EULOGIUM,

COMMEMORATIVE

OF

JASON O'B. LAWRANCE, M. D.

Delivered at the request of his Class,

BY

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EULOGIUM.

DEATH, though presented to our contemplation in a thousand shapes—though every moment of created time has proclaimed, loud as the trumpet's tongue, that it is the inevitable destiny of mortals—yet is it irreconcilable to our thoughts—nor can we regard it with the complacency of a natural event. We revolt against it, as though a violence our nature suffers, and an occurrence not connected with our condition.

The Christian, confiding in the truths of the sublimest of faiths, beholds in one unclouded prospect, Eternity expanded to his view and given to his hopes. No sceptic doubt shakes for an instant the firmness of his belief—and as he feels, so his religion assures him that he is the heir of eternal life. He has for his surety the word of his God. The sun may be hidden in endless night—the planets reel from their spheres—the stars desert the firmament—the vast universe dissolve and be no more—but that word endureth forever. Neither is he who wanders in the darkness of Pagan superstition or of Infidel blindness, devoid of this animating belief. Immortal longings stir within his bosom. A future existence is darkly shadowed out to his mind, in the faint gleamings of natural reason; but it is embodied in all the grossness of mundane conceptions. In him, this belief is rather a feeling from instinct, than the conviction of a revealed or demonstrated truth. So natural is this sentiment to the human mind—so inherent in its constitution, that no period of society has existed when it was unknown. It shone brightly on the morning of our race—it was never completely lost in the darkest era of our degeneracy—now culminating in this epoch of mental supremacy and religious regeneration, it spreads the splendour of the cloudless and

mid-day heaven on the hopes of man. It has been the confiding expectation of the ignorant and uncivilized—the conviction of the philosopher—the trust and consolation of the Christian.

Humanity, elevated by this Heaven-inspired sentiment to the high destinies of immortal natures, in its conceptions is ennobled and dignified, in its affections is purified and refined. Some trace of it is manifested in every action, and imparts a grace and a beauty to feelings that originate in our weakness. It fills us with " thoughts beyond the limits of this frame."

So intense is the abhorrence of annihilation implanted in the heart—so earnest its aspirations of existence—that ingenuity and art have been exhausted on this frail tenement of perishable matters to preserve it from natural decay. Man has vainly striven to reverse the immutable decree of corruption that has been pronounced on his earthly tabernacle—by which it is doomed to the dust. " Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return," is the irrevocable sentence from which no mortal has found immunity. Involuntarily we shudder at the grave that closes on our earthly career, as though its gloom was irradiated by no light bursting through the portals of another world ; and, despairing of a future being, we labour to perfect a perpetuity to our remembrance here, and to spread a lasting lustre around our names.

That we thus rebel against our fate and war with our destiny, is from nature. Science and religion in vain inculcate that the exanimate form is but as the clod of the valley, and that the remembrance of this world is the emptiest of vanities. We cannot at once forget that the lifeless corse was the centre and object of our love, of our hopes and fears, our pains and pleasures, our tender solicitudes and affectionate anxieties. We cannot at once divorce it from our hearts, and dismiss it to forgetfulness, tearless and without emotion. The memory we cherish, and the virtues we revere, we endeavour to rescue from the oblivious wave that sweeps o'er the myriads of the human race. We would

build up for them a space in the vast ocean of time, whereon we would erect them, as tokens and memorials to excite admiration, to awaken emulation, to instil a lesson to the countless multitudes unceasingly borne on its swiftly flowing currents into the bosom of eternity. The patriot and hero we consecrate in the registers of history—the moralist and sage are perpetuated on the page of philosophy—love and friendship enshrine their objects in the rich emblems of poesy—the proud mausoleum records the honours of the wealthy and the great—and the frail and humble memorial relates "the simple annals of the poor."

Feelings having their origin in this principle, depute to me the office I now perform. You have been deprived of your preceptor. In the midst of his exertions to advance your improvement—while listening to his instructions, and partaking the treasures of his acquirements, he was suddenly torn from you—his tongue hushed in eternal silence, and the lamp of his knowledge extinguished forever. Your experience of the value of his lessons taught you to appreciate their loss. It was not a calculation founded in selfish views that governed your conduct. In your instructor you lost your friend—I may say the companion of your studies and scientific pursuits. For such was the ardour with which Dr. Lawrance engaged in his duties, that he seemed to evince an interest not less deep for his own improvement, than for the information of his pupils. Such was the earnestness of his manner, that subjects the most familiar were handled with all the warmth of novelty—and to his class, while he poured out the abundance of his information, he appeared the most diligent and eager to learn. Delighted with science—never satisfied with the extent or sufficiency of his attainments, he never lost the ardour or intermitted the application of a student. He appeared to you less like one who had already reached the heights that crown the steep ascent of knowledge, and who pointed out to you the paths by which they are attained, than as a fellow traveller whose experience guided your way, and whose hand aided you over its difficulties. In him you found, happily blended, all the

