multiply on every side, the doors of which are thrown wide open to the diligent searcher after truth and experience, which is there to be obtained under the guidance and direction of earnest workers, whose great desire is to impart to others what they themselves have dug from the deep mines and blasted from the hard quarries of scientific and practical medicine.

A generation ago, to practice as a specialist was to rank with quacks and nostrum-venders. Now, nearly every organ in the body has its worshippers, who find abundant field for study and labor in unrolling its anatomy, exploring its physiology, and spying into the pathological changes, actual and possible.

Medical periodicals—weekly, monthly, and quarterly—have multiplied amongst and around about us. The practitioner observes more closely his cases, and publishes them more frequently, than of old. Thus, by writing and reading (two of the three famous democratic r's), is the general stock of knowledge increased, and all made better and wiser physicians.

I am sorry to be obliged to acknowledge that quackery has held its own during the years that have added so much to our noble art. As have increased the medical periodicals, so have multiplied the daily papers. Men and women are no less human now than of yore. The advertising columns, which are open to all who pay, teem with notices of balsams, balms, and cordials; pills, potions, and pomades; all of which are eagerly purchased and applied; the proceeds greatly enriching Hallowsays, Helmbolds, and Humbugs.

It is said that the newest popular maps of the United States, now sold in China, "divide our country into two sections, as the Buchu and the Bitters drinkers."

In this connection I would state that the graduates from this

College have, with very few exceptions, followed the narrow and rugged path which alone leads to true professional dignity. Some have been sorely tempted, and have left the direct road, seeking shorter cuts, which have led them wandering and groping through the mazes of various pathies, only to end in regret and disappointment. Let us not forget the days of our youth, and as these wanderers return, let us welcome them home again.

In our time, great advances have been made in surgery. The problem which so long puzzled the profession, how to make extension so as not to inflict serious injury to the soft parts, was at length solved by a New Hampshire surgeon, who taught us "how to do it" by the simple use of adhesive plaster. The knowledge soon travelled far and wide over the country, and as a consequence many a man this day walks erect and free from pain or blemish, who, except for this simple contrivance, would limp and stumble along the road with shortened limb and aching cicatrices.

When we began practice the treatment of even simple fracture of the thigh bone was a serious matter to the surgeon, and a source of great discomfort if not of actual danger to the patient. With the old appliances of long splints, splint cloths, pads, bandages, patent boots, and other contrivances for relieving bony prominences from pressure, and diminishing torture, torture was only made a little more endurable, and shortening of the limb from an inch to an inch and a half was the rule, the exceptions to which were rare and could be counted on the fingers of one hand by any surgeon in large practice.

Now how changed. With adhesive plaster and elastic extension by the weight and pulley, as first introduced at the New York Hospital, and to the profession at large, by one of our own graduates, Dr. Gurdon Buck, the patient tastes not the horrors of a middle passage, but is carried, by easy stages, from the first pain of a shortened limb, over-lapping bone, and wounded muscles, with no absolute decubitus, as though glued

to the bed, to complete recovery, with unabraded integument, a sound heel, and a limb, if not absolutely the length of its fellow, so near it that the accurately graduated tape-measure scarcely discovers the difference.

One would suppose that results such as these, so frequently observed and recorded, would challenge the attention of surgeons abroad. Here, however, is a rare instance of honor awarded to a prophet in his own country, and his teachings disregarded in other lands.

It has been with the utmost difficulty that young and enthusiastic American surgeons, travelling abroad, could secure attention to this method of treatment, or obtain the opportunity to apply it. Even when applied it has been, by the majority, treated as a Yankee invention, and given the go-by. So prone are we to look with disfavor on another's offspring.

The use of plaster-of-paris in the treatment of fractures—simple and compound—has given us a neat, firm, and durable dressing, which the surgeon of to-day would be loath to exchange for the cumbersome and awkward splints of the olden time.

During my student life, and in my early experience as an hospital *interne*, all operations were done without any, save the most inefficient and bungling, efforts to prevent pain. The patient was bound like a malefactor for the trial by "question." The glistening blade went keenly through integument and muscle, and the saw crashing through the bone. The actual and potential cautery was presented to his notice in all its naked deformity, wearing not even a mask to hide its ugliness.

