

WRIGHT (M.B.)

AN

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

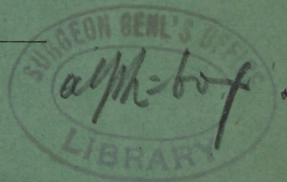
DELIVERED IN THE

Medical College of Ohio,

SESSION 1860-1,

BY M. B. WRIGHT, M. D.

PROFESSOR OF OBSTETRICS AND DISEASES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.



CINCINNATI:

GAZETTE COMPANY PRINT, CORNER FOURTH AND VINE STREETS,

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Correspondence.

CINCINNATI, Nov. 1st, 1860.

PROF. M. B. WRIGHT,

Dear Sir:—At a meeting of the students of the Medical College of Ohio, Andy J. Baxter being called to the chair, and Henry A. Langdon appointed Secretary, it was

“*Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed to solicit a copy of Prof. M. B. Wright’s introductory address for publication.”

Accordingly, we, their committee, take pleasure in requesting an early response to the wishes of the class.

Respectfully yours, &c.

GEO. W. GARVER,
THOMAS J. KARBER,
THOS. McMILLEN,
J. H. BUCKNER,
H. PLUMMER. } *Committee.*

CINCINNATI, Nov. 5th, 1860.

MR. G. W. GARVER AND OTHERS.—Committee.

GENTLEMEN:—Your kind letter requesting a copy of my introductory lecture for publication is before me. The lecture was written for the class, and it is therefore placed at your disposal. For your courtesy please accept the thanks of

Your friend,

M. B. WRIGHT.

Introductory Lecture.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CLASS:—It gives me pleasure to extend to you the kind and cheerful greetings of the Faculty.

It has been an established custom for the Dean, or some other member of the Faculty, at the commencement of a course of medical lectures, to address the class upon any subject which might seem appropriate to the occasion. I endeavored to convince my colleagues that an address from some one of them would be more acceptable than from myself; but, they would neither acknowledge the force of my arguments, nor lay aside their native modesty.

I do not propose to discuss any branch or special subject in medicine. But, as some of us will be associated during the four long months that are before us, it may not be unprofitable to consider for a short time our individual and relative duties.

The professor and the student have both a laborious task before them, requiring not only the constant exercise of their reasoning faculties, but a pleasurable state of feeling and an unflinching will. To stop by the way side and talk with the adventurer about the land of gold, and count the many miles that may intervene, will prove to be an ineffectual way to secure its treasures. The student in pursuit of knowledge is in a similar situation. He has a thousand obstacles to overcome, requiring industry, patience, and a resolute purpose.

It is a common remark, that while the physician is discharging his duty, he is engaged in a conflict with death. Such a claim in behalf of the profession we should esteem the height of presumption. When that grim messenger comes,

and takes the fluttering heart in his icy grasp, there is no human power that can save from destruction. No skill, no severe pang, no torrent of tears, no agonizing appeals will stay his approach, after he has obtained possession of the dread summons. Man is born to die, and when his allotted time on earth has been passed, die he must.

In a healthy state, the human system is under the dominion of fixed, natural laws, and when these laws are forcibly invaded, evil must result. It is the general duty of the physician to observe the operation of these laws, and to correct the consequences of their infringement.

Throughout nature, everything differs in its powers of resistance. The forest soil may be covered with its growing oaks, the one sending forth its branches and green leaves in spring time, enriching the landscape in autumn with its various hues, and in durability bidding defiance to time itself, while the other is stunted, and bends to every passing zephyr. Such, too, is human existence. All along the line from birth to old age, we behold different capabilities. Why this is so, is of itself the study of a long life.

It has been wisely said, "we are fearfully and wonderfully made." Have you ever contemplated the full meaning of this brief sentence? We are, indeed, *fearfully* made. At every step of our progress through life we are encompassed by dangers. The infant dies in its birth. The atmosphere necessary for its existence may be the means of its destruction. Its first nutriment has been to its delicate tissues like bitter water.

Why does the mother watch at the couch of her child day after day and night after night, without either sleep or repose? Why does she observe with so much accuracy the variations of pulse, the changes of countenance, the interrupted breathing, the difference in cry and voice, and those various departures from health which affection is so ready to detect? The explanation is easy, the child is fearfully made, the tendrils of its existence are liable at every moment to be severed.