knowledge of the teacher, with the frank and familiar deportment of an associate. The deep regrets and sorrow with which you were penetrated, by the premature death of Dr. Lawrance, cannot surprize, when the relation that became established between him and his class is known. You regret the loss of your instructor, to whom you looked for improvement—you mourn the friend whose manners and whose kindnesses endeared him to you. That you should wish to offer every honour to his memory, is due to his services and your feelings of obligation—is equally just to his deserts, and creditable to the amiable and generous principles that govern the conduct of youths engaged in the refined and elevated pursuits of science. On the spot that covers his remains, in monumental marble you will record the testimony of your gratitude and respect: You have invited me to give an utterance to your sorrow—to express your grief—to portray his virtues—to declare his claims to distinction and regard, too early extinguished by an inexorable destiny, and which, displayed by the opportunities of time, would have received a general accordance.

Alas! gentlemen, I fear I shall not do him justice, or execute your intentions. My voice, like the faint cry of the infant, heard for an instant on the passing wind and then is stilled, can give but a momentary extension to his fame. Conscious of my inadequacy to equal your expectations, I felt a diffidence of this office that would have induced me to decline it, but I knew not how to refuse your request, or to deny myself the performance of this sad yet pleasing duty to my friend. But I have the consolation to reflect, that his eulogy will not suffer from my deficiencies. It does not require the pomp of language, the flowers of composition, and the graces of a studied rhetoric, to give it effect. It is already written in your hearts. I mention the name of Lawrance, and I prompt, in the awakened recollections it excites, an eloquence of thought no laboured effort could produce. You behold him such as he was—a child of nature, unsophisticated by the practices of the world—with a bosom that knew no guile, and a mind untainted by sus-

picions—with a temper that asperities never ruffled, and which was reflected in a deportment uniformly cheerful, affable and kind. An enthusiast in his profession, you admired a zeal that no difficulties could abate, and a perseverance that no obstacles could overcome. What to others was toil and labour, constituted with him amusement and pleasure—what they performed as the drudgery of a necessary duty, was prosecuted by him with all the ardour of a passion. In the winter session of this school, not an instant did you observe him to flag under the burden of engagements, that few could undertake—that would have oppressed most. On your daily entrance into these walls you discovered him at his employments—when you retired for reflection you left him in his occupations—you were surprised to find him still engaged on your return. The commencing morning witnessed his labours—and the closing night brought not their desistance. The perception of physical wants seemed extinguished by the intensity of application—and the exertions of the body to be maintained by the excitement of the mind. Such, gentlemen, did you know your preceptor—as such is he indelibly imprinted on your remembrance—as such will you represent him to the companions of your present studies, who had heard at a distance the rising sound of his fame, and had anticipated to have profited under his directions. His virtues and his talents—the originality yet amiableness of his character—his devotion to his profession—his zeal to acquire knowledge, and the rigid adherence to truth that characterised his observations and inductions, and without which genius and learning are of no avail—you will picture with an energy and eloquence, flowing from a lively admiration of those qualities, and the deep regrets you have experienced by their premature extinction. Imbibing your feelings and convictions, while they become sensible to their own loss, they will delight to be associated with you in the commemorative tribute of respect you design to the honour of his memory.

It is not by exaggerated praise that the memory of Dr.

Lawrance is to be celebrated. Incapable of flattery himself, and despising it when alive, it would be injurious and insulting to offer it to him when dead. The highest eulogy he could receive would be a faithful portraiture of his life —his sentiments—his principles. I shall, therefore, on this occasion, confine myself, in the first place, to a concise biography of Dr. Lawrance—and, in the next, attempt to represent the peculiar features of his character, in his capacity as a physician and as a man.

Dr. Lawrance entered on his mortal existence in the city of New Orleans, in the year 1791, to which place his father had migrated from the state of New Jersey, and where he had entered into the connubial state with a lady of Irish descent. He was early deprived of his paternal protector, and the guidance of his youth devolved on his maternal grandmother, who resided near Baton Rouge, on the Mississippi. It was on the banks of this noblest of rivers —in the pursuit of game that frequents the deep umbrageous forests that line its shores—in the enjoyment of rural occupations—remote from the vitiating and contagious examples of a crowded population—that young Lawrance imbibed those principles of sobriety and temperate deportment—those habits of activity and perseverance, of assiduity and application—that fondness for the study of nature—which, developed and strengthened in a future time, became the conspicuous traits of his character.