All discussion, as the operation proceeded, was poured into his unwilling but listening ear, until, between pain and terror, he was little better than a maniac, screaming and struggling in the hands of the inquisitors.

It is readily seen that the effect of all this was not especially soothing to the nerves of the surgeon; and brave and strong indeed must have been the man who, under such circumstances,

and with such surroundings, could with clear eye and steady hand course with the keen-edged knife along the margin of dangerous regions, exposing, but not injuring, vessels which carried the current of the patient's life, or nerves which gave sensation and motion.

Behold in these times the mighty difference. The power of producing absolute insensibility to pain, by the inhalation of a subtile vapor, is discovered—undoubtedly the greatest boon conferred during the past century, by our profession, on suffering humanity.

I was present and assisted in its administration, for the first time in this city, to a patient in the New York Hospital, and I well remember the exquisite satisfaction I experienced when he fell into a quiet sleep, as did Adam in the garden, and submitted, without a murmur, to a painful operation (not, by the way, the removal of a rib), awakened to consciousness, and could hardly be convinced that the knife had scarred him.

I then saw before me, instead of darkness, thunderings and tempest, "green fields and pastures new," in which I have wandered ever since, feeling that I carry, corked in a vial, the spirit which controls pain; that limbs can be lopped off, and children born, without suffering; the only cry, if any, being "more, doctor, more!"

The silver suture, introduced by Dr. Sims, who is a son of New York by adoption, has revolutionized the whole practice of surgery, as applied to the lesions accompanying parturition. In olden times the rule was, that woman, once the subject of vessico-vaginal fistula, always remained a sufferer, and went to her grave with the bitter experience that children are born in sorrow. Occasionally, a master-hand and indomitable perseverance succeeded in healing this lesion. Now, as a result of his labors, investigations, and experience, assisted by others who have been stimulated by his example, any good practitioner of surgery is confident that he can attack a fistula with the certain assurance of a perfect cure. Out of this practice has

grown the Woman's Hospital, one of the noblest charities of our truly charitable city. An institution which, under the surgical charge of Dr. Emmet and able colleagues, is doing a good work for wounded and suffering woman.

Time would fail me to speak of the ophthalmoscope, the endoscope, and the laryngoscope, which enable us to peer into passages and cavities before unexplored, save by the knife of the anatomist, and reveal to our gaze lesions and changes before this only suspected; of acupressure—a ready and certain method of controlling hemorrhage—second only, if indeed second at all, to the ligature; of the hypodermic use of remedies, when a few drops, introduced beneath the skin, remove the sting from pain, or cause quotidian and tertian to vanish. These, and a hundred others, throng upon me; but I must pass on.

A thought suggests itself, which, with your permission, I will dwell upon for a few moments.

All now within the sound of my voice have doubtless gloried in the name and record of the New York Hospital, chartered in the reign of King George III, July 13th, 1771. The corner-stone was laid in 1773, but the building, when almost completed, was nearly destroyed by fire, February 28th, 1775. During the war of independence it was used for barracks, and was not in a condition to be opened as a hospital until January 3d, 1791. From time to time new buildings were erected upon the grounds, and the original building, known as the "main house," was enlarged and improved. The elms, planted a century ago, flourished apace, shaded its grand old front, and gladdened the eye of every passer in the Broadway throng, be he bent on business or pleasure. Within its walls, Wright Post, J. Kearney Rodgers, Valentine Mott, and Alexander H. Stevens, achieved those surgical triumphs which made the New York Hospital famous the world over, and sowed seed which ripened into fruit worthy of them.

I will venture to say that no institution in this country has

turned out as many able men, or afforded to our profession as much noble teaching and healthful stimulus to labor for the common good.

Where, alas, is she now! Gone—forever gone from the old familiar spot. The noble elms, planted by our wise fathers with the fond hope that they would yield only to disease and decay, incident alike to man and tree, are levelled in the dust, and, with grief and shame be it spoken, no skilful woodman officiated at the sacrifice, but they fell before repeated and bungling blows from the dull ax of the rude navy. The gentle eminence on which she sat so proudly, has disappeared before the shovel of the inevitable contractor. Streets have been cut through her ample and pleasant grounds. Marble warehouses, in long and tiresome rows, have risen as if by magic. Trade and commerce now sit enthroned on the spot which all had hoped was forever consecrated to charity and good works.

