

Turnbull (L.)

MEMOIR

OF

JAMES AITKEN MEIGS, A.M., M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF THE INSTITUTES OF MEDICINE AND MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE  
IN JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE. PHILADELPHIA.

BY

LAURENCE TURNBULL, M.D.

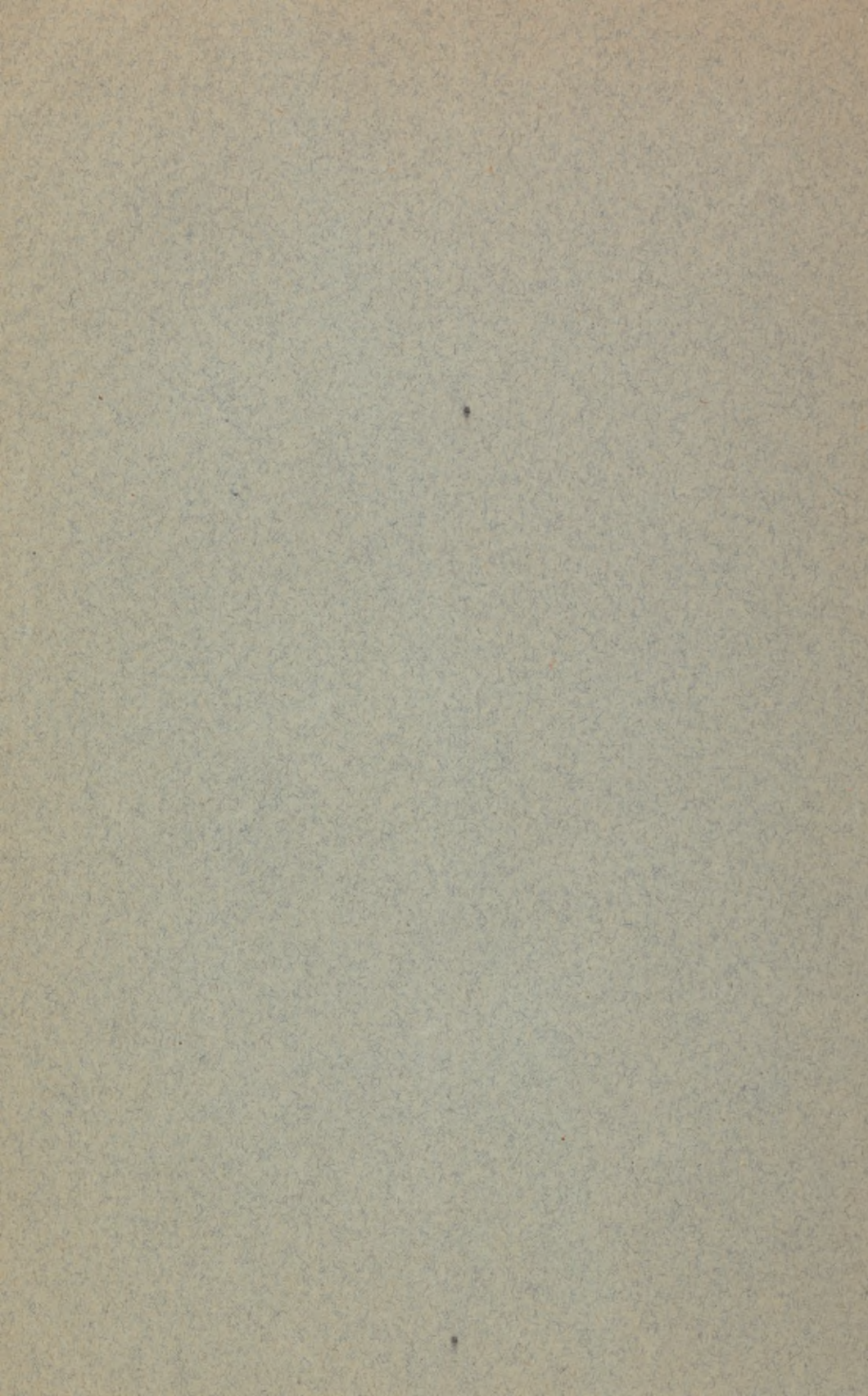


“To mortals life, as Horace sang, gives naught  
Without great labor. Learn this lesson, fraught  
With vast results, and never learned too soon,  
Learn and practice, it will prove a boon.”—*Meigs.*

“The physician should diligently strive to elevate his profession and thus lead the public to respect and honor him.”

PHILADELPHIA :  
PUGH MADEIRA, 115 SOUTH TENTH STREET.

1881





COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE FATHER OF DR. MEIGS.

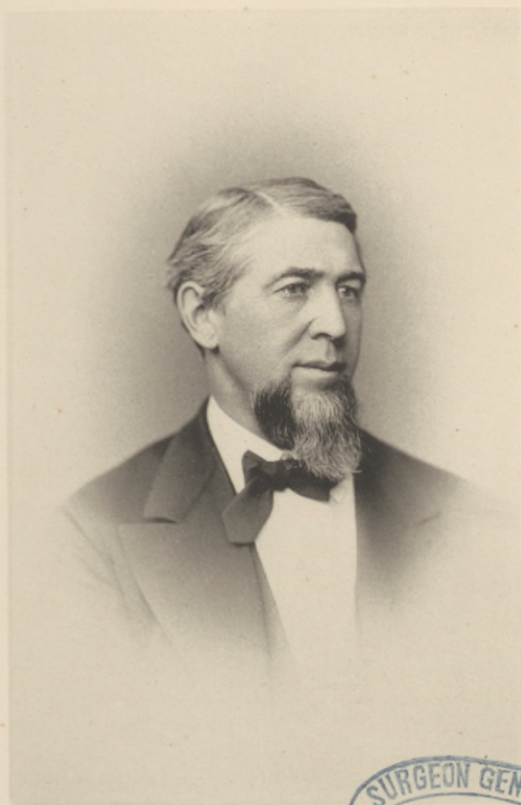
PHILADELPHIA, AUGUST, 5, 1880.

DR. L. TURNBULL. DEAR SIR:—

Allow me to thank you for your kind consideration in sending me a copy of THE MEDICAL BULLETIN. In glancing over it I discovered what you so ably wrote as a memoir of my Son. It was a plain unvarnished statement. I could find no fault with it, for you closely related the truth in all your statements. I read it with much pleasure.

Respectfully, yours,

J. G. MEIGS.

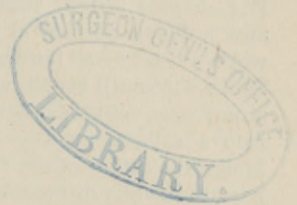


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## PREFACE.

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IN writing this brief and imperfect memoir, I am performing a labor of love. I was his friend and knew him intimately for thirty years, having watched his rise to eminence in his profession. I was with him under every phase of his active life, in the very height of his happiness in attaining the goal of his ambition as a professor in his Alma Mater. I was also with him in his deep distress and sorrow at the loss of his mother, whom he loved with his whole heart, and it was a great source of comfort that he could look forward to meet that loved one in a brighter sphere where he, no doubt, now enjoys her sweet society. My only regret now is, that in the early days of his fatal illness, when his body was free from racking pain, and his mind clear, I was on the distant sea, unable to perform those little acts of kindness which are so precious to those we love, especially when on a bed of sickness.

