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AN ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES OF THE N. H. MEDICAL INSTITUTION,

At the Medical Commencement, Nov., 1853.

BY JOHN E. TYLER, M. D.

Gentlemen of the Graduating Class:—

You have now spent the time required of you in preparatory study. You have passed an examination creditably to your teachers and to yourselves, and you will receive the diploma of this venerable and excellent College. You will shortly have attained to what has for so long a time been a prominent subject of your thoughts and the burden of your desires. You will very soon be *real Doctors*. And now you are to put on the harness of professional life, (and a straight harness it is,) and work for the relief of suffering men, women and children. You will no longer enjoy the careless freedom, the luxury of a mere student's life. You will leave this quiet town, whose very atmosphere is conducive to study, and makes one feel wise. You will leave this famed and honored College, to which it has been your privilege and pleasure to resort,—famed and honored for the triumphs in medicine and surgery here achieved,—famed and honored for the wisdom and ability of its past and present teachers,—honored and gratefully remembered by the many all over the world, who have here laid the foundation of a successful and useful life. But, think not as you leave here, professional men, that you have "completed your studies," as the phrase goes. Think not

that books may now be laid aside, and that you already possess all the intellectual materials necessary for the successful practice of medicine. The examination you have passed, and the degree you will receive will work in you no special miracle, will confer upon you no mysterious and hitherto unpossessed power. You will find that though Doctors, you are the same men that you were twenty-fours ago, only twenty-four hours older, and with a little longer name. You have just commenced, not *completed*, your studies. The hardest, far the hardest is to come; the battle of life is before you; and with a Doctor, 't is an every day fight to the end,—and study, careful and continued; thought, steady and severe, with labor unremitting, can alone give you the victory you desire.

Although we have it on good authority that "there is nothing new under the sun," still things under the sun have been so whirled about, shaken up and turned over since "the life and times of Solomon," that the world to-day is, at any rate, *different* from what it ever has been before. Every body is restless and impatient for results. Rapidity, recklessness, and energy,—I had almost said fury,—characterize every moment. Steam whirls us about with frightful and dangerous swiftness, and yet is getting to be considered quite too slow. Ten days is far too long for crossing the Atlantic; it must be done in five, even if to do so we are to be propelled by ether and by fires suggestive of the Pit. Nothing slower than lightning is fit to transmit news, and dry goods must be instantaneously puffed through miles of iron tube; and a man taking yonder railroad car to-morrow morning will see and hear more things, will *live longer* in one day, than did Methuselah in his nine hundred and sixty and nine years. People are impatient of everything, even of the length of life, of which the daily fearful and melancholy multiplication of suicides is testimony. In religion, people are impatient, and will not hear long sermons or long prayers, be they ever so eloquent or ever so fervent. In physic, men are impatient, and demand a cure of their ailment at a specified time, with the same cool and confident

expectation that they require the punctual making of a coat or completion of a contract, and men choose to drink Croton oil at a risk, and have the business through with, rather than *lose time* with the more amiable and quiet work of its cousin Castor. If a man breaks his leg or his head, it must be mended by a certain day, and if he has not a straighter and a handsomer leg than ever nature meant for him, or if he fails now of an eminently wise head, though all his life he 's been a *ninny*, he 'll sue the Doctor and mulct him in damages enough to support him like a prince. Although diseases change somewhat from year to year, so as to require a modified treatment, and the physical condition of man is somewhat modified by the spirit of the age, still the great facts and truths of disease and its progress remain the same. Broken bones require as much time as ever to knit together. Typhoid fever will have its run, and ulcers will not heal one day sooner for all the hurry and impatience of their owners. These facts of the times, however, affect the physician, and range prominently under the head of difficulties in the present practice of medicine. It is the duty of the physician to answer all the demands made upon him, which are not impossible. Those which *are* he must not *pretend* to answer. To do this, is clearly and purely the province of the quack.

You have chosen for yourselves, gentlemen, a laborious profession, and you should enter it with the expectation of a laborious life, a life with its hours of intense excitement, when days and weeks are crowded into minutes of time, a life with hours of gloom and deep anxiety, but with hours, also, of clear, genuine happiness and joy. If I speak to you chiefly of its trials, it is not because it has no bright side. It has, indeed, its many trials, but it has, too, its rich and abundant rewards. And if you would reap the latter, you must inevitably undergo the former. You should, then, enter the profession with a determination to perform *all* its duties, and to shrink from none of its difficulties, trials or fatigue. You must be ready at all times, in all sorts of weather, and under all circumstances, to promptly and *cheerfully* answer all

demands for your services. Let a call, by day and by night, in sunshine and in storm, by the rich and by the poor, by the civil and the uncivil, all appear to others to be the same to you.