To this period of his life Dr. Lawrance always reverted with sentiments of delight, as embracing the happiest years of existence. It is then that the warmth of generosity has not been repressed by the chill of ingratitude—and the bosom of youth, unruffled by the boisterousness of the passions, reflects the world in images brightened and chastened on the calm surface of its own innocence and purity.

From these scenes he was transferred to attend for a period on the schools of New Orleans, and subsequently, in his fifteenth year, to the Lower Dublin Academy, a very respectable institution in the vicinity of this city, under the direction of Mr. Chapman. In this seminary he remained three

years, during which he cultivated with diligence the elementary classical literature, that constitutes the usual routine of education in our country. His application to his studies—the mildness of his demeanour, and correctness of his conduct—gained him the approbation and esteem of his preceptors—and on the termination of his course of education, he was honoured by the testimonials of the Principal for his proficiency, and the correctness of his conduct. On retiring from Lower Dublin Academy, he returned to New Orleans, where, his mother having formed a matrimonial engagement with the late Dr. Flood of that city, Lawrance entered on the study of medicine, under the direction of his step-father. Under the guidance of this gentleman, Lawrance pursued his studies for three years, profiting by his instructions and the numerous opportunities presented by his extensive practice, to acquire a knowledge of the acute and violent forms of disease common to that climate.

In the autumn of 1812, Dr. Lawrance quitted New Orleans to repair to this city, that he might avail himself of the advantages it presents to the medical student, and terminate his studies by crowning them with the honours of her widely and justly celebrated school. Immediately on his arrival, he selected Dr. Physick as the director of his course of reading and instructor in his profession, and whose pupil he remained for three years, until the time of his graduation. In the close intercourse that was maintained by the relative situation of preceptor and pupil, Dr. Lawrance imbibed those sentiments of profound respect and admiration for that truly eminent man, which he preserved during his life. At the same time, he had the happiness to secure, and it is an evidence of no common merit, the entire confidence, the esteem, and friendship of his preceptor, which no subsequent circumstances in the slightest degree tended to diminish. When the close of his preparatory professional studies terminated this connexion, he was honoured by Dr. Physick with an attestation of his singular diligence in acquiring a knowledge of his profession, and

a warm commendation of the peculiar amiability, and the uniform propriety of his conduct.

Whilst an attendant on the instruction of this University, Lawrance became distinguished for the intensity of his application, especially in the cultivation of anatomy—and he is still remembered for the unexampled ardour he manifested in his favourite pursuit. Eager to seize on every opportunity that could advance his improvement, and fit him for the important and responsible duties of relieving the sufferings incident to human nature, he embraced the occasion of a vacancy in the Pennsylvania Hospital, to offer his services to the managers as resident physician. His tender was accepted—and in the wards of that noble institution, dedicated to the most exalted of charities, and under the direction of distinguished medical and surgical advisers, he acquired an extensive experience of the multitudinous forms in which disease and death invade and ravage the frame of man—and the means by which they are to be resisted and repelled. On the expiration of his voluntary services, the managers directed their secretary to communicate to Dr. Lawrance, the expression of their perfect satisfaction at the manner with which they had been performed, and of their "approbation and esteem."

In March 1815, the degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred on Lawrance by the Professors of the University of Pennsylvania. Few have received this honour with equal preparation to justify its title and to maintain its dignity. He could have obtained, at an earlier period, his diploma, but he was less ambitious to procure than to merit it—to acquire a mere appellation, than to deserve a real distinction—by becoming master of all the groundwork of his profession—by the attainment and combination of the skill and science that can alone constitute the philosophical physician, and vindicate the attempt to regulate, govern and control, in health and disease, the delicate and complicated movements of the animated machine. Having thus qualified himself, by the devotion of six years of assiduous application to his studies—by a diligent resort to the lessons of those