In your mind, go with me for a moment to our own Spring Grove Cemetery. Move leisurely along its graveled walks. Count the evergreens and inhale the fragrance of the flowers, planted and nurtured by the hand of friendship and love. Look admiringly upon the chiseled statue, which represents not only the character of one who sleeps beneath, but the refinements of art. Rest upon some green hillock or grave, and while shedding a tear to the memory of buried treasures, wish that you too may find a resting place where the dead are not forgotten.

Now, turn your thoughts in another direction. Read the inscription on that marble slab. It reveals the fact that the occupant beneath had suffered from long continued disease; and may it not be profitable to enquire how much of human agony arises from a forgetfulness that man is fearfully made?

Man is *wonderfully* made. This is an admitted fact, without argument and without much reflection. The bare admission, however, is not enough for the medical man. He must not look upon the human body with the same wonder that he looks upon illimitable space, and the thousand worlds that shine like diamonds in the firmament. To know that the eye beholds nature in her beauty and grandeur is not enough, while the delicate and various structures of that eye can be minutely examined. To know that the ear can distinguish the delicacy and harmony of sound, excites an inquiry respecting the point of impression produced by that sound, and its mode of conveyance. Why is the texture of bodies so readily detected and compared? How can the tongue separate the bitter from the sweet? Whence comes that immense power by which man can traverse the globe, go down into its deepest depths, and ascend to the summit of its highest elevations? Whence arises that still more wonderful intellect, with its capacity for observation, for invention, for reasoning, for enjoying life here, and preparing for greater exaltations in a hereafter, are questions which must be calmly and laboriously considered.

Man is wonderfully, because fearfully made—fearfully, because wonderfully made. It is the privilege of all to gaze admiringly and thoughtfully upon the inimitable machinery of the human frame; but, it is the positive duty of the physician to understand its fearful delicacy and connections, and to repair its injuries. How fearful the responsibility, and how wonderfully does the mind adapt the means to the end.

Medical men have been subjected to the opposite charges of excessive and deficient ambition. Is it censurable to be eager for advancement—eager for the possession of all knowledge within the scope of the profession; eager to learn, to investigate, to discover, to make known? If the ambition of those whose deeds shine like suns in our pathway, had been punishable as an offence, then, indeed, would our professional knowledge have been confined to a few ideas, and a limited number of remedies. The drones stigmatize the active men of the profession for being ambitious; the drones, too, who never originated an idea, and live upon the accumulations of others.

Is the ambitious man to be censured because he is impatient, dissatisfied, ever active, ever on the alert? When he has before him, near and remote, the one great idea, the cure of his patients, and is fully impressed with the amount and variety of knowledge necessary to be acquired, how can he be otherwise than impatient? When he reflects upon the knowledge which he has, compared with that he might have had, and must have, is it strange that he should be dissatisfied? While knowledge comes not intuitively, should he not be active? When facts are passing and eluding the grasp of so many minds, is it not necessary to be on the alert?

There are doubtless among you men of true energy and determination, and whose unfaltering aim is excellence. Be not afraid of the scoffs of the sluggard, nor the shafts of the envious. You will soon leave the one so far behind, and rise so high above the other, that they will cease to annoy. I need not say this, however, by way of encouragement, for he who has the will to do, has also the courage to dare.

There is one kind of ambition, however, against which I would enter my most earnest protest—an ambition that overleaps itself, or, in other words, that looks to the end without regard to the means, that desires the possession of a Diploma without the willingness to earn it. An example or two of this kind may be presented.

Several years ago, while a professor in this college and acting as Dean, I received an application for a diploma, from a young man in Canada. He expressed an anxiety to be in possession of a medical degree, if it could be procured short of the expense and labor of attending a course of lectures. He was well satisfied that any one of the many medical schools in Her Majesty's dominions would take great pleasure in gratifying his wishes, but, his desire was to be honored by the Queen City. His attainments were set forth in glowing language, and consisted in his being a confidential clerk in a prescription drug store, a regular attendant of a Bible class, and a teacher in a Sabbath school, and in his having an elevated notion of things. His application concluded with the promise that we should never have cause to regret our kindness, and the assurance that his friends would be highly gratified.