Attend strictly to your professional duties, and hold incidental business, politics and pleasure, entirely secondary. Always be at your post, or have it distinctly known where you can be found. You had better be out of the way when a friend would induce you a gunning, than to be gunning when a patient requires your attention. It is not a slight matter for you to have a reputation of always being attentive to your business.

To succeed in practice you must have and hold the confidence of your patients and their friends, and to secure this you must have a quiet, modest, but *evident* confidence in yourselves,—not the growth of a conceit that you know everything, and can account for everything, but that genuine, unobtrusive confidence in yourself which naturally arises from the possession of knowledge and the consciousness of ability. You must ever be adding to your stock of knowledge by study and observation and reflection, and you must come to know your own ability and increase it by improving *all* opportunities for its exercise. Therefore, be determined to do *whatever* you are called upon to do, and do it in the very best and most thorough manner. You may at first meet with many duties from which you will instinctively shrink, many things which you will not know exactly how to do, and which you will not feel *certain* you can do, and you will be greatly inclined to call for aid from some more experienced brother. Learn here, then, a lesson of self-reliance. "What man has done man may do," and *you* undoubtedly may do, and will be certain *to do*, and do *well*, if you have a *strong will* thereto. The only way for you to acquire skill is by *your own* practice, by *personally* doing each and every duty of a physician, and neglecting none. You must meet every difficulty with a *firm*, *brave* heart, and be *determined* to conquer. Rely on *yourselves*. Let nothing ever escape you through *doubts* of your ability, or a dread

of undertaking an untried task. "Whatsoever your hand findeth to do, *do it, with all your might.*"

Before long, gentlemen, each of you doubtless will have decided upon a location for yourselves, and will have made arrangements for the practice of your profession. It is hard to commence practice. There are troubles and trials at the onset which are hard, *very* hard to bear. You cannot avoid them, but you will learn to bear them. There are hours of suffering, yea, of torture, gloomy, wretched hours, in store for the young physician, and they doubtless will be yours, but you will *survive* them, and be better for their discipline. 'T will seem hard to you if you have to wait for days, and may be for weeks, for a call for your services, and many, many a young Doctor has to do it, and it will be harder if you have a call at once. Sooner or later, however, you will make your first professional visit. You will see that notable and ever to be remembered person,—your first patient.—If you are faithful, if you are determined to begin right, if you feel that interest in your patient and in your reputation which you ought, there will be many things in your first case to puzzle you, and if it be a serious one, which will give you a world of anxiety, and rob you of your sleep. To see a patient with your preceptor, to hear him enumerate symptom after symptom, as he at once discovers them, and from practice arranges them, and determines therefrom *so easily* the pathological state and treatment required, may have seemed to you the simplest and most natural and comfortable process in the world, easier, no doubt, and more natural than to him. But to call on your first patient alone, to ascertain yourself *where* the trouble is, and where *all* the trouble is, and *what* it is, to make up your mind just what, and just how much to prescribe, to bear this new responsibility; to feel that a life, and with it the condition and comfort of a family, depends on you; to feel that your professional reputation and success is at hazard,—is not so easy and comfortable, and then to tell the friends the *name* of the disorder, and its probable result, and to inform the kind neighbor by the door, who has seen a great many Doctors,