## MEMOIR.

The subject of our memoir, JAMES AITKEN MEIGS, was born in the city of Philadelphia, July 31, 1829, in the eastern and built-up portion of the city, but while yet a boy of ten was removed to South Fifteenth Street, which was then almost open country, where he developed into a robust, healthy lad. John G. Meigs, the father of our friend, was also born in the city of Philadelphia, but his youth was spent with relatives on a farm in Montgomery County; he subsequently left the country and came again to the city and devoted himself to mechanical pursuits, in which he was very successful. The Doctor's mother's name was Aitken; she also was born in Philadelphia. Her father was John Aitken, a Scotchman, born in Edinburgh, while her mother was of German origin; the latter was attached to the German Catholic Church, which still stands at the northwest corner of Sixth and Spruce. Her husband for a considerable time attended the same church, and was very generous, presenting it with all the silver ornaments for the altar, and was one of the founders of the Orphan Asylum. Mr. Aitken was a silversmith, and resided on Second Street for many years. Mrs. Meigs's father was a true patriot, not only did he display this in words, but also in noble deeds, for when the dispirited and shoeless troops under the illustrious Washington were passing through Philadelphia, on the march to Valley Forge, during the Revolutionary war, he commiserated them, and out of his private purse spent five hundred dollars in providing them with covering for their bleeding feet.

John Aitken was an ingenious mechanic, and covered with copper the first vessel in the United States; this was accomplished for the government, and was entirely successful in its mechanical execution, but was not even-

tually a pecuniary success to the individual. His copper works were situated on the Delaware River, in the neighborhood of Chester. Mrs. Meigs had four children, two died in infancy, and a daughter, who had attained the age of ten years, was attacked with malignant scarlet fever, which unfortunately proved fatal after a lingering illness.

The long continued and devoted nursing of the daughter, and the imbibing of a portion of the disease affected Mrs. Meigs's throat, fatally impaired her health and made her an invalid for life. Having but one child left, her whole maternal love was centered in him, and he became her constant companion and friend, they taking sweet counsel together. This entire devotion of his mother never injured the son, as she was a woman of remarkable judgment and good common sense, well educated, with great natural softness and refinement of character, and a very high sense of justice and truth.

The sentiment which he held for his mother is well expressed by Paul De Rémusat,\* in the love which his father felt for his mother, Madame De Rémusat, which he states as follows: "His love for his mother had been the 'grand passion' of his life. To her he ascribed all the happiness of his youth, every merit which he possessed, and all the success of every kind that had come to him throughout his whole existence. He derived from her his qualities alike of heart and mind; he was bound to her by the tie of close similarity of ideas, as well as that of filial affection. Her memory, her letters, her thoughts, occupied a place in his life which few suspected, for he seldom spoke of her, precisely because he was always thinking of her, and he would have feared imperfect sympathy from others in his admiration of her who was incomparable in his eyes."

\* *Memoirs of Madame De Rémusat, 1802-1808*. Edited, with a preface and notes, by her grandson. Translated by Mrs. Hoey and John Lelles, and published by Harper & Brothers, New York, 1880.



Mrs. Meigs was an Episcopalian and a member of Christ Church, her father having left the German Church and united with this church; he was buried in Christ Church graveyard. Mr. Meigs's children were christened in Christ Church, and when James came to be of proper age to recognize the vows his parents had taken upon them for him, he of his own will and consent took them upon himself, and was confirmed by Rev. Dr. Dorr, attending the Sunday-school of that church. His early education was from his mother, and he subsequently went to a private school, taught by John Evans, on Dean Street, of whom he always spoke in terms of warm esteem. James suffered for a long time from an explosion of gunpowder, having had his thumb blown entirely off, and at one time it was doubtful if the hand could be saved, but his healthy constitution stood him in his day of need. After finishing at the school of Mr. Evans, he was fitted to enter the Mt. Vernon School. This was in 1843, and after remaining in the grammar school the requisite time, and being found fully prepared, he was transferred to the Central High School, where having passed with credit he was received as a pupil.

In this new field of severe mental labor he acquitted himself so well as to receive the warm encomiums of the entire board of professors, but more especially those of Profs. Edw. Vodges and McMurtrie, with the latter of whom he formed a very warm friendship, and to whose branch, physiology, he gave most careful study. It was the first taste of the fruits of this devotion that no doubt gave a bent to his inclination to study medicine, and also led him to give his mind to the branch of physiology.

He graduated in February, 1848, from the Central High School, and he was selected to deliver the valedictory address which was in part in poetic measure, and was considered highly creditable to the young aspirant for fame.

After graduation his father told him he must decide what he was to adopt as a means of livelihood, as he could not afford to keep him in idleness, and he gave him a holiday trip, and on his return he was to choose for himself. In the mean time James had met the late Prof. Chas. D. Meigs and had a long conversation with him on the subject, and he advised him to study medicine. Soon after his father received a note from Prof. Meigs who desired to see him. Mr. Meigs called upon him, and the Professor stated that he had examined his son and had advised him to let him study medicine, was well pleased with him, and he believed he would be a great man, yet he declined, however, to receive him as a private pupil, but gave him a letter of introduction to Dr. F. G. Smith, in which he wrote most kindly of the young man, and ever after took a lively interest in his success, although no relationship existed between them.

Dr. Smith at that time was associated with Dr. J. M. Allen in receiving private students, and what is termed quizzing them—preparing young men for graduation. Dr. Smith was afterwards the Prof. of Physiology in the Franklin and Pennsylvania Colleges, and also in the University of Pennsylvania, and was a most capable lecturer and teacher. In Dr. Allen also he had the benefit of able lectures and demonstrations in anatomy. Mr. Meigs's father desired him to be fully prepared, and to study not less than three full years before graduating, and he stated to them that if after one year's study they found him not fitted he was not to go on; he even set two friends to watch his progress, and report to him direct, but the report was so satisfactory that he went on with flying colors. It is right and proper that due honor and credit should be given to public teachers and private instructors, but the best of them may plant and water most assiduously, but it is the combined efforts of the pupil that brings forth the

ripe fruit in its season, and these were not wanting in our friend.

In October, 1848, he matriculated at Jefferson Medical College, and even while yet a student did the work most creditably of a full fledged physician, by taking notes of the clinical lectures and debates of the Philadelphia County Medical Society, and thus became known to the physicians who attended these meetings, and with many of them formed very warm friendships. In March, 1851, he graduated in medicine, receiving not only the degree of doctor of medicine from Jefferson Medical College, but also a certificate from the corps of lecturers of the Philadelphia Medical Association for summer instruction, as having passed successfully the examination upon the lectures delivered. The subject of his Thesis was "The Hygiene and Therapeutics of Temperament," a physiological subject, and was very creditably handled by one so young.

He began practice in his native city at No. 597 Lombard Street (old number) now 1531 Lombard Street. He subsequently removed to No. 423 South Broad Street, and later to No. 1408 Spruce St. While, as yet, not actively engaged in practice he did not loiter his time away on the streets or club houses, nor in his office waiting for practice, but his leisure time was given to study at the College of Physicians or the Academy of Natural Sciences, then on Broad Street, where he could be readily found, either writing or studying his favorite subject, ethnology, the Doctor having all the time in view the improving of his knowledge of physiology and the fitting of himself for a higher position. These careful and conscientious habits, with a pleasant and agreeable voice and strict devoted attention to his patients, soon won their good efforts on his behalf, and told by increasing practice. He was able to perform it all on foot attending all his cases, and yet, during this time he edited for many numbers the *Medical Examiner*, also the *Louisville Medical Review*, and

acted as quiz master for and assistant to his former teacher, Prof. F. G. Smith, in preparing his lectures on physiology, and in editing the first American edition of Carpenter's work on the Microscope, and subsequently Neill and Smith's Compend." and later Kirk's Manual of Physiology. In 1858 he delivered the semi-annual address before the Alumni Association of the Central High School, having taken the place of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who had to disappoint at the last moment. The Doctor had but little time to prepare, yet, as may be seen from his address, it was replete with good resolves, showing careful reading and study, and considered worthy of publication by such men as Rev. G. L. Platt, H. McMurtrie, M.D., Francis West, M.D., S. L. Metcalf, John Cassin, Morton McMichael, and Charles E. Lex, Esqrs., and others.