luminaries of medical science, in whom are concentrated, and by whom are reflected, the knowledge of the past, combined with the experience of the present times—by an attentive observation of nature, in watching diseases at the bed-side, in our extensive infirmaries, and by correcting and determining the true character of symptoms from the organic alterations, made known by autopsial examinations—Lawrance felt himself prepared to enter on the duties of the high office, to which he had dedicated his life. With this intention he returned to his native city, and entered into practice. His success was flattering. Had the views of a sordid interest swayed his actions, they could have been gratified to their utmost extent. But he felt that he was removed from the soil congenial to his genius—and the acquisition of wealth could not satisfy the cravings of intellectual appetition. Lawrance was emphatically a child of science. In the busy commercial emporium of the vast agricultural regions of the West, and in its fluctuating population, so many of whom are congregated by the ties of a transient interest, it is not to be expected that Letters, Arts, and Science should flourish with vigour. Lawrance found himself alone, as a stranger in a strange land—few to participate in his feelings, and none to join in his pursuits. He looked back with regret to those associations to which he had been united in this city, and in which the toils of professional engagements are relieved by the recreations of science. He lamented his separation from the companions of his studies, and his competitors in a generous and honourable rivalry, who had stimulated his zeal and encouraged his exertions. He felt as an affliction the deprivation of those opportunities he had here freely enjoyed, to indulge in those investigations to which he was led by the natural bias of his genius—and which, a conscious impression foretold him, would lead to the goal in the career of professional distinction. He thirsted for an honourable fame—and the only prospect offered to his hopes was the attainment of riches. To a vulgar ambition this had been sufficient: but that of Lawrance was of a nobler strain, and not to be appeased by the gratifications of ava-

rice. After three years residence in New Orleans, he yielded to his inclinations, I may say to his propensities. Unseduced by the prospects of gain, and a rapidly increasing practice—unshaken by the remonstrances of friends—he abandoned the city of his birth, to place himself in the midst of the busy throng that crowd, in this metropolis, the avenues of medical science and fill all its departments.

In this step we have displayed the character of Dr. Lawrance. A brilliant fortune would have rewarded his perseverance in New Orleans—but it offered no field for professional eminence, beyond the reputation of a successful practitioner. In this city the emoluments of practice are moderate—are scarcely an adequate recompense for the toil and slavery it demands, even when most successful:—but the profession is lofty in character—rich in honours—and fruitful of distinctions. No other city of our continent enjoys more facilities for improvement, or equal means and inducements for new researches—new developments—for ardent devotion to the advancement of our science: while the numerous sources and objects that excite emulative industry, and give employment to mental activity, call forth dormant talent, and rescue merit from obscurity. Lawrance did not hesitate: he forsook present competence, and an assured wealth, unattended with fame, to encounter certain difficulties—to attempt a doubtful fortune in the midst of active competition, but on a field which gave full scope to his energies, and offered no barriers to the exercise of an honourable and legitimate ambition.

During his residence in New Orleans, the ravages of that most formidable and destructive of febrile affections—the endemic of the West Indies, and periodical scourge of this continent—enabled Lawrance to investigate its character by numerous dissections. The danger to which he was exposed by repeated and prolonged examinations of bodies, festering with corruption in that ardent climate, could not alarm his apprehensions or diminish his perseverance. By day or by night, whenever an opportunity offered, he hastened to interrogate nature herself, by a minute inquiry into

the organic lesions, what were the peculiar seat and character of the disease. The observations he thus collected were carefully recorded—and the most copious autopsial examinations of yellow fever that exist, are contained in the manuscripts of Dr. Lawrance. This valuable collection, it was apprehended, would have been entirely lost, by his premature death. Happily, we are promised by his warm friend and consociate in similar pursuits, Dr. Richard Harlan, a posthumous work, arranged from the voluminous manuscripts of Dr. Lawrance, that will present to the profession the fruits of his extensive inquiries in pathological anatomy.

No sooner had Lawrance established his residence in this city, than he entered on the course to which he was borne by the strong bent of his inclination, and commenced a career that only required the maturity of time to have ensured to him fame and distinction. Anatomy, natural and morbid, and experimental physiology, were selected as the objects on which he concentrated his attention.

The knife of the anatomist has too long been industriously applied with skill and intelligence: the scalpel has laid bare every fibre, and demonstrated every tissue too often, to leave a hope that any important discovery in the human structure remains to be disclosed. It was not a fallacious expectation of this nature, that led Lawrance to attach himself with so much devotedness to acquire a perfect acquaintance with human anatomy. He regarded it, justly, as the only basis that would enable him to form a scheme of investigations—illustrating pathology by dissections, and physiology by experiments—entitled to confidence, or that could be productive of profitable instruction. Without the most absolute familiarity with the natural structure, it is impossible to appreciate, with judgment, the alterations that are induced by disease—to discriminate recent from ancient changes—and the various species of morbid degenerations to which it is subject: without a minute knowledge of the organic structure, it would be futile to attempt to remove the veil that conceals the mysteries of functional operations, by experimental investigations—they

would of necessity be defective, from want of skill in conduct—of consistency in arrangement—and conclusiveness in induction. Convinced of the correctness of these principles, Lawrance never intermitted, though he had arrived at great proficiency, his anatomical studies. At the same time he regularly attended the great Infirmary of this city—watching the progress of cases to their conclusion, and determining the morbid changes of structure that characterised the disease.

