

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

TO THE

CLASS OF GRADUATES

OF THE

Missouri Medical College

AT THE

ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT OF THE SESSION OF 1856-7,

BY

E. S. FRAZER, M. D.,

PROF. OF OBSTETRICS AND DISEASES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

ST. LOUIS, MO.

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1857.

PROF. E. S. FRAZER, M. D.:

At a meeting of the Graduating Class of the Missouri Medical College of the Session of 1856-7, DR. HUTCHISON being called to the chair, and DR. WILLIAMS elected Secretary, the undersigned committee were instructed to request of you a copy of your Valedictory Address for publication.

St. Louis, February 28th, 1857.

A. M. DAWSON, }
E. A. CASEY, } Committee.
WM. T. STEWART. }

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 28th, 1857.

TO A. M. DAWSON, E. A. CASEY and WM. T. STEWART,
Committee in behalf of the Graduating Class.

GENTLEMEN:

In reply to your note, asking for a copy of my Address for publication, I can only say, that, if it is deemed worthy of such notoriety by you, it is at your service. I am satisfied, however, that you have made this request more from personal considerations, than any intrinsic merit in the address itself.

Very respectfully, your obt. servant,

E. S. FRAZER.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS ;

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

Custom has made it obligatory upon some one of the Faculty, at each Annual Commencement, to deliver a valedictory, or farewell address, to the Graduating Class. Upon the democratic principle of rotation in office, this duty devolves upon me on the present occasion.

Inasmuch as this is an occasion of most intense interest to you, I sincerely wish its duties had been committed to abler hands ; but upon this, as upon every other occasion in professional life, I do not seek to avoid the responsibility growing out of a position which I have voluntarily assumed.

Although I may not be able to transport you by a vivid imagination above and beyond the stern realities of life, to revel among the stars, or send you with the rapidity of the lightning's flash to the verge of the earth's boundaries ; yet, I do suppose, that from an experience of more than twenty-five years in the active duties of the profession of your choice, I shall be able to impart some counsel and advice which will be of service to you in the discharge of the new and responsible duties which you are about to assume.

Gentlemen, you have looked forward, some of you for years, to this period as the consummation of your highest hopes. You have toiled and labored in the office, in the privacy of your chambers, in the lecture-room, hour after hour, week after week, and month after month ; in the dissecting-room, at the risk and peril of your health and lives, you have bent over the dead body, and, with your scalpel, unfolded tissue after tissue, developing the beauty, order and arrangement of the physical organization, and demonstrating anew the great truth, that "man is fearfully and wonderfully made."

In consideration of your perseverance and unremitting industry and zeal in the pursuit of knowledge, and the high appreciation which we, as a Faculty, have of your attainments and capabilities for the practice of medicine, we have, this night, by virtue of the power vested in us by the laws of our country, conferred on you the highest honor known, or recognized in the profession—that of Doctor of Medicine.

I hope we, as a Faculty, have duly considered the weight of responsibility which rests upon us, in thus bestowing on you the highest evidence of your qualifications to practice medicine. We are your endorsers before the world. Will you let your parchment go to protest, and thus dishonor us at the great banking-house of public opinion? Is there a young gentleman whom I address this evening, who will prove recreant to his obligations, implied by the reception of a diploma at our hands, to devote himself unreservedly to the advancement of his profession by all honorable means; or who shall so far forget the dignity of his own nature and the relation which he sustains to us, to the profession in general, and to the world at large, as to become the slave of his baser passions, and thus bring dishonor upon the brotherhood, into the society and equality of which we have this night introduced him?

My intercourse with you justifies me in answering this interrogatory in the negative.

It has been the custom, heretofore, to devote this hour to giving advice and counsel in reference to your future deportment and your duties as physicians, as well as the difficulties and hardships which will beset your pathway all along your professional career. I shall not, upon the present occasion, depart from that custom, and the remarks which I shall make will be drawn entirely from my own experience and observation, and not from the *ipse dixit* of any man, living or dead. Hence they will at least have the merit of originality.