and who has "just stepped in" when the new Doctor came, when, and where, and how, and why,—'t is not so easy, or natural, or so comfortable after all. These latter are minor things, but they are not *trifles*. Then, after having settled in your mind what the condition of your patient is, and having prescribed to your own satisfaction, you go home and consult your books, and may be you find there many symptoms given which you have not noticed in your patient, and you are certain you have noticed some symptoms which are not given in the books, and you begin to question whether you have not mistaken the case, whether, *after all*, what you have considered and prescribed for as pleurisy, may not be a disease of the heart, or whether the headache which you have decided to be the result of a disordered stomach, may not be an indication of brain fever, or the rapid pulse which suggested to you inflammation, and on account of which you depleted, did not betoken debility, and require stimulants; and so you may be worried and troubled, and get preciously confused. *Others* have been thus troubled before you. But you may leave your patient, satisfied with the correctness of your diagnosis and your prescription, and upon careful review and comparison with authorities, be confirmed therein, and yet at your next visit find your patient in every respect worse. You will doubt your own abilities in the premises, and mistrust that some one else might have produced a different state of things, when in truth you have done far better than an older and less careful man. It may fortify you to know that others have felt *just so*. And again, your patient, though quite sick, may be getting on well, and you are conscious of doing all for him that man can do, and are feeling satisfied with the progress of the case. Still, from some unaccountable cause the friends may get uneasy, and on your next visit you will see that you are not met *quite* so cordially as common, and your patient's answer to your kind greeting is, "I'm *no* better, Doctor," and as you make your customary examination, several more of the family than is usual or necessary leave their work and come and soberly stand about the bed. You do

not find the patient worse, but there's something wrong. Your questions are all answered, but nothing more. Questions are not asked in the usual free manner, nor is the ordinary glib little history of particulars volunteered. You are chilled by the silence, and feel annoyed by the want of confidence in you, and the "*experienced* nurse," as she steps very much in your way to do something for the patient entirely unnecessary, ominously and oracularly remarks that "he is a very sick man." You know that something is "on their minds," that something has been talked of and decided on before you came in. Do not be surprised or *too* much grieved if it is nothing worse than that it is thought best that an *older Doctor* be called in to consult. Do not object to this, or *appear* averse to it. *Cheerfully* accede, however little you may like it. All this has happened to others, and they have survived it. It is better usually to anticipate such a proposition. When you perceive that there is a little uneasiness felt, (and if you are sensitive you will discover it very quickly,) it is best to speak first yourself. You can very composedly and indifferently say, "I see that you are feeling very anxious about this person, and he is indeed very sick, but there is nothing obscure or very difficult to manage in the case, still, if you have any wish to call in counsel, do not hesitate on my account." In nine cases out of ten after such a move, you will be left to go on quietly and alone. Such is human nature. In *really serious* cases it will generally be for your advantage to seek counsel. Your first cases, whatever they may be, if of any severity, will necessarily distress you. You must expect it, and make up your minds to endure it, for anxiety, perplexity and trial, *more* than this, real unmitigated, undiluted misery seem to be an inseparable and unavoidable part of a physician's early experience, a necessary preface to his life, a sort of purgatory to be passed before the paradise of confidence can be reached.

I well recollect my first patient. He was a stout youth, and came to my office and said he was sick, and I believed him. From his account of himself, and from his answers to

my many questions, you might suppose he had any one of a great number of diseases. He had lost his appetite and his legs ached, his bowels were sore and his head ached. His tongue was furred, he had a cough, and he felt cold and hot, and a great many other ways. What in the world was his real ailment was a mystery to me, and I was not certain but he had the seeds of something dreadful in him. Two facts, however, were clear in his case. He had caught cold and was costive, and I reasoned upon these until I ventured to order him a sweat, and a brisk dose of calomel, aloes and jalap. I thought a great deal of that boy that night, and wondered what would become of him, but to my surprise and *great relief*, he was *alive* and well the next day, and gave me no further trouble, for he has n't been sick since.

And my next patient, to whom I made my first professional visit. How well I remember her? With what care I studied and re-studied her symptoms. How constantly, too constantly, I attended her. How often did I make some slight change in her medicine, and direct some new application for her relief? With what eagerness did I watch for some slight sign of amendment, and with what *agony* of desire did I hope to see some trifling good for my remedies, and in my disappointment, how uncertain was I that I was doing right. How uncertain *what* to do. How fearful that I was doing harm, that I had mistaken her disease, and that through my error she was growing worse. There was not one bright spot in the whole case. My first visit was a painful one to me, and so were all that followed. All that I did was utterly without avail. She died, and with her all my hopes. If a similar experience be yours, it may be a drop of comfort for you to know that you are not the first who has thus suffered. Be not disheartened. Brighter days will come; however laborious your whole professional life may be, the *first* part will be the hardest part to bear.