Another informed us that he had a secret remedy for all diseases, which he would exchange for a diploma. He had made several voyages to different parts of the world, gathering information here and there, and combining such as was deemed most valuable into one grand system. He was especially gratified to state that he had visited St. Helena, and had sat upon the tomb of Napoleon.

Now, these men were not alone in their ignorance. They belong to a class who think that the possession of a diploma is the possession of knowledge, while it is only a certificate of qualification. It is gratifying to the professor to bestow honors upon the deserving, but, it is an imperative duty to withhold it from those by whom it has not been justly earned.

There are a vast number of facts to be taught and learned. The reasoning faculties as well as the memory, are to be brought into requisition. Bone, its form and composition—muscle, with its size, attachments and contractile power—the blood vessels, with their numerous ramifications—and the various organs, with their peculiar structure and special uses, must all be closely studied, and then united into one complicated whole, not as dead material, but, as acting under the influence of a mysterious vitalizing principle.

To know the composition of a medicine is not enough—to know that it produces a particular effect upon an individual organ, or seemingly upon the whole system, is not enough—to know what group of symptoms constitute a particular disease is not enough, we must know how to adapt the remedy to the disease. To do this skilfully, requires the exercise of both memory and reason.

The student too often brings confusion to his own mind, and charges it to what he supposes to be the conflicting doctrines of his teachers. Look well to this. They may entertain different theoretical views, but, what is the sum and substance of this? All theories have been good in their time. All are good now, that will give to the mind a satisfactory origin of a fact. To theorise is to think. Men differ in their modes of thinking, in the explanation of a cure, and yet the cure is complete. Follow carefully in your mind the train of argument, and the facts presented by each professor, to the great result. Then, perhaps, you may look back and say, I have been traveling with different companions, along separate avenues, but, there is the same bright, beautiful prospect at the end.

You may think, during the progress of our teaching, that we differ widely in the treatment of disease. Be not controlled by the idea that at the moment impresses your mind. Remember that a number of remedies produce the same general effect, and so far as this is concerned, it may not be material which remedy is selected.

Again, although the general effect of remedies may be the same, and disease the same, a cautious discrimination may be required on account of some individual peculiarity. As an example, two persons may have swallowed poison, its immediate ejection from the stomach being necessary to save life. To the one is given tartrate antimony, to the other ipecacuanha, for the reason that antimony agrees and operates well with the one and not with the other.

Two persons suffering from the same disease, are under the influence of different remedies. Is this strange? Then remember that the patient is not being treated for the *name* of the disease. The age and peculiarities of the patient, the period and tendencies of the disease, and the action of the remedy, varied with the dose, are all under cautious observation. There is no inconsistency, then, in the administration of different remedies in the same disease, and especially in its different stages, and instead of becoming embarrassed or disheartened, you should take new courage, increase your stock of patience, and summon to your aid all your powers of discrimination.

It is true, that diseases are cured by impressions seemingly different and even opposite. Is this discouraging to you as learners? It should be otherwise. Alas! how sad and disheartened would the physician feel, who, in assailing some fierce disease had become exhausted of his remedies. The hope, the self-reliance, determination and untiring energy of the physician are sustained by a knowledge of multiplied resources. To you, this should be the stimulus of daily and increasing effort.

The almost intuitive perception which distinguishes some men in the investigation of disease and its treatment, you may hope to possess, and short of this should not be satisfied. Proficiency in practice cannot be attained during your collegiate studies. It must be acquired at the bed-side, with the aid of observation and experience.