Pathological anatomy has been singularly neglected in the United States. Except some limited essays, amongst which the dissections of Dr. Physick in the yellow fever of 1798, are the most distinguished, I know of no systematic work that any American physician has contributed to the improvement of pathology by anatomical illustration. Yet it is indubitable, that without the assistance of morbid anatomy, organic diseases cannot be understood by the practitioner, or their progress arrested by a systematic treatment. Though of less immediate utility, in diseases resulting from lesions of the vital powers, still their nature and character are often exemplified by the organic alterations they induce, and the method of cure rendered more determinate and consistent. This deficiency, with which the profession of this country may with great justice be reproached, Lawrance would have amply supplied, had a greater prolongation been granted to his existence. When we regard the poverty of our science in this department, the preparation of Lawrance for its execution, and the advancement he had already made in this important work, we become more fully sensible to the loss that has been sustained in his death.

The pathology of the cerebral diseases is involved in confusion and uncertainty. This organ engaged the attention of Lawrance. He studied its structure with a patience truly exemplary. He had become completely a convert to the opinions of Gall and Spurzheim, and their method of dissection, which he generally adopted in his examination; and the correctness of which, with their peculiar doctrines of its organization, he satisfactorily demonstrated. It was his object to render himself, by repeated dissections of this or-

gan, familiar with the natural appearance and condition of every portion, that he might be enabled to detect the slightest changes resulting from disease, and to profit by the opportunities that should offer, to seize on facts calculated to enlighten the darkness of its pathology. Often has his unwearied attention excited admiration—as, day after day, he repeated the minute dissection of this complicated structure. His introduction to the practice of the Alms House, where the various forms of cerebral disease—mania, apoplexy, convulsions, palsy, and epilepsy—annually swell the hecatombs of the dead—had placed him in a position to have rendered productive of useful results, this devotion of time and labour, and which, there is every reason to believe, would have contributed richly to the stock of our information.

Soon after he had taken up his residence in this city, Dr. Lawrance began to attract attention, by his active and unremitting exertions in the pursuit of those objects which engaged the energies of his mind. In the spring of the succeeding year (1820) a fever, of peculiar character, made its appearance amongst our black population, who were, with few exceptions, almost exclusively its victims. At no prior time, I believe, had this disease been noticed. Certain it is, that never before had it assumed the character of an epidemic, and extended its ravages so widely. It is remarkable, that this febrile affection, which has continued to manifest itself in that portion of the community, each succeeding year, first exploded in the month of May, a period when our white population is, with few exceptions, uniformly exempted from the attacks of continued fever, and that it declined with the advancing heats of summer, and had reached its termination in September—the season when the fevers of the whites are most prevalent. This circumstance continues to be remarked as peculiar to that disease. The vague and indefinite name of Typhus was, and is still, applied to this febrile affection—leading to a misconception of its true character, and often to a very improper mode of treatment. In the investigations of the nature and seat of this disease, as indicated by post mortem examinations, Lawrance

was indefatigable. His examinations were frequent—were daily repeated—and we are indebted to his researches, and those of his friend and associate, Dr. Harlan, for determining its character to be a gastro-entiric fever, of irritative and inflammatory character. During the same year the reappearance of yellow fever, which we had been led to flatter ourselves, from its long absence, had taken its departure, and would not again affright the city with its dreaded presence—enabled Lawrance to resume his researches on the morbid lesions it induces, and contrast its character, in our more Northern latitude, with what he had observed in the Southern section of the country. The deep interest he felt in these inquiries, caused him to disregard the dangers resulting from reiterated and prolonged dissections, in the sultry heats of summer. They were daily renewed, particularly amongst the victims of the epidemic of the blacks —and were rendered more perilous, from attempts to ascertain the minute alterations of the important structures, especially that of the brain. He did not escape the hazards to which he thus exposed himself:—after the examinations of several subjects, continued for some hours, he was seized with the usual febrile premonitions, which ushered in a severe attack of fever. For a few days his life was considered in imminent danger, and his recovery despaired of. A vigorous and unimpaired constitution, and the skilful attention of Doctors Physick and Chapman, enabled him to triumph over his disease.

In the fall of 1820, Dr. Gibson, the Professor of Surgery, engaged the services of Lawrance as an assistant in his department—which situation he continued to enjoy to the period of his decease. In this capacity the Professor of Surgery has acknowledged his usefulness.