It is essential to your success, gentlemen, that you commence practice in a way that shall secure to you correct professional habits, correct habits of observation, of thought, of study, correct manners and conduct. Be careful, minute

and thorough in the examination of your first and every succeeding case. Gather all the information from every source at your command, from the appearance of the tongue, the state of the pulse and skin, the expression of the countenance, the hue of the complexion, the character of secretions and excretions, from such manipulations and examinations as may satisfy you of the condition of the viscera, and by such questions as shall show to you the feelings and sensations of body and mind, the previous general habits and state of health, the occupation, and what exposure there may have been to the weather, disease or fatigue. From these data, carefully considered and compared, deduce your diagnosis. If you cannot do it in five minutes, take ten. *Deliberately* conclude upon the pathological state of the person, and then prescribe those medicines which you judge will best accomplish your purposes. Never allow yourself to prescribe at random, or for a disease by its *name;* for instance, never prescribe for a headache, a sensation, but for what makes a headache, something material and within the province of doses. But *endeavor*, *always*, to satisfy yourself just what and how much disease you have to deal with, decide upon what results you wish to produce, and use the means which you have learned will produce them; for it is easier not to think than to think, and without a strong resolution at first and continued, to be correct in this particular, a habit will insidiously possess you, destructive to all scientific practice. If your case perplex you, if symptoms seem to conflict, and you are unable to satisfy yourself of the exact condition of things, proceed cautiously, in accordance with the most *probable* view of the case, and, like Mr. Micawber, wait for something to turn up. Attention, study and reflection will in a little time set you right. Let me repeat it, always have a definite object in prescribing,—a good reason for your prescriptions. Correctness here is vital to your being anything but a mere artisan in medicine. If this be difficult at first, it will by practice become easier, and at length gain over you and for you all the force of an invaluable habit.

And herein will your books come to your aid. You should consult them carefully and systematically. Study out your cases in your office slowly and deliberately. Read and reflect on the matter you have in hand, and not only that particular phase of the disease in your patient, but upon all its phases and attendant circumstances, consider its mode of attack, progress and termination, its management and treatment, and do this until all is ineffaceably imprinted upon your memory; and when you have other cases of the same disease, pass all carefully in review, and as you receive new books and periodicals, post from them every thing you think valuable under its appropriate head, and so keep on unflinching and untiring through months and years, and you certainly *must* become well informed and scientific men, whose counsel will be valuable and sought for, and whose opinion will be authority. In your reading, seek for the *practical* rather than the theoretical. Lend your ear the closest to the men who *know* whereof they write, "who speak what they do know, and testify of what they have seen," and not only of what they have *once* seen, but *repeatedly*, and have settled for truth by years of experience. Stick to the authorities in medicine, for those things are least liable to disappoint you which in the hands of intelligent and skilful men have for years proved to be reliable. The shades of disease are so diverse, and the attendant and modifying circumstances so many and so powerful, that you will find the *firmest* authorities none *too* firm for you to depend upon. In most cases a majority of probabilities must decide you. Sulphur will cure the itch, that is beyond dispute; but opium will not always make a man sleep, nor antimony make him puke, but they *almost* always will, and therefore you will not hesitate often to use them for these purposes.

You should take some of the Reviews and Journals of the day, if for no other purpose than to be familiar with what is transpiring in the medical world, but be cautious of receiving them as authority, although captivating theories may be advanced and brilliant successes vaunted. An old but good maxim will apply well here, "Believe only what seems

reasonable." Try every thing first in the crucible of common sense, and then test by cautious practice, and whatever proves valuable, gladly receive.

But be not *too* conservative. There are old fogies in medicine as well as otherwheres. Cling not to an old thing simply because it be old, it may be dead, nor reject a new thing because it be new. Follow not a course sanctioned by the schools, if, after due consideration and fair trial, you are not convinced it is right, simply because it is a "*regular* thing," only do you be sure to *sufficiently* distrust your own judgment when it clashes with the dictum of many wise and able men who give authority to "regular things." Search after truth always. Search after that which will in the readiest and best way alleviate human suffering, and wherever you may find the truth, no matter in whose possession, no matter how ignoble its surroundings, so it really be truth, seize upon it and make it your own. The veriest quack may have a truly good remedy, and on it depend all his fame, albeit he knows no more of its modus medendi than a mule does of exegesis. Do not waste yourself in fretting about it, or in saying that the good is bad, but quietly get possession of it, and if it be true gold, it will pass as currently from your hands as from his, and far more respectably. If you know that $\frac{1}{2000}$ of a grain of Belladonna will affect the brain, and relieve the headache better than $\frac{1}{8}$ of a grain, and that a shadow of a dose of chamomile will quiet a child better than paregoric; if you *know* that a cold wet towel will relieve a sore throat, and that a dose of the "anti-spasmodic tincture" will snap a fit of hysterics quicker than assafœtida or antimony; if you *know* these things, do not be deterred from their use because Homeopathists and Hydropathists and Thompsonians so use them. Do not refuse a truly good thing, just because its birth has been accounted doubtful. But do not be too fond of looking for truth in such places. 'Tis searching for jewels in swines' snouts.