It is not possible that in the ordinary period devoted to

lecturing, the practical branches can be taught in all their minute ramifications. Practical topics will be presented clearly and prominently. The safe paths of the profession, upon which bright minds have reflected their light, will be so far traced, that, in your future studies you may easily reach their termination. Declarations of unexplained meaning, and suggestions of untried value, will be laid aside for a more convenient season. Wild, fitful efforts at change, or so called improvements, will be left for rhymsters and dreamers. True improvement founded upon facts and knowledge, will be assiduously cultivated. Bold assaults upon medical truth and professional honor, belong to that class who make them as finishing touches to their doggerel, and who have never yet cracked a nut of the profession containing a kernel. The inconsistency, not to say dishonesty, of putting life and the cure of disease under the exclusive control of nature, and at the same time teaching medicine as a science, will be handed over for discussion and explanation to sensation declaimers, and those who write essays for yellow covered periodicals. The work of beating out new systems from vague generalities, belongs properly to those who fatten upon public credulity, and embrace humbugs as legitimate inventions. We shall take no pleasure in robbing a Boston satirist, or any other satirist of "the substance of things hoped for," nor "the evidence of things not seen." We shall be careful how we exchange a practical Roland for a fanciful *Oliver*.

I hesitate not to assert, that no class of men require the same amount of moral courage as physicians. The warrior deals in death and destruction, only when opposing an enemy; while he whose whole soul is devoted to the saving of life, is obliged to receive calmly the assaults of his friends. They threaten, because he will not yield his opinions to theirs—they denounce, if he is unwilling to embrace some fashionable nonsense—they distrust, if he is given to change. With all this, he must pursue the even tenor of his way, hoping that reflection and experience will bring a favorable change.

It is a common charge, that doctors are prejudiced against every thing which has not the sanction of great names. Prejudiced! No suggestion was ever made to the medical profession, having the slightest claim to science or good sense, that did not receive due consideration. Appeals to the popular ear, instead of the judgment of the physician, are properly unheeded; they always carry with them a suspicion of evil.

Still, it were well that we should make a virtue of necessity, and confess that we are prejudiced—prejudiced in favor of truth and against error. The aim of the physician, in all his labors and anxieties, is the cure of his patients. Whatever will accomplish this paramount object, is cheerfully entered upon his list of remedies. If I believed that a crystal of sugar, scarcely as large as a mustard seed, would produce an effect similar to that of a nauseous drug, I would give the former in preference to the latter; but, when I know that such an effect is against both reason and experience, no hope of gain would induce me to hazard the welfare of my patients. Gentlemen, it requires a terribly corrupt heart to be dishonest in the practice of medicine.

There is no just ground for doubt respecting the curative effect of medicines. You are not compelled to rely upon your own experience, or the practice of any one man. Through innumerable medical journals, you may have the combined testimony of medical men every where. In addition, we have the aid of hospitals scattered over the whole earth.

In 1850, there were twenty-six hospitals in Paris, containing, during that year, eighty-four thousand patients—sixty thousand medical, and twenty-four thousand surgical. Take this number as a starting point, and if your imagination can go far enough, you may form an idea of the extent and accuracy of our sources of knowledge, for be it remembered that the knowledge thus derived is at our command.

The human mind is in constant demand of change. This

demand, when made of you in your daily round of duty, will be accompanied with the recital of most marvelous exploits. With an even temper continue your way—have charity for human weakness, but, you will find outside discussions a profitless task.

A vast amount of the feeling expressed against the taking of medicine is ideal—often depending upon the expression of a single word. You all know how much language will change the direction and force of an idea. Still, an example may not be out of place.

You have often heard the remark, “no tricks upon travelers,” but, you may never have heard how the traveler was tricked. I will tell you.

A landlord stood at the head of his table, knife and fork in hand, and addressing his guests, said, “may I help you to a piece of fine roast beef?” An individual in the centre of the table, who had assumed the air of a stranger, seemed impatient for a supply. No sooner had his plate been returned to him, than he curled his nose and pouted his lips, saying, “this is *dead* meat.” Every one was seized with a feeling of nausea, and no roast beef was eaten that day. The profession is subjected to similar modes of exciting dislike on the part of the sick. Let us be watchful of our reputation, and give full assurance that we are supplying our patients with good roast beef and not *dead* meat.

The mariner, tossed to and fro by fierce tempests, submerged by mountain waves, and almost lost to the beholder, has confidence in the strength and buoyancy of his vessel, and stands undismayed at his post. Those who are directing the course of the Medical College of Ohio, have equal reason to be self-possessed and hopeful. Her recuperative energies have been fully tested, and found equal to the emergency, while rival schools have been organized, have lived their day, and have gone down almost beyond remembrance. In every thing which appertains to strength and durability she is equal to the best, and with skilful and energetic man-

agers, you may entrust to her your professional treasures, and rely with full confidence upon a prosperous future.