#### ALUMNI ADDRESS.

*Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the Alumni Association.*

OUR unresting planet has measured half its orbit since we last greeted each other face to face. The day-god has breathed beneficently all over the land, and the prolific earth yielded up rich increase, as of yore. The brown places have become green. Skeleton trees no longer chide the northern blast, but chant peans of praise with their leafy tongues. Naked and sullen rocks have been won to laughter by the mossy gifts of summer. Mighty rivers have broken their icy chains, and are hastening with joy, on their fertilizing errands. The invisible spirit of air has been gathering moisture from the bosom of the great deep, and scattering it, with lavish hand, broadcast over the thirsty soil. Sleeping life shut up in seed, and root, and branch, has been waked to renewed activity by the sunbeam's magic touch, and the glad vegetation, struggling through the moist ground, decks itself in all-gorgeous hues, and leaps up, an artless virgin, to the passionate embrace of the glowing sun.

Day and his glories have been alternating with night and her quiet stars. Day after day has the sun repeated his resplendent march, calling men to their accustomed toils; night after night has the ghostly moon, from the "still tem-

ple of the solemn heavens," been shimmering over city and forest, land and sea—on the polar iceberg, on the tropical palm.

Thus much nature, from whose peaceful soul the silent anthem of joy and happiness ever ascends.

How has it been with man and his interests?

Nations have been stricken in the bloom of their prosperity. Trade languishes therefrom, blighted by the fever-heat of contention; while the silken cords, with which commerce was binding the world into one harmonious whole, have been strained almost to bursting by the rude hand of a despotic ambition which knows no limiting power but the sword. Liberty-engendering civilization has been forced to turn aside from her ameliorating path, to oppose new ramparts against the barbaric sea with which her Muscovite enemy threatens to engulf her. Battles have been fought, and blood poured out, as a steaming libation to the insulted spirit of freedom. Men in the country have ploughed and sowed, and gathered in the fruits of the earth; men in crowded, tired cities, have delved and planted in the teeming field of society, each reaping an especial result, after his own especial fashion and desire. The merchant's counting-house and the workshop of the mechanic have known no rest. The votary of science and the student of high art, have alike blanched over the midnight toil. The astronomer, from his lonely tower, has given to the world new views and grander conceptions of the star-gemmed heavens; while the geologist, the man of stony argument, has, with deathless energy, been gathering in the mysterious depths of the "great globe itself," the fragmentary details, from which has yet to be constructed the history of the dim eternal Past. In endless modes has science been tortured to reveal the mysteries of nature and of being. The arts, too, with unstinting hand, have given to society instruments of good and instruments of evil, life-prolonging conveniences and death-dealing agents.

Determined men of the temperate zone are invading the ice-bound homes of an hyperborean people, in search of their long-lost fellows. Others, to enlarge the bounds of geographical knowledge, have been opposing health and life against fever and death, from time immemorial fell guardians of the unknown African land.

Did my feeble powers permit, I would on the instant cause to appear before you, as in the magic glass of an Agrippa, a grand panoramic view of the intellectual and moral development of the world, that you might clearly trace therein what the scholar, that thoughtful priest of truth, hath done for man. How he hath labored, and prayed, and suffered for him; how he hath brought him out of the darkness of ignorance into the noon-day light of knowledge. How he hath given him letters, arts, and science, and taught him self-reliance and self-command. How he hath instructed him in the past, that he might be prepared for the future. How he hath conquered nature, and shown incontestably that the world was made for man, and not man for the world. How he hath shown his "proper being, his truest self, the man in the man,"\* the man as he existed in the divine mind, long ere the earth was formed, and the firmament with its chiliads of stars. How he hath taught him to reason upon himself as God made him, and not as he has been disguised and perverted by the tyranny of circumstance.

"That all-pervading atmosphere, wherein  
Our spirits, like the unsteady lizard, take  
The tints that color, and the food that nurtures."†

How, in short, he hath unsealed his eyes, and opening before him the sublime volume of nature, pointed out to him the wonderful things of the "heavens, and the earth, and the waters under the earth," "that the invisible things of the Almighty might be understood by the things that are made,—even his eternal power and Godhead."

Briefly I essay the picture, trusting more to your thoughtful imaginations for success, than to my humble words.

Come back with me into the dim twilight of time, and guided by the torch of the paleontologist, let us survey the aspect of organized nature, as it then may have appeared. Dense forests of palms bend under a primeval wind; gigantic arundinaceae and marsh-plants skirt the majestic river, in whose bed stalks the strange river-horse—Behemoth, with jaws of brass and bones of iron—while on the banks huge pachyderms and saurians bask and flounder out their term of life. Hyenas glare from the tangled thickets, and the heavy tramp of the stately elephant and the unwieldy rhinoceros disturb the sultry

\* Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Aph. IX.  
† Bulwer, *Richelieu, or the Conspiracy*.

quiet of the noon. But see! adown the slopes of yonder mountain a man approaches. He is naked and a barbarian. Armed with a club only, or a flint-knife perhaps, he stands in constant dread of the brute creation around. He is very timid, weak, and helpless; hiding in caves and clefts of the rock, mayhap, and subsisting upon the spontaneous fruits of the earth. As yet unconscious of the possession of intellect, and therefore unaware of the power with which that intellect is associated, he witnesses with superstitious awe the fierce storm and the sharp lightning, the loud thunder, and the drenching rain. The measure of his existence is made up of eating, sleeping, bathing in the river, climbing trees, and sauntering through the long summer day in quiet, shady dells, secure from his brute enemies. The circle of his thriftless life is purely sensuous; beyond its bounds his obscure mind can travel not.

Thousands of years have since lapsed over the earth and the man, bringing manifold change. The scholar has been busy. He sought out the rude child of nature, and made haste to civilize and so disenthral him from the yoke of the senses. The mental train was fired by a celestial flame. In the light of its scintillations, the progressive development of our race has been accomplished.

At what precise time in the night of human history, the evolution of man's dormant faculties began, we may perhaps never determine. This much, at all events, we know—that five thousand years ago, this evolution had merged into the colossal civilization of the East; a civilization whose high-toned character, power, and wealth, indicated a growth of centuries. The proofs of this tower up broadly and high in the sacred valley of the Nile. Civilization is a creation of mind; as the latter varies, so does the former. The ages or epochs of mind are comparable with the ages of nature or material creation. As the earlier plants and animals were of gigantic structure and size, so in remote historic periods the developing mind in its efforts towards an external realization of thought, assumed a gigantic, colossal aspect. The imposing relics of the pyramid-constructing, mound-building people of the East, and the tropical West, are significant emblems of the savage grandeur of intellect in its earliest phase of development. Even then, the scholar grappled with his task. From the plains of Babylonia and Egypt,

and from the Punalands of the Aztec, his restless soul soared up into the blue solitudes of space, and held converse with the stars. Under the form of the primitive legend or myth (such as the Mexican),\* the astronomical results of that flight have been transmitted to us, and the scholar of the present day is even now giving their proper scientific value to these mythological relics.†

But progressive effort faltered. Man was pressed to the earth by the leaden hand of a despotic patriarchal centralization. The inaction of mental death long characterized the East. The scholar in despair shrunk from his familiar path. After a prolonged transitional period, the crisis was at hand. That long-expected, long-deferred crisis came at last. Oriental society was convulsed throughout its length and breadth, and nations that had for many years been tottering to their fall, were ruthlessly hurled to the ground. Amidst the confusion and darkness that ensued, the scholar fled with the rescued learning of the past, and laid it trustingly at the feet of the primitive Greek. You all know the result. You all know how in Greece was established the power of a more democratic, over a purely patriarchal government; how the old slavish and colossal civilization was replaced by a reasoning intellectual one. How, as if conscious of his destiny, the Greek began his career by building up pyramids of letters, monuments of art, obelisks of science. "For it is a remarkable circumstance in the history of Greece," says Mitford, "that its oldest traditional memorials relate not to war and conquest, generally the only materials of the annals of barbarous ages, but to the invention or introduction of institutions of the first necessity to political society, and of arts even of the first necessity to political life."‡ It took the Roman, the restless, resistless lover of power, full seven centuries to disseminate to the world the mental treasures which the Greek, through his reasoning independence, had evolved in two hundred years. But during all this time the worm was silently gnawing at the root of the goodly tree of development. Notwithstanding their æsthetic grandeur, neither the Grecian nor the Roman commonwealths arose to the conception that unceasing indefinite progress and political stability were com-

\* Preserved by Humboldt in his *Vues des Cordilleres*.