First, then, as to the duties which devolve upon you as medical men.

You have, this night, by implication, solemnly dedicated yourselves to the profession of medicine, and to the promotion, by every means placed within your power, of its highest dignity and advancement.

Some of you may have imagined, that with the reception of your diploma ended your toils and difficulties, that from that time onward

your pathway would be strewed with flowers, and that all would go as merrily as a marriage bell. If so, let me tear the delusion from your mental vision, and inform you, that, if you discharge the duties necessarily involved in the practice of physic, your lives must be characterized by incessant labor, both physical and mental. I trust, that no man who bears away with him the broad seal of the Faculty of the Medical College of Missouri, will ever consent to occupy a second or a third rate position; yet, if you would attain to the first ranks in your profession, you must labor with the devotion and zeal of an eastern devotee. You should surround yourselves with a few of the best authors upon the various branches of medicine, and, when a case is entrusted to your management, study it individually, its pathology, its history, its therapeutics. Consult carefully the best authors on the subject, and then submit the whole matter to the crucible of your own mind. Never give up your own individuality, but bring your own judgment and common sense to bear upon the case. Never consent to be the shadow or echo, in your practice, of any man, living or dead. You may wade through whole libraries of musty volumes; you may encumber the brain with the antiquated theories and exploded dogmas of those who have sought to hand their names down to posterity by writing a book, and yet, in the practical details which are so necessary to enable you to pursue your profession successfully, you may be almost as ignorant as the horse you ride or drive. As a general rule, the books are written by men of the closet—not the laboring, practical workers in the profession. I would not be understood as condemning a thorough knowledge of the great general principles by which you are to be governed in the practice of your profession, and which are to be attained only by a familiar acquaintance with the standard authors, but that blind subserviency to the opinions of others.

I have endeavored to impress upon your minds, in my lectures, the importance of obeying every professional call with promptness, no matter by whom it is made, whether rich or poor, and especially the latter. Let it be said of you, wherever your lot may be cast, that, in you, the suffering and afflicted poor have a sure and never-failing friend in the hour of distress. Let your motto be, that no human being, male or female, made, as they are, in the image of God himself, can sink so low in depravity as to place them out of the reach of your benevolence, professionally and pecuniarily. They may be worthy or unworthy; their destitution may be the

result of misfortune or of accident, or it may be from the indulgence of their own passions and appetites ; yet, no matter how it may have come, it should be enough for you to know, that the afflicting hand of God is upon them, to arouse the sympathies of your nature and prompt you to fly to the rescue. When they are stricken down and languishing under disease, it is too late for you to stop to inquire whether it is the result of their own folly, or otherwise, or whether you are to be remunerated for your services, or not. Go, and do your duty; and though you may not be compensated by money, yet your reward shall not be lost. The approbation of your own conscience, when you have retired from the busy concerns of life to the silence of your bed-chamber, will afford you more real comfort and enjoyment than money can bestow. The luxury of doing good will be yours. God will see that your labor of love and mercy shall not be lost ; nor will he defer payment until you have exchanged worlds, as some have imagined ; but you shall have your reward even in this life. The poor penniless widow with her orphan children, by an act of Providence inscrutable to us, is languishing upon a sick bed. You are called to attend her ; and as you go, day after day and night after night, and exert all your skill for her relief, a rich neighbor is watching your faithfulness and zeal in behalf of the poor, forsaken, afflicted widow, and although his own heart may be closed up against her necessities by his inordinate love of money, yet he cannot withhold his approbation of your disinterested benevolence. He too, perchance, falls sick, and, remembering the poor widow and your faithfulness, you are sent for. Give him also your undivided attention, and when he has recovered and you make out your bill, so arrange it as to make him remember the poor widow again, or, in other words, make him pay a reasonable proportion of her account.