In the spring of the same year, Lawrance commenced a course of private instruction on anatomy and surgery, which was delivered daily, with the exception of the month of August, until the month of November. The same course was repeated each succeeding year, to an increasing class, and was suddenly terminated the last summer by his lamented death. The time occupied by this course is an evidence

of the fulness and completeness of the instruction he spread before his pupils: nothing was omitted that should be communicated—nothing left obscure and to be conjectured—but every point was amply and fully dilated. A friend who was in constant communion with Lawrance, has declared that he delivered "one of the fullest courses of lectures ever given in this city."

In commencing this arduous undertaking, Lawrance did not, as young men are prone to do in the exuberance of fancy and youthful ambition, mistake his powers and overrate his strength. He rose from the task with a reputation tested and confirmed by trial. His class awarded to him the suffrage of their approbation—and with the students, who are the best judges of those qualities that become an instructor, Lawrance was an esteemed and favourite teacher. Disciplined by experience and familiarized by habit, the manner and delivery of Lawrance rapidly improved—and he bid fair to become in time a lecturer as interesting as he was instructive, and to justify the expectations of the most auspicious fortunes.

The numerous avocations in which he was engaged, did not divert the mind of Lawrance from the experimental inquiries into the vital functions, in which he early contemplated to engage. In 1821, an association was formed by a number of the physicians of this city, for the improvement of the science of medicine. The experiments of the French physiologist, Magendie, on venous absorption, had then lately been made known. It was an interesting and important object to verify his conclusions, novel in modern physiology, and which are probably destined to have an extensive influence on our speculations in pathology and therapeutics. A committee, consisting of Doctors Lawrance, Coates and Harlan, was appointed, to repeat those experiments, and test their accuracy. The want of funds, that so frequently embarrass the experimental investigations of the young American practitioner, was freely supplied by Professor Chapman. With that liberality he has manifested on so many occasions, and which constitutes a brilliant and distinguishing feature of his character—he placed a hundred

dollars in the hands of the committee, with instructions to call on him for any additional sums that might be required. This committee did not confine themselves to a mere repetition of the experiments originally executed by the French physiologist, but after ascertaining their accuracy, varied them—devised new—corrected some, and strengthened most of his inductions by fresh observations. It would be unjust to the other gentlemen of the committee, to attribute the successful result of their undertaking to Dr. Lawrance, yet they will cheerfully acknowledge the important aid they derived from his skill—the value of his suggestions in framing their experiments, and the caution with which he guarded against error from a too precipitate adoption of results. The labours of this committee, and the complete character of their investigation, may be conceived from the extent of their experiments. Not less than ninety experiments were performed on living animals, before they felt authorised to adopt the doctrine of venous absorption.

Aware of the many instances of deceptious inferences into which philosophers have been led by imperfect inquiries, and the baneful influence they have exerted on our science, Lawrance never desisted from an inquiry until every possible source of error had been resolved. Notwithstanding the minute scrutiny of the committee, it appeared to Lawrance that some points had been neglected, by which the colouring matters might be supposed to have found their way into the blood, independent of the veins, in some of the experiments in which that result was indicated. Although satisfied in his own mind, he considered it a duty not to rest contented until every shadow of doubt had been dissipated, and every objection answered. He accordingly commenced a new series of experiments, in conjunction with Dr. Coates, in order definitively to determine this question. The former course of experiments was repeated, diversified, and varied on more than one hundred animals, providing against every contingent result, and guarding against every possible fallacy.

The doctrine of venous absorption, one of the earliest of medical theories, though abandoned on the discovery of the

absorbent vessels and their office, revived by Dr. Magendie, and in part established by his experiments, was thus positively confirmed by Dr. Lawrance and his associates—and by their researches is recorded amongst the most clearly ascertained facts of physiology.

The procedure of this committee, I would recommend as a model for investigations of this nature. In no instance was a single experiment, ever liable to mistake, relied on: repeated and varied, no point where error could harbour was left unexplored—and the conclusions, deduced from numerous confirmatory and concurring results, removed from the debatable questions that agitate and perplex our speculations, have become fixed and demonstrated truths. It is alone by this Baconian method of philosophizing, that our science can be rescued from that state of interminable controversy in which it has been involved for ages, resulting from unfaithful observation, imperfect experiments, and an absolute looseness of deduction.