In the practice of your profession, gentlemen, life and health are not to be the only objects of your care. It will be your duty to consult as much as possible the *comfort* of

the sick, and that physician will be the most successful, the most sought for, and the most beloved, who does the most to place his patients, both bodily and mentally, in a condition agreeable to themselves, and conducive to their ultimate recovery. Any fear you may remove, any uneasiness you may relieve, any disquiet you may soothe, will be appreciated quickly by the sick, and for this, medicine is not always necessary; a cheerful countenance, a kind word, a confident tone, or a well timed story, are often more availing. Seem not *over* anxious for your patients, for you will thus surely arouse their anxiety, and that of their attendants, and injure both yourself and them: but on the other hand, *never appear* careless or indifferent. Make them sensible that you feel a strong interest in them, and that you are moved by an earnest and heartfelt desire to relieve their suffering and promote their welfare.

Let this desire to give comfort to others, to do them real substantial service, and all the service you can, control your whole conduct. You can easily disturb a whole family and make them many steps for your own convenience, after a cold, bad ride. You can in muddy times track across a newly washed floor, and by coarse and boisterous language show your independence and oddity. You can produce a sensation by curious and sarcastic questions, or by severe and ill-timed jokes. But it is not wise. However well you may prescribe, and however successfully your prescriptions may result, it is doubtful whether by such a course you do not in the aggregate give a family more trouble than comfort; better be quiet and gentle and civil. Some distinguished physicians have been very rough, odd men, have said and done rude and odd things, but they became great *in spite* of their oddities, and not *by* them, and would have been greater men, would have won more hearts, would have given more comfort, and have caused a more affectionate remembrance of themselves, without them. I know a physician well, a thorough and accurate scholar, and a remarkably excellent and successful practitioner, who is very rough and odd, and who has told me that he prided himself on his

manner, on being Abernethy-like, and that he got practice by it. But the truth is that his practice would be doubled were he a civil and a courteous man.

You will not often be professionally called when your presence is not necessary, or *supposed* to be so. Some inconvenience is felt or imagined which you are expected to remove. Be sure that you *do* remove it, no matter if it be insignificant. Never be so rude as to laugh or fret at one's *folly* in unnecessarily calling you. People in this world had rather be considered *wicked* than foolish, even in *little things*, and you can easily wound their pride and cause a prejudice against yourself. Endeavor always to leave those who have sent for you, feeling in some respect the better for your visit. Cultivate and exhibit every where the kindness, courtesy and firmness of manner belonging to the true gentleman.

Pay proper regard to your dress. Avoid a slovenly appearance or practice, and on the other hand, be not so nice that people will fear to approach within a given distance of you.

Be slower to speak than to hear. Most people had rather hear themselves talk than any one else, and the fact of your being a good listener will with many give you a better reputation than the utterance of the most profound wisdom. As a general thing, the *less* you have to say about the condition, symptoms and prospects of your patients, even to their friends, the better, and never, for the sake of explanation, or of satisfying them of your knowledge of the case, give them a medical lecture. They will not appreciate it, and you may commit yourself to something which in the end will prove untrue, and shame if not injure you; whereas, for silence you can seldom be sorry. When you have a patient in danger or a doubtful condition, and find the friends extremely anxious and fearful of the result, you will be very liable to give them a word of encouragement which you do not feel yourself. Guard against this carefully. Never encourage a patient to keep them quiet, unless you have grounds to do it. Never say, "he is better," or, "I think he will get better," if you do not really believe it. If you do this, results will make you belie yourself, and you

will impair the confidence of people in your judgment or prognosis. You are responsible for the correct and proper treatment of your patients, and not for the result, and you are not to feel that because a case results unfavorably, you of *necessity* mismanaged it. People *will* die in spite of the best of treatment and in spite of your closest attentions, and if you, *without reason*, allow yourself to feel that you are blameable for it, you will *show* it, and the community will soon be of your opinion and also blame you.