You have been accustomed to look with reverence upon old age, even in its decrepitude. You have enjoyed the shade of the wide-spreading oak, and although it may have been scathed by the lightning's flash, you have felt that there was an element even in the native forest commanding irresistibly your admiration. You have visited and gazed with eager curiosity upon the broken battlements and scattered ruins of an old fortress, and a thousand startling memories have come up to perpetuate its fame. But when you have before you an institution which has long withstood the assaults of enemies, and blunted the tooth of malice as it was gnawing into her vitals, and she still stands forth in full proportion with all the majesty of conscious power, why will you not unite your destiny with hers, and look into the far future without dismay?

The "old school" is an expression often made in your hearing. Ay, the old school. How much of endearment there is in the expression. To talk of the old home—the old willow by the brook—the old dog that played with the children, and spread himself at full length on the hearth stone—the old servant who was ever faithful to his trust—the old grey horse that carried the bag to the old mill—the old school house where so many were prepared for the great battle of life—to talk of these, I say, is to fill the mind with vivid and pleasing recollections. How natural, then, that the feelings of manhood should be bound to the "old college," by the strongest ties.

Perhaps the term may have been used in derision. Do you suppose that when you become forty years of age, with the life of only one man to sustain your energies, you will become enervated, lose your power to think and act? Why you will then be in the vigor of your manhood—will be able to combine energy with judgment, self possession with enthusiasm, practice with observation, and success with caution.

The college has reached the same period in her history, and instead of having the vital elements of only one person to sustain her, has the judgment and experience of eleven in the capacity of Trustees, and of seven others in the capacity of Professors with their assistants, to give her impulse and to keep her in motion. Do you not know that she is just being roused from her slumbers, just shaking off her drowsiness and indolence, that she has started out afresh on a new and high career of usefulness? If the past is any index of the future, no man has more authority than myself, to say, that firmness, consistency, harmony, strong and united action will win the prize. Years gone, when I first lectured in this institution, the class numbered but few, yet each professor was true to his duty. The classes gradually increased in number, until the catalogue reached in eight years two hundred and twenty. Now, mark you. During this period, while *outside* opposition was loud, active and malignant, all *within* was peace, union, energy, action; and with such combination at the present time, there can be no such word as fail.

The graduates of the college are numerously scattered over the west. They are watching our movements with anxiety. Some have already given expression of their kind feelings and lively sensibilities. They must not be disappointed. Their confidence must be secured, and they must be enabled to look back to college scenes and successes with true pleasure.

It may be that some have cherished other feelings than those of kindness and sympathy for their Alma Mater. Alas, for human nature! In rare instances it has been so weakened and perverted as to turn the hearts of men from the mother who gave them birth. Let them alone. Where there is no refinement, no sense of obligation, no conscience, there is no efficacy in appeals or arguments.

We should not be insensible to the wishes of the profession at large. It is a compact body, of which we are part and parcel. Its reputation is our reputation, its glory our glory,

its destiny our destiny. It has thrown into a common treasury, its experience, its discoveries, its failures and its successes, and has given us the privilege of using them all for our mutual benefit. Such generosity must not go unrequited, such confidence must not be misplaced, such desire for the good of mankind must be responded to promptly, and every effort made to give universal satisfaction.

With separate and distinct creeds we shall have nothing to do. If a member of the profession differs with me respecting the action or utility of a certain medicine, and endeavors to organize upon it a peculiar sect, with a newly coined name, we shall not quarrel with him, we shall simply entertain our own views respecting his honesty. If my neighbor says that he can sugarize his patients, and by the aid of nature cure disease with as much certainty as I can with medicine, I shall not engage in a contest with him, I shall be generous, and acknowledge that he can drive a profitable bargain, and use the credulity of the public for extremely selfish ends. If I claim that I am right and you wrong, we will discuss the point of difference as members of the same family. If we have the chicken and the egg, why need we quarrel over the question whether the hen laid the first egg, or the first egg hatched the chicken? If you should now rise from your seat and with great vehemence declare that your nose was larger than mine, and I should doubt the correctness of your judgment, would you run into the highways and byways proclaiming yourself the founder of a new nose-ological system? If you should, excuse us from following you. We shall still remain united to the medical profession, and avail ourselves of its united wisdom and experience.