The acquisition of wealth by the practice of medicine is hardly to be expected, nor, indeed, is the worship of the almighty dollar compatible with its high and holy behests. A competency is perhaps all that you can reasonably look for ; and, if you are determined to be rich, you have mistaken your calling, and the sooner you abandon it the better. If money is your god, turn your attention to the money-changer's desk, or to the usurer's cold and heartless vocation, the very door lintels of whose office are made of case iron—there is the legitimate field of labor for you, not in the genial atmosphere of medicine.

Next to the minister, the physician will be the confidant of his patrons. Into his sympathizing ear will be poured, perhaps, all the griefs and disappointments of the domestic circle. Your obligation to preserve inviolate all your professional secrets is unquestionable. Aside from interested and selfish considerations, you have no right to divulge that which may implicate other parties, without their consent. You must necessarily be admitted to the privacy of the domestic circle, and this fact alone will often cause you to be approached by the designing and inquisitive, eager to catch every word as it falls from your lips, which they may turn to the injury of another. There is no more perplexing position for a medical man than when professional honor requires that he should preserve inviolate the secrets which have been entrusted to him, while a disposition to allay all perplexing inquiries demands that he should give a satisfactory reason for the peculiar circumstances which surround the case. Upon the fiat of the medical man often hangs the fairest reputation, and the destiny of inoffending innocence and virtue; and as the thoughtless word, or the dark insinuation, drops from his lips, it is instantly caught up and re-echoed by a thousand slanderous tongues.

Wielding such a power, and being the depository of facts involving the peace and happiness of individuals and society, the medical man, mindful of his sacred trust, should never abuse the confidence reposed in him. And as the fair fame of woman is often in his hands, let him remember that it is like the delicate, impalpable powder upon the beautiful wing of the butterfly; once brushed off, it can never return; and the reputation which his hasty and inconsiderate verdict has spotted, can never again shine forth in its pristine brightness and purity.

Permit me here to digress, for a few moments, from the legitimate objects of this address, and press home upon the hearts and consciences of women their cruelty towards an erring sister.—Woman's inhumanity to woman makes countless thousands mourn. As society is at present constituted, one false step forever annihilates and blasts the last ray of hope, in the bosom of the erring one, ever to be restored again to the society and companionship of friends and relatives. No matter how many bitter tears may have been shed over her folly—no matter that her Father in heaven may have said to her, "go thy way, daughter, and sin no more," still there is no mitigation of the unrelenting condemnation and persecution of

her own sex. Is it any wonder that she seeks to bury the recollection of her former position in still lower depths of infamy and shame? How is it, I ask, that men can steep themselves in the very pest-houses of debauchery and licentiousness, and reform and take an enviable position in society; be admitted into the most gorgeous and splendidly furnished parlors; admitted to the society of innocence and virtue, and be courted and caressed by the elite and fashionable world? I answer, by the force of public opinion, and for the reason that his brother man does not cast him off, but hails with joy his return to sobriety and virtue.

Is there any reason why woman should not have the benefit of a similar public sentiment? How long will women of rank and influence, christian women, be chained down by a false public opinion, and do violence to all the kindlier impulses of their nature? Women by nature seem peculiarly fitted to assuage the sorrows and dry up the tears of downtrodden humanity. How long will they consent to occupy their present false position? Suppose the same facilities, which men enjoy for returning to the paths of virtue, were offered to fallen women; a thrill of joy would penetrate the dark dens of infamy, such as perhaps never vibrated upon human hearts, and thousands would rush back to the arms of an injured society, and by every means in their power seek to make reparation for the wrong.