Why this change? Let us examine the record. The governors of the Hospital, in their annual report to the Legislature for 1869, state that poverty was the cause. I will quote their own words: "The annual State appropriations had ceased; donations and bequests were always uncertain, and had been rendered still more so by a general conviction of that portion of the community sympathizing with the humane objects of the Hospital, that the valuable land occupied by the Hospital buildings should be made to yield income for the support of the Hospital in some other location," etc., etc. They say "that the proceedings of the board of governors for the last ten years will show that the absorbing theme of discussion and investigation has been to devise means for the permanent increase of revenue, in order to extend the benefits of the Hospital to a larger number of the sick and injured; and that the leasing of the lands on Broadway, Worth, Church, and Duane streets, was finally adopted, with reluctance, as the only means adequate to solve the problem. To have continued even

the restricted operations of the Hospital, in the face of accumulating indebtedness and increasing demand for gratuitous hospital treatment, with no ascertained or probable source of additional annual income, would have subjected this board to the well-merited censure of your honorable body and this community. Such are the circumstances and motives which controlled the action of the board of governors in respect to the old Hospital grounds, and in the light of these facts they are willing to be judged.

"The board are sensible of the heavy responsibility that rests upon them to administer their trust judiciously, liberally, and economically, and are confident that their next annual report will make manifest that their sympathies and energy have been successfully devoted to perpetuating and extending the usefulness of the important charity under their charge."

After such a declaration, you would very naturally expect that, having leased the grounds and thus secured the "additional annual income," the board of governors, who for ten years past have been absorbed in the discussion as to how the benefits of the Hospital could be extended to a larger number of the sick and injured, would be up and doing, and that long ere this something worthy of them and the trust they hold would have been at least commenced.

Listen to a plain statement of facts:

The medical board have, from the first, watched the progress of affairs with great anxiety; have protested against even the temporary suspension of the institution. We have urged upon the governors the necessity for prompt action; have diligently labored to find eligible pieces of property, which might be obtained; have found such a location, which can be had, and which is very desirable, situated as it is on the west side of the town, far removed from any other hospital, and accessible to a district which would furnish ample material to fill its wards. A committee from the board of governors was appointed to examine into the matter. The committee was

made up of a few men in the board who are for progress, and they reported favorably. The board, however, by a large majority, dismissed the subject, and in opposition to the report of their own committee and our individual and united pleadings as a medical board, adhere to their original intention. What think you is that intention? Listen, while I tell it you.

Years ago, when there was no provision in this city for the care of lunatics, except the cold charity of the alms-house, the New York Hospital spread its sheltering wing over that unfortunate class, and erected a building upon their grounds where they could be cared for. In time, as the wants of the Hospital for the sick and maimed increased, and more room was needed, land was secured at Bloomingdale, buildings erected, and the asylum removed to that location, the building formerly used for lunatics being converted into a hospital proper, and devoted to the accommodation of sick and injured seaman, for whose support the State paid a certain sum per head.

The property at Bloomingdale, fronting as it does upon one of the new boulevards, is now immensely valuable, and the board have determined to remove the asylum to White Plains, or some other place, and to this they intend to devote all their energies and means.

Years hence—for we all know how slowly all such projects are accomplished—when the new asylum shall be completed, they propose to allow the Hospital again to come into being, and occupy the buildings then vacated at Bloomingdale, far, far away from wharves, factories, railroad stations, and a dense population. In the meantime the Hospital sleeps—is dead.

The absolute need of a new asylum is doubted by very many. Since the early days of its usefulness great changes have come to pass. The State has provided, and is still engaged in increasing her provision, for lunatics; and private enterprise and charity is actively at work, here and all over the State, multiplying asylums.

By what right, except that of might, do the governors bury

the Hospital, virtually ignore its usefulness, and devote their funds to buildings and grounds of questionable utility?

Who were the founders of the New York Hospital? By whose influence was the charter obtained, and the funds chiefly raised? In fact, who made the New York Hospital what it was from the beginning to the time when it lay gasping, dying, in Duane street, now more than a year ago? Doctors!

Its charter was granted by George III, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, who "sent greeting to his loving subjects Peter Middleton, Samuel Bard, and John Jones, physicians, by their humble petition presented unto our trusty and well-beloved Cadwallader Colden, Esq., Lieut.-Gov., &c."