We are not free from obligations to those who have preceded us, and have added to the respectability of the school. It is due their memories that we should perpetuate what they have so nobly achieved. And here allow me to indulge my feelings, and give a passing tribute to my deceased colleagues.

I need not say that Dr. DANIEL DRAKE was the founder of this institution. While I was quite a young man, I had the

pleasure of an interview with him, and the Medical College of Ohio was among the most cherished objects of his life. No man ever took to his heart the interests of a favorite son more closely than he did the welfare of the College. When obstacles were thrown in her way, he became impatient of restraint. When prosperity smiled upon her, his heart was full of exultation, and his whole nature was cheerful and animated. For many years his connection with the College was severed, but, he was restored to it and died one of its professors. His thoughts and affections clung to her so closely, notwithstanding his connection with another school, he could not rid himself of the feeling that he would return to her and die within her walls. Not long before his death he became my colleague, and age having dealt kindly with him, he was full of zeal and activity. The success of the college was his constant aim, and among the last of his ardent wishes. The College and Dr. DRAKE bear so close a relation to each other, the name of the one cannot be mentioned without reviving a recollection of the other.

Dr. JOHN T. SHOTWELL entered the College with myself, both being untried as teachers. He had been the pupil of Dr. DRAKE, and, although of a less excitable temperament than his preceptor, imbibed much of his attachment for the College. He was naturally full of humor, and a boon companion for those who cherished a fondness for the bright and sportive side of life. It must have been difficult for him to bring his mind down to the cold demonstrative facts in anatomy, yet, he soon acquired facility in demonstration, and a high reputation as a clear elementary instructor. His dissections were patterns of neatness, and he exhibited great ease in the use of the scalpel. His students retain a grateful recollection of his urbanity and desire for their welfare.

An allusion to Dr. JOHN P. HARRISON brings up the image of the man vividly before us. His clear, penetrating voice, his impulsive manner, his boldness in the presentation of his views, and the defiance with which he hurled back the opin-

ions of his competitor, are all green in memory. He loved the profession for its own sake, and in view of the good it had accomplished, he could not brook the slightest reflection on its fair name. In the professorial chair, he was always self-possessed, and was never more happy than when addressing a class. His works upon our shelves contain evidence of his industry and ability, and his name is prominent upon our records.

Dr. JOHN LOCKE, like Dr. DRAKE, was a self-made man, and in point of attainment and breadth of intellect, had not many equals. He was a man of genius and of profound thought. Few, indeed, were the subjects in science he had not carefully investigated. With him, nothing was too small to arrest attention, nothing too large for his mental grasp. Patience and endurance belonged to his nature, which were greatly strengthened by the severe tasks he imposed upon himself. He looked upon the sluggard as a sort of recent trilobite, occupying a place which might be devoted to a more useful purpose. His time, his thoughts, his means, his whole reputation were at the service of the College, and her destiny was among the last topics on which he was heard to converse.

Having made these remarks, we are reminded of those whose hearts are still alive to sympathy, and whose voices are prompting to good works. They demand a passing notice.

Dr. JARED P. KIRTLAND commenced lecturing in this institution. He had acquired reputation as a man of science, and especially as a naturalist. In the pursuit of knowledge he was laborious and enthusiastic, and he has sustained the reputation of a sound, practical teacher. Sensible in his reasoning, and careful in his conclusions, he was a safe guide for his pupils. For many years we have occupied different fields of labor, yet, I have cherished a grateful remembrance of his friendship and good advice.

Dr. REUBEN D. MUSSEY was my colleague for many years. He has retired from professional labors, and has taken with

him the esteem of all classes. The true surgeon every where associates his name with important operations. In the use of the knife he was bold and at the same time cautious, and he was eminently successful. Before he goes hence to reap the rewards of a well spent life, it is desirable that the result of his long experience and labors should be left, in a tangible shape, as a legacy to the profession.