It is said that women never reform, and it is true, simply, because you will not let them. Who that has listened to their lamentations, and witnessed their anguish of heart, as in tears they recounted the sad story of their wrongs, can believe that a nature so alive to the nobler impulses of the heart cannot be reclaimed? Christian women, I fear, that, in the day of reckoning, you will have a heavy account to settle on this score. The work is peculiarly your own. Men cannot accomplish it. You are sure, however, of the co-operation of every good man. Think of this matter, and act as you expect to answer at that tribunal from which there is no appeal. Could I take my stand upon some mountain peak, and command the universal ear of womanhood, I would say, burst the fetters which have too long pinioned you to the ear of a false, cruel and tyrannical public sentiment. Assert and maintain your independence. Revolutionize the usages and customs of society in this matter. Exercise the instincts of your nature, and snatch fallen woman not only from the fires of a temporary hell which she en-

dures on account of her position, but from the penalty of an eternal death.

But to return from our digression. In your personal appearance and dress you should always be neat and genteel. It is not enough to clothe the mind, richly, with the great principles of your profession. The world looks somewhat to the external man; and indeed there is some propriety in estimating a man's character by his dress and personal appearance. Extreme slovenliness indicates a lazy, laggard, careless and indifferent order of mind; while the other extreme is perhaps equally unfortunate in giving proof positive of no mind at all. Therefore you will observe a just medium between the loafer and the soap-lock—avoiding either extreme.

Your intercourse with your professional brethren, of course, should be conducted upon the strictest principles of medical etiquette. Do you ask me where you will find a complete system of medical ethics? I answer, in your own bosom. If you have not the innate principles of a gentleman, it will be very difficult to acquire them. I cannot resist the conviction that we are all gentlemen in the same way that Falstaff knew the prince—"by instinct." A clear perception of right, and a disposition to do right, will always protect you from any gross violation of the conventionalities of the profession.

Observe strictly the golden rule of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. Never seek to supplant a professional brother by insidious detraction, or to damn him with faint praise. A frank, open and undisguised deportment towards your brethren should characterize all your relations and intercourse towards them. Nor do I confine this course of conduct exclusively to those who are practicing their profession on strict orthodox principles. As a matter of course, you will not be expected to meet those who are practicing irregularly, or empirically, in consultation; but there are many allowances to be made in reference to those who employ such men. The generality of mankind have but a very limited conception of the qualifications of medical men. Unfortunately, there is an amount of ignorance on the subject of medicine, which does not exist in reference to any other subject of general and universal importance. Upon the subject of governments, religion, or law, you will find them posted up. In everything which concerns the possession and title to their broad acres, houses, lots, and hereditaments, they are upon the "*qui vive*;"

but, when it comes to the health and lives of themselves and families, they seem content to remain in the most confirmed and unparadonable ignorance. Inasmuch, then, as we cannot remodel society in this respect, let the nobler impulses of your nature predominate, and when summoned to the sick and afflicted, go, and exert your skill to the utmost for suffering humanity, no matter how many quacks have been in attendance. Clean out the Augean stables. Send them and their nostrums out of the back door, and by your skill and success demonstrate the difference between science and an ignorant, presumptuous empiricism.

I have already intimated that it could not be expected of you to compromise the dignity of your profession and your self-respect by meeting these men upon terms of equality, professionally; yet I know of no reason why this restriction should extend to social life. Take the homœopathist, for example—and I select that particular branch of the great family of medical humbugs, because it seems to me to be the elite and fashionable one of the present day, representiing, or arrogating to itself the aristocracy of the entire brood. If a gentleman sees proper to practice upon that system, under a full conviction of its truth, and follows strictly its principles, there would be no propriety in your treating him discourteously in the social circle, however much you might pity that obliquity of mind which could adopt a system so preposterous and absurd.