The determination of this question left the leisure moments of Lawrance disengaged. His active mind immediately seized on a new subject of investigation. No absorbent vessels have yet been detected in the brain. Subject as this organ is to effusions of blood and of serum, constituting the most formidable diseases which enter into the domain of practical medicine—its powers of absorption is a question of pathological, therapeutic, and physiological interest, that has not yet been solved. In this inquiry Lawrance engaged with his friend Dr. Coates. A few experiments alone were performed—establishing, however, the fact of absorption. The consecutive researches to decide the nature of the vessels, and mode by which this function is accomplished, were interrupted by the death of Dr. Lawrance—and our positive information on this very important subject is postponed, until some one with equal zeal, industry and attainments, will undertake the task.

In the winter of 1823, in addition to his employment as assistant to the Professor of Surgery, Dr. Lawrance engaged with Dr. Horner, the adjunct Professor of Anatomy, in superintending the anatomical demonstrations of the dis-

secting classes, which were that year more than usually numerous, and in a course of anatomical surgery. Multiplied as were the duties of these various undertakings, they were satisfactorily performed—and with the increase of his engagements was enhanced the reputation of Dr. Lawrance, as a demonstrator and teacher. His labours during that winter, though severe, were sustained with an unwavering perseverance. Six hours was the period he allotted for rest —and very frequently, such was the activity and excitement of his mind, that it did not extend beyond four.

The close attention of Lawrance to these objects, did not lead him to a neglect of his professional duties. His practice, it is true, was not extensive. A stranger, and a resident only within a few years, it could not be expected that he should have rivalled the veterans of the profession, or even have overtaken its younger members—surrounded and sustained in their native city, by connexions and friends. Yet, within the last two years it increased so rapidly, both in extent and respectability, that his singular industry and economy of time alone, could have permitted him to have continued the accessory investigations that have been noticed. His zeal carried him beyond the limits that prudence would have dictated, and led him into exertions dangerous to his health and safety. He had been elected, by the Managers of the Alms House, one of the surgeons to that institution. The opportunities that it presents, for the illustration of pathology by dissection, Lawrance was anxious to improve. His associate in the medical department, and etertaining a similarity of views, we became united in this pursuit. For several weeks previous to his decease, our autopsial researches were daily renewed, and in which Lawrance often subjected himself to exhaustion and fatigue, by the avidity with which he ravelled the minute anatomy of the brain.

The epidemic fever, which for the last three years has ravaged the vicinity and suburbs of our city, had again commenced its depredations—and Lawrance was frequently called on to afford the assistance of his art. His visits were made on foot, in the heat of the mid-day sun, and the damp

dews of the night. He was thus at once occupied with his official duties at the Alms House, with a series of observations on morbid anatomy, conducted in the same institution, in conjunction with myself—with a summer course of anatomy and surgery, delivered with a fidelity and ability, of which your regrets for his loss is an impartial and unequivocal testimony—in a series of experiments on cerebral absorption, in association with Dr. Coates—and in a practice extensive and unusually laborious. He may be considered censurable for crowding his time, at an unhealthy season, with so many employments of importance—but the incessant occupation of Lawrance, in the University during the winter, precluded the researches and experimental inquiries he was eager to achieve—and his stirring ambition to be useful, would not permit him to postpone their execution to periods of remote and uncertain disengagements.

Debilitated by want of rest and over exertion, his system, imbued with putrid miasms, from frequently repeated dissections, was prone to disease. Assisting Dr. Physick, in the commencement of August, at the performance of an important operation, he exhibited evident symptoms of indisposition, but which were attributed to fatigue. They were the precursors of a mortal fever, that already preyed on his vitals—and which, the same night, displayed itself with frightful and portentous energy. His medical friends, alarmed at his danger, surrounded his bed, and were lavish of their attentions. They had to mourn the impotency of their resources, and the imbecility of their art, when Death, commissioned to destroy, stretches forth his sceptre and demands his victim. Vain are all human means, in this unequal conflict. Like the vessel, gallantly speeding o'er the booming waves, freighted with the rich productions of every clime, on which the destructive typhoon comes to burst in its fury—whelmed with the surging deep—no skill of the pilot can save—or the brave exertions of her intrepid crew.

Thus perished Lawrance, in the prime of manhood—in the pride of his days—in the period when every auspice shed its happiest influence o'er his path, and brightening

prospects cheered him on his way. To the erring judgment of mortals, his career seemed destined to be brilliant with every hope, and its long vista to terminate in a rich expansion of rewards and honours. But where are they? The grave has closed upon them all. Himself—his hopes—his dazzling prospects, and his fame, just bursting like the dawn, are cold, withering, darkening in the tomb—renewing the oft-repeated, still-neglected lesson, of the uncertainty of our condition, and the vanity of mere earthly expectations.