Dr. LANDON C. RIVES was a professor in the medical department of the Cincinnati College. The reputation which he there acquired, kept him before the profession as a suitable person to occupy a chair in the Medical College of Ohio. A favorable moment arrived, and he became one of my colleagues. Our association was of brief continuance, yet I had satisfactory evidence of his worth, medical attainments, independence of character, and zeal for the welfare of the profession. He is not at this time in active service, but his best wishes are with us in all our laudable efforts. No one can attest more fully than himself, how much the courtesies of life secure universal good will.

There are other prominent names among the living and the dead, to whose worth we would gladly pay tribute, if time was not so rapidly passing. They remind us of the past, and bid us take due heed of the future.

The inquiry is here very naturally suggested, what have you to say of your present colleagues? I could say much, but, will only express the belief that they will come up to any reasonable standard of excellence, and supply fully the deficiencies of your speaker.

We must not forget our obligations to the State, and her agents. They present strong claims upon our industry and ability in the instruction of our class, and upon our care, tenderness, and skill in the hospital. By the union of the College and Hospital much good was anticipated, and much has been accomplished. They have served as important aids in the great cause of medical education, and of rendering ser-

vice to the sick. We should not forget on the one hand, that the State contributed thousands of dollars in the establishment of the hospital, and that one half the auction duties collected in this city was given by the State for its support, during a period of thirty years—that throughout its entire existence the Faculty have attended the sick, and performed all operations without pecuniary compensation. On the other hand, the claims of the sick should be ever present in our mind.

It is admitted that *one* patient, whose condition has been carefully investigated, explained and treated, or upon whom a skilful operation may have been performed, is of more practical value to the student than weeks of mere book study. By the use of the hospital, therefore, as a place for practical teaching, the people at large have been benefitted, their physicians, many at least, having undergone a more perfect preparation for the discharge of their professional duties.

Instead of being injurious to the sick, clinical teaching, properly conducted, should be to their advantage. The professor, knowing that critical eyes and minds are upon him, will give a direct application of all his knowledge, and skill, and energies. Instead of his neglect, or indifference, or failures being concealed, they are open to exposure, and, if need be, censure. This, alone, aside from more commendable incentives, will keep him ever mindful of his duty to himself and his patients.

The sentiment has often been expressed, that hospital patients are used only as subjects of experiment, and with but little regard for their feelings or condition. Never was an idea, put forth with a mischievous intent, more erroneous than this. Does he come in rags, he is provided with raiment—does he come with starvation marked upon his shriveled features and emaciated frame, he is supplied with food—does he come houseless and friendless, he is taken under shelter and placed upon a comfortable bed, where he may seek repose for his weary limbs and aching head.

Instead of meeting with neglect, the patients in the Hospital have constantly at their bed side, or in view, competent and sympathizing nurses—resident Physicians, who are near to carry out the instructions of the Faculty, and to render cheerful service—and three members of the Faculty in daily, and, if need be, more frequent attendance. What man in our midst, with all his wealth, can purchase more than this?

The city has been benefitted also, in a pecuniary point of view. If the Faculty had been compensated, according to the usual rates paid by the city to medical functionaries in charge of public institutions, they would have received from the treasury more than one hundred thousand dollars. This amount, then, has been saved to the people. In addition, the students of the College have expended in the city, from time to time, over half a million of dollars.

Our reciprocal obligations as professors and pupils, are many and imperative. While we are endeavoring to convey to you in comprehensive language, such knowledge as we may possess of our respective branches, an evidence of your attention and improvement will sustain us in our efforts, and render our labors pleasant. Let our social relations be such, that you can approach us without reserve, whether for pass-time interviews or information. If sickness or misfortune should overtake you, although we cannot compensate for the absence of home, and the tender care you have there been accustomed to receive from affectionate hearts and warm hands, we may make you feel that you are not entirely among strangers. Thus let us proceed, hand in hand in our professional journey, expressing congratulations when our pathway is bright and pleasant, and encouragement when full of obstacles.

And now, at the close, may I not inquire have you ever gazed upon the face of a dear friend as the wing of death was passing over it, as the eye was becoming sightless, and the brow icy-cold—have you felt that all the ties binding you to

earth were being severed—have you ever looked out upon the world and seen woe, and desolation, imprinted on all things? If you have, if you can appreciate death and its terrible results, your duties are plainly before you.