I am perhaps more liberal in my views in reference to Hahnemann, the originator of Homœopathy, than most of my professional brethren. I am inclined to the opinion that he was an honest man, and designed to confer a blessing upon the world by the promulgation of his peculiar views. He was, in all probability, an infidel in medicine; or, looking over the civilized world, and seeing so many incompetent and ignorant men in the practice of medicine wielding so many potent remedies, which, if unskilfully used, must prove disastrous to the lives of the people, he concluded that, as a whole, medicine did more harm than good. He brought his powerful mind to bear upon its utter annihilation and overthrow, and not to the correction of its abuses, as he should have done. Possessing an intimate knowledge of human nature, he knew that his object could not be accomplished by direct and open attack upon all remedial agents, because the mind, or the imagination if you please, must and would have something to rest upon, whilst the

“*vis medicatrix naturæ*,” or the inherent restorative power of the system, accomplished the cure. Imbued, as he doubtless was, with the philosophy of the German schools, he brought forth and promulgated to the world just such a system as might be expected to emanate from such a source ; so etherialized and sublimated as almost to bid defiance to mind either to comprehend it, or to combat it. Many have adopted it, and practice it in all sincerity and honesty. With such I have no quarrel. They are but exercising a right dearer to Americans than life itself. But there are others, who are ready and willing to give their patients Homœopathy, Allopathy, Hydropathy, No. 6, composition, and steam, or any other imaginable system which the patient may desire. Such are knaves and hypocrites—no better at heart than the highwayman, or the stealthy thief who prowls about your house at midnight and despoils you of your property. From such, turn with scorn and contempt, professionally and socially.

Your deportment, gentlemen, in the sick room, and especially towards your patients, should be characterized by that suavity of manners, mildness of temper, kindness and sympathy towards your patients, which so eminently distinguish the true gentleman from the counterfeit. Some have sought notoriety by affecting eccentricities, such as coarse vulgarity, obscene jesting, and even profane language. Such things emanate only from illy-balanced minds, or low and grovelling natures. However currently they may have passed in the days of Abernathy, the civilization and refinement of the present age does not, and ought not, to tolerate such gross violations of its moral sense.

Temptations, in a thousand forms, will cluster about your pathway, bedecked in all the gaudy trappings of vice and folly, so well calculated to fascinate and lead astray the ardent and youthful mind, seeking to seduce you from a virtuous and upright life. The gaming table, the race course, the intoxicating bowl, and, I may add, the muddy pools of party politics, will each, perhaps, in their turn, seek to decoy you into an infraction of the solemn vows which you have this night taken upon yourselves to devote body and mind to the divine art.

There is, perhaps, a no more fascinating device of the devil to lead men to destruction, to ruin their business, to undermine and destroy their health, to blunt their moral sensibilities, than gaming. It engenders a morbid appetite for excitement, and totally disquali-

fies its unfortunate votaries for the sober, legitimate and honorable pursuits of life. I would therefore warn you to avoid the gambler's den as you would the deadly upas. No matter how respectable its exterior, rottenness and dead men's bones are within.

So far as its relations to your professional career are concerned, I can say but little better of politics. Although more respectable, yet it will prove most pernicious to your business and to your advancement in the knowledge of your profession, as well as to your personal independence. Nor have I a very high opinion of the honesty and integrity of the professional politician, who pursues politics as a trade. He is driven to the most abject sycophancy, "to bend the supple knee that thrift may follow fawning," and often to sacrifice his own independence, and consent to be the echo of a clamorous and ignorant rabble, or lose his place and his support. Can you consent to barter the dignified and respectable position of a physician for such doubtful honors and so precarious a means of support?

Should you, however, feel impelled by patriotism, or a less worthy motive, to enter into the service of the State, abandon medicine at once. They are wholly incompatible with each other. Your Professor of Chemistry, with his admitted ability and learning, would find it impossible to give you the combining proportions. You cannot serve two masters. It seems to me that the tremendous responsibilities connected with the practice of medicine are sufficient to engross the whole mind and heart. Few men can contemplate the relations which they sustain to their patients—the unbounded confidence and reliance upon them in the most critical and dangerous maladies—without being overwhelmed with that responsibility. Is it right therefore, in view of the important trust committed to your hands, to divide and distract your minds with other pursuits having no affinity or analogy to your profession? My advice to you is to abstain from politics, preaching and speculating, and bend every energy of body and mind to the acquisition of a higher and more perfect knowledge of the great principles of your vocation.