† *Ethnological Journal*, New Series, No. 1.

‡ *History of Greece*, Vol. 1.

patible with individual freedom alone. With them, individual was merged into political liberty; the state was everything, the individual nothing. The much-lauded classical patriotism was the degradation, the sacrifice of self for the party or government to which the person belonged. A true patriotism teaches the exaltation of the community, the amelioration of society through self-cultivation, self-advancement alone.

One thousand years, and all was again in confusion—confusion settling down into the thick darkness of the mediæval period. Again the scholar stood the friend of man. To his comprehensive vision it was evident that there was no hope for human-kind until it had passed from beneath the despotic cloud of communism. "Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits." As with individuals, so it is with nations. For the proof of this look to the history of that fossilized people, the Chinese. The spirit of non-intercourse so sedulously cultivated by them, has been proof against the activity, by which, for the last two thousand years, they have been surrounded. The conviction of the necessity of external intercourse and activity, was the redeeming thought for Europe. Close upon it followed the efficient means for the accomplishment of that redemption. The revelation of the polarity of the magnet fell upon the benighted nations of the Old World like a genial shower upon a withered field. From its offspring, commerce—"the calm health of nations"—resulted that truly democratic and growing civilization, which, after giving to Central Europe her greatness, and to England her maritime power, has unflinchingly held on its westward way; and now, upon our own continent, under more liberal auspices, is soaring grandly upward, and though still imperfect, is the nearest earthly approach to that happy condition of society in which every member, acting out freely and honestly his part, government becomes obsolete—no longer of any use.

Such is the general picture; examine it more attentively for a moment. See how those true children of the sun, heat, light, and electricity have been delivered into the hand of man, as bond-servants, obedient to his call. Learn from the photographer, how light doeth his bidding right well. Behold how from certain gross chemical elements skillfully combined, has been evolved that mysterious calorific force, that miniature

thunder and lightning, the power of gun-powder; which, to use the words of a philosophical friend, "has essentially modified the condition of the human race; for it thenceforward secured the uninterrupted progress of civilization, which can never again be arrested by the incursions of barbarous hordes, nor the light of knowledge be in embryo as during the early periods of history."\*

With consummate skill the marriage of water and heat was effected. The child of that marriage has grown to be an herculean aid to onward-moving humanity. Certainly steam is a benefactor to the race. The printing press and the electric telegraph have become the handmaids of thought. By their assistance the latter expands uninterruptedly and in every direction, through time and space. The invention of Faust binds together the past and the present; the trained thunderbolt of Jove links to each other widely-separated towns and tracts, lying in different latitudes and longitudes. The obstructing seas are defined; and already the electric connection of continents is being removed from the domain of speculation into that of reality.

The scholar's "pure intellect, grounding its exertions upon a moderate number of very elementary propositions in theoretical mechanics and geometry," has given to man "almost all the great combinations of modern mechanism and many of its refinements and nicer improvements."† Among mechanical aids to the physical senses, two stand pre-eminently forth for the wonders they disclose, though the inventions, as it were of yesterday. The telescope shows us worlds scattered through the infinity of space; the microscope reveals worlds crowded into the minutest atoms. We are poised in wondering awe betwixt the great and small. The microscope has exposed endless creations of animal life, floating hither and thither in the aerial ocean, animating the crust of the earth and disporting in the inmost recesses of animals and plants. Activities—creative, preservative, and reproductive; activities as varied as wonderful are displayed in a drop of water or in the simplest vegetable germ. The telescope brings to view unnumbered millions of stars, filling what to the naked eye is blank and cheerless space;—stars so far

\* Dr. Metcalf. *Caloric; its agencies in the Phenomena of Nature*, Vol. I.

† Sir John Herschell. *Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*.

removed as to require 14,000 years to send their light to the earth. Even the distances of some fixed stars have been determined, the planets weighed as in a balance, and the rapidity of their orbital motions calculated. Who but the scholar could have weighed the mass of Neptune, numbered the years of its revolution, and ascertained the dimensions of its orbit, ere that planet was seen by mortal eye? Who but the scholar could have taught us, that as our earth rotated, on its axis, and revolved around the sun, it was also subject to a translatory motion in space which was silently but surely hurrying it towards a distant point in the heavens?\*

Long ere you were unwittingly ushered into the world, as members of the great body politic, progression was (and still is) taxed to the utmost to promote your enjoyment, add to your comfort, and even to give an ornamental excellence and finish to the accompaniments of your existence. Letters, science, and art, have been traveling, oftentimes footsore, over a weary road, to bestow upon you benefits unknown to your predecessors. The past is full of discoveries and inventions, made for your benefit; of mighty examples of the good and great, enacted for your edification. If, then, your daily wants are better cared for; if the humblest among you are better clothed and lodged than the ancient kings of France or England; if the standard of moral excellence is more exalted and better defined; if the intellectual demands of our nature are more efficiently and more elegantly complied with,—then remember, that just in proportion to the benefits received, is the demand made upon you for compensating exertion. Society, through the aid of the scholar, has done much, very much for you; from the storehouse of its laboriously collected experience, you have drawn freely and without stint. The essential comforts, the utilitarian aids, the refined and elegant accomplishments, the humanizing knowledge of nature, are so many talents intrusted to your care, to be repaid with interest. The law is imperative; each and every individual must liquidate the debt he owes to humanity. In all justice, therefore, you cannot be idle if you would; you dare not, if you could. He who shrinks from the work before him, will be overshadowed by the cloud of that curse ever clinging to standing still.†

Such an one contradicts himself, remaining in discord with the deep and abiding purposes of his being.

Your own intellectual wants and interests entail upon you an intellectual energy which, charity-like, beginning at home, expands until it has penetrated the mass and reached and affected the very circumference of humanity. Having strengthened your mind by gathering carefully the active thoughts of the past, and the living benefits of the present, think not to say, I will now rest. You cannot rest. The grave itself, is the commencement of a new life.

Your intellectual interests, then, you must cultivate; for to their education all actual and solid advancement of the condition of society, stands directly related. Very truly, you cannot all be scholars; I use the term in its highest philosophical acceptance. nor is the work of increasing and perfecting knowledge demand, or even expected, of every member in society. It is not given to every man to become a Bacon.

Science is the work of two orders of mind. The first narrowly inspects nature of her modes of action, institutes artificial experiments, carefully collects and tabulates observations and facts. These constitute the capital, the basal or fundamental, and therefore unalterable statistics of science. The second is the higher order. It arises above the level of facts, and taking a comprehensive survey of them, endeavors to deduce those generalizations which we call "laws of nature." These two varieties of mind are mutually supporting, and equally necessary to the education of scientific intellect. Without data, generalization would be impossible, and without generalization men could never rise above mere phenomena or effects, or conditions of existence. A natural law implies a lawmaker. It is, indeed, but the active mode of causation, the medium of the efficient cause. Thus a truthful generalization carries the mind from a survey of phenomena up towards the Ineffable Cause of all things.