Through the exertions of Dr. John Fothergill and Sir William Johnson, names eminent in our profession, considerable contributions were obtained in Great Britain. It was instituted for the benefit of the respectable sick poor of the city of New York, a class too intelligent and not poor enough to be absolute paupers. Let its records show how it has been esteemed by that class, and also the good it has wrought among them.

Nothing is said in the original charter about a lunatic asylum. A hospital for the treatment of disease and surgical accidents was established and intended to be perpetual, the *first* if not the *only* care of the governors.

One great cause of the departure from the straight path of duty and responsibility, seems to me to lie in the fact that the profession has no representation in the board of governors. I do not believe that the management of the affairs of any hospital can reach the highest point of excellence except its medical board constitutes a part of its board of governors. Let it be a minority if you please, but still a minority so respectable in numbers as to command attention and secure a fair hearing of what they have to say on all questions in which they from their training and experience have the ripest knowledge.

There seems to be in the minds of all governing boards of

hospitals, in this community at least, a certain jealousy of the medical men connected with them. We are treated, to be sure, with a certain *sort* of respect, and our opinions are formally asked, but except in clear cases of life and death, how often are they accepted? The opinion of an architect on the subject of ventilation and the number of cubic feet of fresh air required by a patient, is preferred to ours; and a hireling steward is frequently considered a better judge of fitting food for an invalid.

To what degree this feeling is sometimes carried I will illustrate. A certain old-time and influential governor of one of our hospitals was applied to for aid and counsel in establishing a hospital in the neighboring city of Brooklyn. He gave freely from the stores of his ripe experience, and closed with the following injunction: "Whatever you do, be sure to keep your foot on the necks of the doctors."

This should not be so. The medical man who devotes his energies to developing the greatest amount of good to the sufferers within the hospital wards, and who does this without reward of any kind, except what comes from a good conscience and the sense of duty done, is certainly entitled to a voice in the management of the institution with which he is connected, and the laymen associated with him would find him at all times an able and earnest coadjutor.

I have heard that it has been said by some who are responsible for the fate of the New York Hospital, "that the doctors are only in a hurry for its reconstruction that they may have a field for teaching, and thereby glorify themselves." If this were true (all but the glorifying), why should it not be so?

It was the intention of the original founders that the Hospital should be used as a school in the highest sense of the term; where the student should see disease and accident treated under the most favorable circumstances, and in the best manner known to science. How else are doctors to be made at all fitted to practice their noble art? To whom, think you, would one of these objectors first apply, were he sick or sore?

To the man fresh from two courses of lectures, or to one with mind well stored and memory filled with daily hospital experiences?

While the governors stand on the bank of the stream, hesitating whether to venture in or not, I very much fear that the "powers that be" may bring the whole matter before the legislature, and on the ground that the trust has not been properly administered, attempt to get the matter into their own hands. As the real estate now held by the board is so valuable, computed as it is by millions of dollars, I shall be much surprised if the "ring" do not attempt to step in and dispense.

Now the profession acting in concert are strong, and can accomplish much, either socially or politically. What I would propose, is that each one of us examine into the merits of this subject, and use all his influence to secure the immediate rehabilitation of that Hospital of whose record in the past we are all so proud.

Since we started in the race, many of our fellows who ran beside us have fallen by the way. Some, stricken down suddenly, have gone with harness on; others, their vital forces gradually sapped, have lingered and suffered. One who was dear to me in my student life entered the navy, and in the service of his country and of science made his first voyage in company with the lamented Kane, away off amid the ice and drear and darkness of the Arctic Sea. Returning thence he tarried with us for a time until the order came for China and the Indies. During the great war of the rebellion he did loyal service on our coast, and at New Orleans and Mobile. Thence to the African coast, where he fell a victim to the fever which has taken from life so many good and true. His body now rests fathoms deep beneath the restless waves of the southern Atlantic. Alas, poor Vreeland! The muse of poetry delights to sing of heroes who have died battling for liberty and right. Peace has her heroes as well as war, and in no walk or profession do they more abound than in ours.

Enthusiasm and the applause of men stimulate the soldier. To be brave in battle is the rule, the coward is the exception. In our ranks we are opposed, not to an open enemy, but to a secret and insidious foe. We have not the applause of thousands to stimulate and cheer. Pestilence stalks abroad, and our lines are thinned and decimated; as one falls another steps into his place and marches bravely on to almost certain death.