Your profession will admit you to the privacy of families, will lead you even to the most retired chambers, "will cause you to behold the human character disrobed, by the rude hands of mental and corporeal suffering, of all the coloring and drapery thrown round it by the forms of society, and thus make you the depository of facts which involve the happiness of individuals and of society." Be true to your trust. Never reveal even to your closest friends, what your professional position alone permits you to know. And further, say nothing of the trifling things you see and hear.—Do not tell Mrs. A— what Mrs. B— remarked or what she had for dinner. Gossip not at all. Never allow yourself to make fun of or show up a patient's condition for the amusement of his neighbors. Should you do this in unimportant instances, people will quickly infer that you may trifle and jest at and expose more serious matters, and so you may lose their respect and confidence, and form for yourself a rude and despicable habit.

You will find it particularly necessary, gentlemen, to have your temper under control, for many and severe will be the trials thereof in the practice of medicine. You will meet with many annoyances which you must patiently and good naturedly bear. You will be at the mercy of garrulous old ladies, and jaundiced Betties of your own sex, who will seize upon the new Doctor and insist, (when you are in a hurry or wishing to study,) upon telling you minutely of their numberless diseases and *peculiar* sensations, of their *unparalleled* sufferings, of the quantity and diversity of the doses they have drank, of their interviews with Doctors, and

the *astonishing* remarks they have made, and what miracles of obstinacy their ailments have been. They will have your opinion upon divers points in their economy and pathology, and insist on your prescribing again and again for them. You must bear these dispensations of Providence as best you can.

You will be greatly tried by the whims and caprices and unjust exactions of the sick and their officious relatives. You will be censured for tardiness in answering a call, when your delay was clearly unavoidable. "You will be too early or too late. You will visit too often or not often enough. You will give wrong medicines, or in wrong doses. You will bleed when a sweat would answer. You will give a dreadful dose of calomel when a cataplasm was needed." You will do different from the old Doctor, or just like him, and in either case be wrong. Your patient recovers. It is no thanks to you, Oh no, he had a wonderful constitution! Or, he dies. You certainly put him through. Under such trials as these, gentlemen, keep your temper and hope for better things.

You will be tried by the meddling of neighbors, who distrust the young Doctor, and advise a change, or who despise doctors and their doses, and commend McAllister's ointment and a famous "family pill." You will be tried by the various forms of quackery, and, perhaps, by the quacks themselves. Never stop to quarrel with them. Let them entirely alone. They thrive by opposition and will die by neglect. The most arrant will occasionally make a good hit, and if you deny it, you will only injure yourself. But if you *must* occasionally encounter the friends of some famous herb woman, or seventh son, or medical Indian, do it not "with a fierce or passionate tone, nor in the language of vituperation or abuse, for thus you will strengthen their old opinions, or fix them, if wavering, and convince them that self-interest and not philanthropy, is the cause of their hostility. But your true and effectual plan will be, with all moderation of tone and manner, to appeal to their common sense in the matter, to demonstrate the absurdity of quack-

ery in general, and of the particular form in question, and to show clearly the immense amount of evil which flows therefrom."

You will be tried by the inadvertencies, and, I grieve to say it, by the positive offences of your medical brethren. Some old Doctor may remark at one of your neighbor's, that no doubt you are a very fine young man and *intend* to do right, but that you have n't had *experience*, or he *accidentally* may be passing the residence of one of your patients and be called in. He looks about seriously and silently, and "*does n't know*" but all is going on right, it is delicate for him to say anything. The medicine is shown him, and he indifferently asks if the patient is troubled so and so after taking it, and nods.

You may lose a patient, and some *kind* brother *hopes* it was no fault of yours, but remarks that such cases are not ordinarily difficult to treat. Many, many are the wounds which one practitioner may inflict upon another, and you may not escape. But for your own part, however much you may desire practice, desire honor more. Always and strictly observe professional etiquette, "those rules which the wisdom and experience of our predecessors have established for the regulation of our intercourse with one another and the community." They are in conformity with the nicest principles of honor. Adhere to these, however much your fellows may sin against you. Like the Great Physician, "when you are reviled, revile not again." But those of whom I have just spoken are not numerous in our profession. The brotherhood to which we welcome you to-day is composed in the main of high minded and honorable men, men devoted to the advancement of science, and to the best interests of humanity, *true* men, in whom you may safely and implicitly confide.