Again, you have other interests; higher and still more important; at once personal and moral in signification. These, also, require a peculiar education. Through his intellectual culture mainly, the duty of the individual towards society is discharged. His moral culture concerns himself, chiefly. Upon it depends his present happiness and future condition. Moral perfection is by man unattainable. The attribute of

\* The star  $\delta$  in constellation Hercules.

† Goethe, Die Aphorismen über Naturwissen-  
schaft.

God cannot become that of man. Nevertheless, the path thitherward leading is open to all, and ever the voice of the scholar is heard above the din of life, earnestly persuading men to enter and walk therein, ere the night of death closes around them.

Bulwer very truly said, "The key to all mystery is the desire to know." So in the sphere of the moral faculties, the desire to improve is the primary and efficient step in moral progression. He who really desires to do good to his fellow-man, has already profited himself. The recipient is blessed by the actual performance of the good deed, not more, oftentimes not as much, as the mind in which the happy conception originated. "A fig tree," says the Arabian proverb, "by looking upon a fig tree, becometh fruitful." So the mind that steadfastly contemplates the truthful and the good, blossoms at last with beneficent acts an hundredfold. The influence of such a mind spreads widely, winning many to like deeds. This it is to be in peace with one's self, to harmonize with nature, and with God, the author and sustainer of nature.

"I live to move," said Sir J. Davies, two and a half centuries ago. These four words are talismanic; they contain the successful secret of the truly eminent men of ancient and modern times. Men of character are men of power, and character is, in truth, but will highly cultivated through action. All power, as humanly manifested, is evolved from action, for every act is a positive and efficient item of knowledge. Progressive "man in the ages," is bound, Ixion-like, to the ceaseless wheel of activity. Earth had witnessed countless cycles of action before the garden of Eden received its first tenant. The life of the globe was then and still is the synonym for change. Creation, development, decay and death—which is but transition into another state of activity—fills up the restless history of nature. Narrowly inspected, this history is seen to be a progressive one. Development, whether physical or otherwise, consists in action. Progressive development is therefore an universal law. On the hills, "rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun," it is stamped with a bold hand; in the caverns of the earth slumber its fossil records; from the blue firmament sparkle its lustrous witnesses. Not less obedient than the inorganic, is the organic world to this law. By it the insignificant grub is transformed into the gorgeous butterfly;

through it is accomplished the evolution of the animal and vegetable germs. So, too, it would appear, the human brain in the embryonic period of transition, successively resembles that which characterizes each of the well-marked animal types below it, terminating, finally, at the perfect form of the race to which it belongs. The forest oak and the humblest garden plant are alike pregnant with lessons of wisdom. Their budding, bloom, and involution, or decay, are so many silent, but none the less expressive attestations to the prevalence of the law under consideration. All nature is alive and musical with motion. Action is, indeed, life; inaction, death. The mutations of matter are, as they have been from the beginning, incessant; the inorganic elements are constantly passing into the vegetable, the vegetable kingdom yields them up to the animal, and this latter in perishing returns them again to the inorganic world. So the invisible circle of action is complete. More manifest examples are around us. See them in the rapidly rushing river, in the foaming, bursting cataract, in the ceaseless, surging seas, in the bending forest as it is struck by the storm, in the fluttering leaves as they are toyed with by the zephyrs, in the constant trade-winds waiting the mariner from one continent to another, with but little exertion on his part, in the raging typhoons of the eastern seas, in the drifting icebergs of the polar ocean.

Division of labor has assigned us different pursuits. Yet by reason of the all-pervading ideal, our pursuit is one and indivisible. The moment we lose sight of the material world on the one hand, and of man physical—its counterpart—on the other, and direct the eye of thought to that grand focus, that ideal life which is the proper sphere of the soul, that moment we begin to approach each other like the figures in a stereoscope, coalescing into one solid actual mind,—which is Soul Reasoning,—and thus from this high, glorious, and rigidly severe standpoint, at once the theme and guide of the scholar-life, we obtain that only view of God, and nature, and man, and man's duty in this life, which enables us to work out truly the duties allotted us by the Supreme Master.

Deem it a privilege to work, and you will overcome all adversities, making each conquered obstacle an auxiliary in the succeeding conflict. Wait not for opportunities. Waiting is never without danger. "He that considereth the

wind shall not sow, and he that looketh to the clouds shall not reap." Rather carve out opportunities from the circumstances of your station. Your destiny is very much in your own hands, to be determined by your own free willing power. The Will is the master, and when the master speaks, already the work is half done. Horace reveals the whole secret of Roman greatness in a line—

"Nil sine magno vita labore dedit mortalibus."

Let it be your guiding motto. You will reap if you work and faint not. Work, then, without haste, but without rest. Work for the sake of your own undying interest; work for your country's sake—your country, which is free only in proportion to the knowledge of its citizens, which is strong just in proportion to their morality, which is enduring just in proportion to the unsectarian oneness of their Christianity. Strive to extend the republic of knowledge, truth, and learning in this life. Strive always

"To run

The great career of honor, to exalt  
Your generous aim to all divinest deeds,  
To chase each *partial purpose* from your breast,  
And through the mists of passion and of sense,  
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,  
To hold your course unflinching, while the voice  
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent  
Of nature, calls you to your last reward.  
The applauding smile of heaven." ADDISON.

Dr. Meigs was very fond of the fine arts, having a profound knowledge of music, painting, and the drama, and his histrionic talent would have made him a brilliant star, had he essayed the "buskin." On numerous occasions he had taken part in private theatricals of the higher order, showing how well he was calculated for the stage. He was of a poetical temperament, and many fugitive pieces are still preserved by his friends. Even his prose is often poetry, as may be seen by many passages in his addresses, and this talent he cultivated and improved in his later efforts, as he advanced in years. He had the rare gift of oratory, and was a perfect reader; many an evening he contributed no little to the enjoyment of his friends, by reading from the poetical works of Bret Harte, Oliver Wendell Holmes, or Swinburne; the latter was one of his favorite authors. He enjoyed the ex-

quisite melody of his rhythm, joined to his noble love of liberty. Like Victor Hugo, he considered Swinburne the first of English lyrists. (And we may here say that he has certainly rare merits, and one may hope that he will yet give the world a work free from his many faults, and worthy of his poetical talents.) Yet, with these tastes, and of a most domestic and companionable character, the doctor was a bachelor; a singular preference, which his father attributes to the fact that he was wedded to his books, of which he had a valuable collection of about 6 000 volumes, unquailed by any other library of its size in the fascinating features that it offered to the book-worm and the student. But this was not his only reason, for as long as his mother lived, he never desired to marry, altho' advised to do so by her, as she often told the writer, that as the Doctor's tastes were domestic, he would make a good woman very happy. After his mother's death he compared every woman by her standard, and it was such an elevated one that he never succeeded in finding one to fill her place. "The education of that platonic passion for books, properly termed bibliomania, whose sole ambition is to get possession of the rare and curious, merely for possession's sake, as well observed by an anonymous writer in the Telegraph", is entirely absent in its make-up; and thus, while the volumes that fill the cases include many literary treasures, the entire collection bears the unmistakable stamp of the student's magazine, and that the materials of which it is composed have been gathered gradually, as required for actual use."