Even on the field of battle the duties of the surgeon differ from those of the soldier, and so do his rewards. Well has Freilingrath, the greatest of living German poets, expressed this in a beautiful lyric addressed to his son, a medical student, serving as a surgeon in the ranks of the fatherland :

“ Well wouldst thou in the contest
 Strike home for Fatherland;
 The Frenchman's ranks thou frontest—
 Yet not with sword in hand.
 Upon the field thou servest,
 Yet not in deadly strife;
 Thy hero-hand thou nerverest
 To save, not sever life!

“ Thy heart so warmly glowing
 Impelled thee to the Rhine:
 Thy arm the red-cross showing
 Within the German line.
 Thou step'st among the stricken
 Upon the field of gore,
 The dying life to quicken,
 The wounded to restore.

“ The fevered brow thou soothest
 With drops of healing balm,
 The wayside pillow smoothest
 When comes the deadly qualm.
 The dying prayer thou hearest
 Upon the night-wind swoon,
 In dying faces peerest
 Beneath the autumn moon.

“ Then still through dead and dying
 Thy faithful course pursue,
 And keep the red-cross flying
 Within each warrior's view.
 Ne'er from thy pathway swerving,
 Friends, foes, alike to shield—
 Thy curse for him reserving
 Who forced us to the field.

“ Farewell, my boy! God's favor
 Attend thee to thy close;
 Nor let thy love-task waver—
 My blessing with thee goes.
 And if we ne'er behold thee
 In Deutschland's conquering van,
 In fond embrace we'll fold thee,
 A boy no more—a man!”

Our Alma Mater, in honor of her heroes, has inscribed many names on yonder tablet, and testifies to her appreciation of their worth in the language of the Roman matron, “*Haec mea ornamenta sunt.*”

When the trump shall sound, calling men to their last account, many such will come from the north and the south, from the east and the west, and from the isles of the sea, to receive their reward for deeds done here in the flesh, but known only to him who knoweth all things.

Let us take heed that we place not too high an estimate on our individual importance. The best of us—one or a dozen—may be taken away, and except by a few near and dear friends we are hardly missed. “Man may come and man may go,” but the true earnest work of the world “flows on forever.”

As death is so certain to come to us all, and to many of us so unexpectedly, it is fitting not only that we ourselves should be prepared for it, but that we should not leave those depending upon us to the cold charity of the world. “He who provides not for his own household is worse than an infidel.”

Henry Clay once remarked that "it was the fate of professional men in this country to work hard, live high, and die poor." The truth of this saying is, alas, too often proven in our profession. Hard work, it is not desirable to avoid; it does not kill, it only ripens and mellows us. High living, why that depends upon what you call high. Generous living, provided always it be within our means, hurts nobody; in fact we are required to live as do those among whom we practice, and with whom we associate. Must we die poor? Not of necessity. In these days of Life Insurance Companies, "Societies for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of Medical Men," "Physicians' Mutual Aid Societies," etc., every man is to blame if he does not provide for the maintenance and comfort of those he leaves behind him. "Make hay while the sun shines." No one should allow himself to live as though clouds and storms might never come. In the day of his prosperity let him put by something every year, and if this be done dilligently he will be surprised to see how certain will be his reward.

It is a curious fact that this mother of ours, though so fecund, should never in all these years have given birth to a girl; sons many, daughters none. This seems to have been the rule with all "her kin" until of late years. We now occasionally hear of the birth of daughters in medicine; and it is worthy of note that those mothers who bear them seem to have what is called "a hard time," and some abroad have been in danger of their lives during gestation. In these advanced days of woman's rights, woman's suffrage, etc., our mother, influenced by surroundings, may be suddenly seized with "a longing," and have daughters. If so, let us boys treat them with respect and kindness, never forgetting our manhood.

In confidence I will state to you that our mother's health has never been better than at the present time. A consultation of physicians pronounce her sound and strong, and, barring accidents, sure of a long life in the future. It is our bounden duty as good sons to guard her from accident, and

to cheer and sustain her, that her old age may be green and fruitful.

In the strife between rivals, let her sons always be generous ; let their aim be to secure for her such aid and counsel as shall keep her in the front rank, so that her "stature be not measured by the lengthening shadow of her sun making haste to its setting."