In the life of an individual we have displayed his character. It is unnecessary I should dwell on that of Lawrance, already exhibited, in its principal traits, by the incidents of the preceding biographical relation. He was distinguished less for brilliant than solid endowments. The imaginative faculties were repressed, rather than cultivated—and he slightly prized the embellishments of the intellect, too often incompatible with the maintenance of its vigour.

Medicine is a science of strict observation and rigid induction—a talent and mental operation, that the visions of fancy delude, and the phantasms of the imagination pervert. These faculties, corrupting medical philosophy with their pernicious influence, have ever diverted it from the plain path of demonstration, into the mazy windings of conjecture—have loaded the science with that mass of false facts and false theories, that obstruct its progress and dishonour its character. Quick perception—persevering application—patient attention—unweariable industry—professional zeal—those are the qualities to which medicine is indebted for all its substantial improvements. Those are the qualities, that, predominating in the character of Dr. Lawrance, admirably qualified him for the painful and difficult investigations, by which truth, in science, is to be elucidated.

The public contributions of Dr. Lawrance to the profession, are inconsiderable. He did not consider himself as having reached that period, when multiplied experience and maturity of judgment, diminish the probability of error—and no feverish anxiety for distinction, goaded him into a hasty promulgation of opinions on subjects, at once obscure

and important—which have baffled the reasoning of the wisest, and in which error is pregnant with dangers. His work of preparation was, however, extensive, and the materials he collected voluminous. Upwards of three thousand manuscript pages, consisting of observations on diseases, histories of cases, and necrological examinations, he has left behind—attest the industry and devotion with which he applied himself to the means of the improvement and the advancement of his science.

Towards his profession, Lawrance entertained an enthusiastic attachment. He did not regard it as a business which gratified his individual and social necessities, but as the noblest ministry in which the rational and feeling mind can engage. "Man," says Cicero, "approaches to the Gods in nothing so much as in giving health to man." And one of the most acute of modern philosophers has remarked, that—"Those who would apply themselves to restore others to health, from the sole principles of humanity and benevolence, would be above all the great ones of the earth—they would partake of the Divinity: to preserve, and to restore, is little less than to make." Animated by similar sentiments, Lawrance pursued his profession as a philanthropist. The poor and the rich knew no difference in his attentions—which were governed by the urgency of the disease, not the expectations of reward. His principles of practice belonged to the modern school, based on pathological anatomy and physiology, and which, restoring medicine to its character of a sublime philosophy, distinguishes the philosophical physician from the practitioner of routine.

In private life, Lawrance was peculiarly felicitous. He lived without reproach. I truly believe that censure never breathed upon his name. Governed by principle, a rigid punctuality attended his engagements, and a regulated deportment directed his actions. His mind, intensely occupied on his professional researches, pleasure's syren voice could never charm his ear, or ambition's dreams bewilder his understanding. Ignorant of the arts of policy, he knew but one way to command success, which was to deserve it—and when it lighted on him, none justled from his path—

envy was hushed, and it was confessed to be merited. With many warm friends, I know not that he had an enemy.

Grateful as is the theme, why should I dwell on his professional merits, and personal virtues? You knew them well, and this day attests how truly they were appreciated. Though he has been early torn from his friends—from society—from our science—his labours incomplete and his task unperformed—yet let him not have lived in vain. He has left his example, and I do not fear to propose it as a model for imitation in your profession. You are about to enter on a ministry involving the most awful responsibilities. You will ask to be entrusted with the health and the lives of your fellow mortals: the husband to confide to your skill the safety of his spouse—the wife, that of her husband—the parent to commit to you his child—and a helpless family to depend on you for the recovery of a father and protector, whose death would plunge them into wretchedness. An error of judgment—mistaken views—deficient information—negligence in attention—may be fatal, and you, the authors of the heaviest calamity that man can suffer. If you would avoid the deep-felt censures of your own conscience, go, then, and follow in the path of your preceptor: Like him grow pale in the sickly wards of hospitals, watching by the squalid bed-side of disease—pine o'er the midnight lamp recording your own observations, or consulting, in their works, with the experienced living and the illustrious dead—subduing every feeling of abhorrence and disgust, with defiled hands tear from the cold and lifeless corse the mysterious secrets of disease, that you may know, of each, the causes and the seat. Believe me, gentlemen, that could our departed friend listen to my invocation, and touch my lips with the inspiration of his spirit, such would be the injunction, that, from the grave, he would pour into your ears. Take it then as his last counsel—practice on it: conform your professional conduct to those precepts. It is the highest honour his pupils can offer to the memory of Dr. Lawrance—and you will perform your duty to yourselves—to society—to your God.