"A large variety of books in smooth, drab covers, the regulation shade of medical literature, numbering about 3,000 volumes, fill several cases, and embrace the works of authors eminent in the profession, treating upon the various ills that flesh is heir to. A large number of books in this department are de-



voted to ethnology, craniology and other kindred sciences, while not less than 800 volumes represent the specialty of this medical branch, and the Doctor's favorite study—physiology. The balance of the library comprises books of a miscellaneous character, exceedingly rich in variety, and embracing almost everything from philosophical treatises to the very latest novel."

"Several standard editions of Shakespeare, and the complete works of Byron, Scott, Moore, Burns, and those of a galaxy of other English authors, all superbly bound, and elaborately illustrated with fine steel plates, are among the conspicuous features of the miscellaneous collection, and all bear the earmark of the careful reader by the easy opening pages, and the Doctor's frequent pencil notes on their margin. This may also be said of almost every book in the library, for it was a rule with the owner not to buy a book unless he wished to read it, and it never entered the bookcase until this had been done. Most of them contain the dates of commencement and the finish of their perusal, while many bear the record of having been read twice. The elegant character of the miscellanea may be judged by the elephantine editions of the magnificent English Court "subscription" works, bound and illustrated with royal lavishness, and of which but few copies ever passed into the hands of others outside of the nobility. Side by side with these are *Rydbery's Magic of the Middle Ages*, a twin copy of the author's original gift to Queen Victoria, bound by Hayday, and illustrated in gold. The most elaborate scroll-work embellishes the gilt surface of the closed edges of this book, and in many other respects indicates the ambition of the author to make it a copy fit for a queen to read. This was a present to the Doctor, and near it lay a well thumbed Latin copy of Virgil, given him by his father upon his sixteenth birthday. Other books of note are

*Nott and Gliddon's Types of Mankind and Crania of Races*, to which Dr. Meigs was a large contributor; *Mme. Blavatsky's imperial* edition of the Philosophy of the Eastern Nations, gathered under the title of *Isis Unveiled; The Gulstan*, or Flower Garden of Sharke, Sadi of Shiraz, a beautiful copy in morocco gilt; Percy's translation of the Chinese *Han Kun Chooan*; a magnificently illustrated copy of Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* Julia Kavanaugh's *Women of France*; superb copies of Hogarth and Gilroy, and elephant editions of the famous Rabelais, Spain, and other works, illustrated by Gustave Doré."

In September, of 1859, Dr. Meigs was appointed lecturer on climatology and physiology at the Franklin Institute for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts, holding the position for eight years, attracting always very large and attentive classes to listen to him. He also lectured frequently on his favorite branch, physiology, in the different mechanic institutes in Philadelphia, and before various literary associations in the country and neighboring cities. These lectures were delivered at night but were always considered by him as secondary to his practice, which he never neglected, often coming from the bedside of a patient to lecture without his meals, and hastening away to visit another patient on the completion of his allotted task, which he performed conscientiously, preparing himself during the previous day or night.

The character of these lectures before the Franklin Institute, by Dr. Meigs, were all of them bearing upon or elucidating some important fact of his favorite subject, physiology. The first series he delivered was upon climate, and its influence upon the human subject. This was illustrated by various thermal charts, dwelling upon the nature of hot, warm or temperate, and cold climates on the skin, as producing

its various changes of color, also the peculiar diseases caused by such alterations of temperature, with the great effect they produced on the peculiar races of mankind. Another important subject was the various forms of food upon which man existed, either in a savage or a civilized state. This was illustrated by a large collection of foods, both in their natural and manufactured condition. In this connection he naturally brought in the action of the mouth, teeth, and glandular secretions, and the whole process of healthy digestion in the stomach and intestines. After describing the process of digestion in man, he passed to that of the animal, where the stomach and intestines are generally much more complicated, and form a longer canal in those animals which feed on vegetable matter, possessing little nutritious property; and on the other hand they are more simple and of less extent in those animals which nature has designed habitually to feed on the highly nutritious flesh of other animals. He would then discuss the important question: What is the kind of food on which man is by nature destined to feed? To answer this question, as well as for other purposes unconnected with our present subject, the digestive organs in man would be carefully compared with those of the animals. This interesting investigation shows us that the digestive organs in man hold an intermediate place between those of animals which in a state of nature feed wholly on vegetables, and those which exclusively subsist on animal food or flesh. There can be but little doubt that we are acting in obedience to the dictates of our physiological nature in feeding partly on vegetables and partly on animal substance. This he would demonstrate, and prove that any exclusive diet was in itself hurtful, and that a mixed diet was the proper kind of food for man.

The Franklin Institute for the Promo-

tion of the Mechanic Arts was founded in 1824, and has been an auxiliary to the medical schools of Philadelphia in supplying many of their most distinguished professors. It was in this admirable institution that they received their first training in lecturing and experimenting before a critical audience. Among its professors were Franklin Bache, John K. Mitchell, John F. Frazer, Robert E. Rogers, and Henry Morton; men who, like James A. Meigs, were remarkable for the extent of their knowledge, and whose names are identified with the scientific and medical reputation of our city. Besides, there was a long list of others who have contributed valuable lectures, and made for themselves a name not only in our city, but in the United States. Its present President, Robert E. Rogers, is not only a chemist and physician, but has shown himself to be a mechanic in the highest sense of the word, by making himself familiar with the progress of the mechanical arts. He knows well the part played by science in that progress, and he well expresses, in an address before the Institute, its share in the arts and sciences during more than half a century.

"Did time permit I would attempt to recall to your minds in detail, however imperfect, the effort wherein this Institute has done its part, but to do this would weary your patience. I would therefore simply refer to the experiments it has conducted in the investigation of the strength of materials; to its careful search with the causes of the steam boiler explosion; to the numerous reports of its committees upon matters within its province; its library of valuable scientific and practical works for consultation; its collection of minerals and models, the one a help and incentive to the study of an important branch of natural science bearing upon the mining interests, the other facilitating inventive talent; its course of instructive lectures delivered during each winter, etc.

IN 1855 Dr. Meigs was elected physician to the department of diseases of the chest in the Howard Hospital and Infirmary for Incurables, a position which he filled for thirteen years to the entire satisfaction of the Board of Trustees and his colleagues. Indeed he became so successful in diseases of the chest, that he had one of the largest clinics in this city at that period. This connection brought him numerous private patients from far and near, hearing of his fame in this benevolent institution, and who were glad to avail themselves of his skill. This special and distinctive charity has for its object, that each physician confines his attention exclusively to a specific class of diseases. It was founded May 1, 1853, and so far as known, was the first successful effort of the kind in this country; it did not interfere with the operations of the Guardians of the Poor, but limited its efforts as much as possible to a better class of the industrious poor; none were refused medical advice, and medicines were furnished free of charge. The Doctor only resigned his position at the Howard to take a higher one at the Pennsylvania Hospital, to which he was elected without his solicitation or application. In the year 1856 he became Librarian of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, the duties of which office he discharged for several years, until increasing professional duties compelled him to resign. In 1857, by an invitation of the Faculty and Board of Corporators of the Philadelphia College of Medicine, then located on Fifth Street, he accepted the chair of the Institutes of Medicine in that institution, and for two years also conducted the clinics, and this he did without any pecuniary return, the college not being in a financial condition to pay him; yet he gave his valuable time and attention, still fitting himself to fill a higher position. In April, 1859, Dr. Meigs was transferred to the Professorship of Institutes of Medicine in the medical department of the Pennsylvania College, with a number of his colleagues of the Philadelphia College of Medicine. Thus while very young in years he became the successor of his preceptor, Prof. F. G. Smith, the latter succeeding Prof. Samuel Jackson in the chair of Physiology, in the University of Pennsylvania. While connected with the Pennsylvania College, our young Professor delivered two systematic courses of lectures on physiology, illustrating them with an extensive series of vivisectional demonstrations which attracted much attention at the time, as no sustained systematic effort had been made to teach physiology experimentally in either of the four medical schools then existing in Philadelphia; here again he labored without remuneration, for just about the time when they had attracted a paying class the civil war broke out, and the class was broken up, and he in com-