Allow me, gentlemen, to allude to one other matter, which you may not neglect. You will not long be unmindful that by your profession you must earn your bread. You should, therefore, have its business part systematically arranged. You should have a set time for making your daily charges,

say at night, and days, at regular intervals, for posting your books, and from these fixed times you will not often find it necessary to vary. Compel yourselves to this practice, (I mean, of course, when you have anything to charge,) until it becomes with you a settled habit. Once in three, or six months, at least, draw off all your accounts and present a bill to every person in your debt, and give them civilly to understand that you expect it to be paid. In this way you may offend some who have been accustomed to years of indulgence from their former physicians, but as soon as it is known to be your regular way of doing with every one, there will be no complaint; and thus you will avoid the difficulty and danger of wrangling over an old and half forgotten account, and the possible inconvenience to your debtor of a demand illy proportioned to the condition of his wallet, and by so doing you will collect a large proportion of your charges.

And here let me say what I believe to be of great importance to you in other than a pecuniary point. *Charge* for your services, reasonably to be sure, but charge for *all* necessary visits and medicines, and make out your bills to the *full amount*. Then if from the circumstances of your patient, you see fit to make an abatement, let it be understood and appear to be a *deduction* made for a specific reason. In the estimation of the public, now a days, "what costs nothing is nothing worth," and you may be sure, if you charge but half price for what you do, you will be esteemed accordingly. You may have been unsuccessful in a case. Either after a longer or shorter period of attendance it may have been transferred to another, or the patient may have died. You may even feel that although conscious of having done your best in the premises, your services have *really* been of little account, and you will feel disposed to reduce your demand greatly below a *real* compensation to yourself. Now never under such circumstances present a bill below what is a reasonable equivalent, not for results given, but for duties done, unless you are willing to admit that you have done wrong, and a reduction will be considered an admission thereof, al-

beit a word to that effect is not said. Charge the *full* and righteous amount due, and although there may be present grumbling, you will be the *more* respected and the *more* likely to be again called upon by the same people than if you cheapen yourself.

I do not mean to say that you may never give your services freely, or without the formality of reduced bill. Nay, there will be many occasions when you will wish in the clear charity of your heart, to receive no pecuniary reward for your most careful and constant attentions, and when in the most unostentatious way, you may decline all remuneration with propriety and honor to yourself.

In closing, let me urge you, gentlemen, to strive by close and critical study of books, and by constant and untiring attention to the details of practice, to deserve and possess the reputation of thorough scholars and skilful physicians, for this is an object worthy of your ambition. Strive, also, by honest and honorable means, for the accumulation of property, for this is necessary and not to be despised. But before and above these and all other things, remember always that you are immortal and accountable men, accountable to God. Never for a moment forget it, and let the thought qualify all your actions, and be the *spirit* of your life. Remember always that the present passing moments *are* your life, and that your thoughts and acts therein, these items of your account, are posted in the great ledger of eternity, and will meet you again. There is nothing in the practice of Medicine to render a man skeptical, but *every thing*, *every* day, *otherwise*. *Every* thing to make him, if he will, know and feel the constant presence of a Being of infinite wisdom and Almighty Power, and *every* thing, *every* day, to make him wish to depend on such an One, and cast his cares and burdens there. To a man who views life rightly, to a really religious man, the profession of Medicine offers opportunities for doing good, beside the relief of physical suffering, unequalled in any other profession or any other business. A physician has access to persons whom no one else can reach, and at times when no other one would

be allowed, at times when the feelings are tender, when the conscience is aroused, when persons, whether they *will* or no, must and do reflect. He is privileged with an intimacy allowed to no other, and receives, if he is what he ought to be, an unreserve of confidence given to no friend, however near and highly prized. He sees men at times when *he* may say to them what no other man may say. He often stands in such a relation to men that a word from him may change the whole purposes and character of their after life. The proud scoffer upon his sick bed does not think it humbling to confess to his physician that he trembles with the fear of death, or to crave from him a prayer. The dissipated man will own his folly and pledge his faith alone to him. The reckless, the gay, the wayward, will listen to him, and be moved by his words as they can be by no other man's words. May he lightly meet these occasions? May he neglect or misuse such power for good? These responsibilities you are about to assume. Do it not lightly. Rely on God and consecrate all your energies to the work of doing good. Do it always and ever, and look for your reward beyond this life.