pany with his colleagues resigned. Few men would have been willing to lecture, labor, and wait so long without remuneration, but with him this was a secondary consideration. At this time he was poor, in money, but he well knew that his careful education was fitting him for a higher and nobler field of usefulness when the tide would turn. In this connection it will be interesting to step aside from this constant contemplation of work without any pecuniary reward, to a pleasing incident in his life. One warm summer afternoon the subject of our memoir was in his office after a laborious day's practice conversing with his mother, when who should come in to visit him but the Nestor of American surgery, Prof. Samuel D. Gross, who, after a cordial greeting to him and his mother, informed him that he was about to go out of town, being worn out with his active duties and the heat, and desirous that our young physician should take charge of his journal, the *Louisville Medical Review*, and issue the number for him. The Doctor at once agreed to do so, with evident pleasure that so much confidence should be reposed in him by one whom he admired as one of the brightest lights of the medical profession. He took especial care with the number, and when the Professor returned to the city he had another visit from him, when he expressed himself as much pleased with the number. Prof. Gross then tendered the young editor a handsome honorarium, the first which had been offered him for such literary work, it was at first declined, but being pressed he accepted it. This was the first, but not the last time in which the generous Professor availed himself of the labors of our youthful scholar, as he subsequently wrote for him a very good life of the late Dr. Jacob Randolph, for his *Biographical Dictionary of Physicians*, and he was always well rewarded for his work. These acts of kindness on the part of Dr. Gross were often alluded to by him to the writer, in after years, and in his last valedictory address he writes of him "Thou, whom thy brethren all delight to praise; thou, good friend of my early, struggling days." On another occasion our good Professor selected Dr. Meigs from numerous aspirants to fill a most important chair, in a successful and well-known Southern college, with a fixed salary, which, after many consultations with his good mother was declined with many thanks, this declination was mainly owing to his mother's unwillingness for her son to leave her, and her firm belief that he would ultimately do as well in Philadelphia. During the brief period of the Doctor's connection with the Pennsylvania College he was elected by the Board of Guardians of the Poor, Consulting Physician and Clinical Lecturer to the Philadelphia Hospital at Blockley, which gave him an oppor-

tunity to lecture before a large class of medical students from all the medical colleges, and his lectures were most acceptable, he taking care to study well his cases before presenting them to the class. For the next five years he applied himself most devotedly to a laborious practice, having on his hands many of the cases of those who either went into the field during the war or were attached to distinct hospitals. An injury to his hand prevented him from being called upon by the government, and exempted him from active duty in the field. His practice so increased that he would make twenty, thirty and even forty visits in the twenty-four hours, and it was no extraordinary thing for him to have two and even three confinements during the same number of hours, and he attended as large a number as two hundred obstetrical cases, for several years; one year it reached two hundred and fifty. Dr. Meigs was very successful in this department without desiring such a class of practice, and he gradually withdrew from it, passing the cases to his younger medical friends. We often looked upon him with admiration and wonder, knowing but few could perform such an amount of mental and physical labor. Dr. Meigs had a most remarkably robust constitution and was able to get along with the minimum amount of sleep; never was troubled with dyspepsia, the only thing he suffered from was now and then a cold or bilious headache. He had a splendid digestion, good appetite, and was an admirable sleeper, and was very abstemious in his habits; his eyes however gave him some trouble from his constant study and the use of the microscope, especially at night, by producing *muscæ volitantes*.

In 1866, a spring course of lectures was established by the Faculty of Jefferson Medical College, with the object of extending the facilities of instruction, so as practically to lengthen the regular winter lectures; he delivered in this special course, by request of the Faculty, a series of lectures on the physiology and pathology of the blood and circulation. Here again he lectured without remuneration, and in June, 1868, on the resignation of the late Prof. Robley Dunglison, became a candidate for the vacancy, and after a most exciting canvass, in which the whole profession of the city and county was interested, against a most able, well-known, and popular gentleman, was elected by the Board of Trustees of Jefferson Medical College Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Medical Jurisprudence, his application for the chair having been supported by a large number of the medical men of Philadelphia, many of them using their utmost personal efforts on his behalf. They were attracted to him by his urbanity of manner, willingness to assist them in any emergency, which with his pleasant smile

won their regard, and also their respect for his qualities of head and heart. His fame extended to other portions of the country, and even to distant countries where he was known only by his contributions to science. As evidences of this, he had the strongest letters of recommendation from the late Prof. Henry of the Smithsonian Institute, at Washington, D. C.; Dr. J. C. Nott, the celebrated ethnologist of Mobile, Alabama; Professors Wilson, of Toronto, Canada; Owen, of the British Museum; Turner, of the University of Edinburgh; Broca, of the Academy of Medicine of Paris; Von Dübén, of the Cazolinska Institute of Stockholm; Pruner Bey, of Cairo, and other distinguished physicians and scientists of America and Europe. Herein was shown the advantage of being prepared, for had he not, how could he have ever been able to fill the place of so distinguished a physiologist, lecturer, scholar, and well known author as the late Prof. Dunglison? Let it be stated to his credit, that he not only filled the position, but we have never known in Philadelphia a more successful lecturer or *one* more capable of instructing and teaching the well-known facts in physiology, for nothing that was doubtful, or mere speculative, was ever given to the student. No amount of time, money, and labor was ever grudged by Prof. Meigs, so that he could make his facts more clear and plain, and no one either at home or abroad employed the oxyhydrogen, or lime light, more freely, or had finer illustrations of the nervous system and other portions of the human body. It was considered such a treat to hear him, that some of the ablest lawyers, divines, and professors would eagerly throng his class room so that the very aisles were frequently crowded. Honors now came thick and fast; he was elected a member of all the learned societies of this county, medical and scientific, also President of the Philadelphia County Medical Society; member of the Society d' Anthropologie de Paris; the Ethnological Society of London; the Anthropological Society of London; the Societas Medæcorum Svecanæ of Stockholm, and the International Congress of Prehistoric Archæology. He also was a delegate to the International Congress which met in Philadelphia during the Centennial Exposition.

October 12, 1868, he delivered the inaugural address introductory to his first course, after his election to the professorship of the Institutes of Medicine, and the subject he selected was the "Correlation of the Physical and Vital Forces," a subject he had given long and deep study, in conjunction with the late Dr. S. L. Metcalf, formerly of Kentucky. This lecture is one of his best productions, having received much care and attention at his hands,

in evidence of which two editions of it were published and over one thousand copies sold.

Another valuable scientific paper of his was on the Relation of Atomic Heat to Crystalline Forms, which was read before the Academy of Natural Sciences and published in their Journal.

Being chairman of the standing committee of Anthropology of the Academy of Natural Sciences (which he retained until his death), he arranged and classified the extensive collection of human crania of the Academy, and prepared a systematic catalogue of the collection, which was published by the Academy. But his crowning work, by which he was best known abroad, was his valuable essay on the "Cranial Characteristics of the Races," by Nott, and Gliddon's "Indigenous Races of the Earth." In this learned essay, which exhibits the genius of its author, is presented a general survey of human skulls, in their ethnical relations, and this is considered a work of great merit, and won from scientists a full round of praise. He contributed at various times, many original articles on craniography, prominent among which may be mentioned: "Hints to Craniographers upon the Importance and Feasibility of Establishing some Uniform System by which the Collection and Promulgation of Craniological Statistics and the Exchange of Duplicate Crania may be Promoted;" "Description of a Deformed Fragmentary Human Skull found in an Ancient Quarry Cave at Jerusalem;" "Observations on the Form of the Occiput in the Various Races of Man," "The Mensuration of the Human Skull, and on Observations on the Cranial Forms of the American Aborigines."

October, 1872, he delivered a most admirable and learned address at the laying of the corner-stone of the new building for the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, which was published by the Academy. For several years he was collecting materials for a bibliography of physiology, in which could be found all the well-established facts of this department. He was also writing a book on woman's place in history, and had collected almost every work on this interesting subject. The last complete work of Dr. Meigs, written under the pressure of a multitude of avocations, and chiefly while riding about, was his valedictory address to the graduating class, which was written in the form of a poem, in two different measures; and although there may be a few faults of versification, etc., yet no one can read it carefully without being convinced of the great power in his words, the beautiful and classical references, and many most chaste and graceful expressions which showed much improvement over his early efforts. The theme selected was the Epithalamium of the young physician, in taking Fair Hygeia as his bride.

"Behold the maiden, Hygeia, your faithful guide,  
Your gentle, loving, health-dispensing bride,  
And now be mine, the pleasing task to sing  
Your epithalamium, and to fling  
Upon the altar, ere you leave for aye,  
Some gifts to mark this bright, auspicious day."

Dr. Meigs erred in doing too much work; it was true that circumstances conspired to make him the willing agent to lecture too frequently, because of, in part, the ill health of two of his colleagues, but still it was taking too much labor upon him to perform, and then he would steal hours from sleep, in the vain hope that he had such a stock of health that he could go on, and on, as he had done for years before. His hope was all the time to lay aside the drudgery of practice and take a long rest, with congenial occupation of a true scientific and literary character, and visit Europe, for that was his heart's desire, but like many other men, he would not listen to his friends, or even to the small voice within. How different from Goethe, whom he admired so much. The grand old German though a constant thinker and active toiler, reached the age of eighty-three, retaining his intellectual forces unimpaired to the last. Montesquieu also lived a life of unremitting industry, yet he reached a good old age, and Quesnel was in his eighty-sixth year when he died, closing by a peaceful death a life which had been assiduously devoted to study. At the base of this overwork there was in our good friend a mistaken conception of duty, also a false theory of life, as he failed to give due attention to his physical health, when alas! the day of reckoning had come. June, 1876, he ceased even to take his summer holiday, his reason was that he desired to study the collection of the International Exhibition, but the same excuse was given in 1877-78-79. This latter year he was much exposed in summer consultations out of the city, and in malarious regions, and soon his friends began to notice his change in color and complexion; still he worked on and on when he should have been in his bed. It was not until he had a congestive chill followed by local manifestations of deranged liver and kidneys, with some local hemorrhoidal trouble, which alarmed him that he as a precautionary matter at once sent for his friend and neighbor, Dr. John H. Brinton, a well known surgeon, who treated him for his local hemorrhoidal difficulty, but getting no better he called Dr. Da Costa, in consultation, but the fatal character did not show itself conspicuously. There were hopes that he might yet get well; vain hopes, for soon, too soon, some internal hemorrhage or organic change, embolism or sudden clot in the heart, terminated in his 55th year his brilliant career in the very prime of his manhood. Few persons were permitted to visit him during his illness, except his father and a most faithful

old housekeeper who acted as nurse. On Sunday morning, Nov. 9, 1879, about three o'clock he was able to sleep, and was free from pain for a few hours, but his mind, however, was active with his duties in his lecture room, etc.; a second time he slept and when he awoke he told his father he felt better and would like to have something to eat, his father gave him some beef tea and milk; he desired to have a cup of tea; while this was preparing he wished to see some letters that had arrived from Europe which were given him. On expressing a desire to get up, he was so weak as not to be able to raise his head, his father assisted him and he walked across the room to the washstand and made his toilet, and then was helped back to bed, when they had a pleasant talk of going to Europe, etc.; his father agreeing to go with him,—at this time he thought he was better. After taking his tea he laid down, but soon after his father noticed a change in his countenance and expression, and some irregularity of his respiration; so he sent at once for Dr. Brinton. When he arrived, he was dead. Mr. Meigs declined to have a post-mortem, and he was so firm that no amount of persuasion, or the most expressed desire of his best medical friends had any weight with him.

We have been asked the question, Did the Doctor die believing in a future state? We distinctly replied that we were sure of it. He was a firm believer in the immortality of the soul, and after his mother's death his mind was filled with grief, but his consolation was that she was immortal, and he might hope to meet her again. He received a great deal of comfort from a beautiful letter written at that time to him by the elder Professor Draper, of New York, which he read to us and in which the Professor gave him the evidences of his own belief, based on physiological grounds, that the soul was immortal and would live forever. From some cause he but seldom went to church, but now and then he would attend the service of some able divine, and he enjoyed very much the discourses of the Rev. Dr. Wadsworth. Dr. Meigs was thoroughly conversant with both the Old and the New Testament, as evidenced in his last address, and one of his favorite books was the New Testament, edited with comments by Rev. Dr. Clark, and he carried about with him a small copy of Ecclesiastes, which he often read and admired, and which he frequently referred to in his valedictory address. The Doctor was a biblical scholar and was conversant with the Bible in the original, and he had numerous works on the subject, and seemed pleased with the new idea of a translation, freeing it from many errors. He was employed by several clergymen as their physician, and had long and learned discussions on the original works of the ancients with some of them, who

held him in high esteem, but there was another class which he considered a great injury to the Christian religion, and the truths which they professed to teach, but did not follow in their lives and conversation. The following communication from one of his friends and an old patient, expresses our ideas and confirms what we have already written about him:—

"In frequent conversations which I had with Dr. Meigs, I found he entertained peculiar views in regard to religious ideas. He believed in the teachings of the Bible and made for himself and others a high standard of strict morality, temperance, and chastity. He had no faith in being simply a member of any church in name, if they did not fulfil every obligation due in all business transactions, and this idea was so fixed in his mind that he would often speak about it, and in such a positive manner that it would lead many to think that he did not believe in any true religious people at all; but such was not the case, as other evidences and remarks made by him to me would not justify such an erroneous conclusion." Among the clergymen for whom he entertained a high regard and whom he believed to be a true servant of the living God, was the late Rev. Dr. Dorr, Rector of Christ Church, and he always spoke of him in the highest terms. The funeral of Dr. Meigs took place from his late residence, 1408 Spruce Street, and was attended by a large number of members of the medical profession, and crowds of patients and friends who desired to take a farewell look at their beloved brother and physician. The Trustees and Faculty of the Jefferson Medical College, the Alumni Association, and the students of the college attended the funeral; the latter to the number of about two hundred and sixty, proceeded to the house in a body, and afterwards walked out to the cemetery. The services at the house and at Woodland Cemetery were conducted by the Rev. Dr. Foggo, of Christ P. E. Church, and the following gentlemen acted as pall-bearers: Drs. Ellerslie Wallace, J. M. Da Costa, Roberts Bartholow, and Hons. James H. Campbell, Furman Shephard, and E. B. Gardette. Dr. Meigs was placed near his mother, and a beautiful shaft of granite has been erected over him.

In his own words, addressed to another, we say *Farewell*:—

"In sadness and with hearts forlorn,  
To him whose armor has been laid aside.  
In tears and sadness and with humbled pride,  
And trembling hands and drooping soul, I spread,  
In memory of our brother who is dead,  
These withered willow leaves and cypress sad.  
Oh! never, never more his face our hearts will glad,  
Oh! never more within our ears will sound  
The voice of him we loved with love profound.  
But though his body crumbleth into dust,  
Still lives his name which all men said was just.  
To us that name whose lustre ne'er will cease,  
And to his ashes everlasting peace."