Next I turn my eyes towards that rock upon which so many countless thousands have wrecked their hopes and prospects for time and eternity—the use of intoxicating drinks. This is one of the most subtle and deadly enemies with which you will ever be called upon to contend.

It is a popular notion that in sickness there should always be some spirits about the house, and the custom of presenting the bottle to the doctor is almost universal. There are so many extenuating circumstances to lull the conscience to sleep; so many reasons why you may, and in fact, why you ought to take a glass. You have been up all night, or you have had a long ride, or you are very cold, or you are very warm, or you are very wet, or you are very dry. Oh, what a wonderful catholicon! It warms and it cools, it wets and it dries; and, according to the views of some, it is a "cordial for every fear and a balm for every wound." But there are two things it cannot do—clothe the naked and feed the hungry. It can and assuredly will, however, make the clothed and well-fed both naked and hungry. It is not however my object so much to picture to your imagination its terrible consequences, as to guard against the formation of habits of intemperance. As a general rule, when the habit is once formed, it never releases its hold upon its victim. I would therefore warn you, in the most solemn manner, against its formation. No man was ever a drunkard by his own consent, or choice. But it is the occasional social glass against which I would fortify your minds. I know it is usual for men to say and feel, that they know how far to go, and where to stop; and if they find that it is obtaining the mastery over them, they will at once abandon it.

What, I ask you, is the experience and observation of the world on this subject? Is it not a notorious fact that the individual himself is the very last one in making the discovery that he is indulging to excess, and is in great danger of becoming a drunkard. After, perhaps, his neighbors have given him up for lost, and his heart-stricken wife has been weeping in secret and in silence for months over the gloomy prospect of being a drunkard's wife, he wakes up to a consciousness of his terrible condition. The possession of mind, of station, of influence, or of wealth, is no protection against its insidious approaches. The mightiest intellect that ever adorned the human form, the most gifted genius that ever sung in poetry, the most burning eloquence that ever swayed the multitude, or held chain-bound listening senates, or the loftiest patriotism that ever burned upon the altar of the human heart, is no security against its fatal tendencies. All alike have been its victims, and have been swallowed up in one common grave of infamy.

It is one of the most exacting and inexorable appetites, when once formed, that ever chained a human being to the car of degradation. I do not therefore ask you to reform the habit when it is once contracted, for my observation is that when once thoroughly formed, it is rarely, if ever, corrected.

In the course of my professional life, I have met with many victims of intemperance, and, as I have presented to them the highest and holiest considerations that could be brought to bear upon the human heart as inducements to leave off the habit, I have seen the briny tears roll down the manly cheek, the bosom heave, and the eyes sparkle, as, in the very intensity of his nature, he resolved once more to be a freeman. Time and time again have I extorted the pledge of abandoning intoxicating drinks, and believe such pledges were given in the sincerity of the soul and with a determination to keep them. Did they do so? In looking back over my experience, I can call to mind but a single individual who did. All, under the influence of temptation, have relapsed into their former habits, and one by one have been dragged down by this insatiable appetite to a dishonored grave.

Gentlemen, these are no fancy sketches drawn from a vivid imagination. "I speak of things which I do know, and testify to that which I have seen." There is probably not an individual in this assembly but that has cause to mourn over the desolation which has been brought upon their families or their friends by this accursed practice. This is not all, gentlemen. Its power to destroy is not confined to the interests of time. It kills the soul as well as the body. It is written that "no drunkard shall inherit eternal life."

On this subject I have suffered much, and therefore I feel much; and in view of the desolating and blighting influences of intoxicating drinks upon the human family, I can say, sincerely, that I would to God the knowledge of their preparation were lost, forever lost, to the world. As you value your own peace of mind and the good opinion of the neighborhood in which you live; as you respect the dearest and holiest affections of the human heart in others, I charge you to live a life of virtue and sobriety. Nothing can compensate you for an infraction of the laws of society in this respect. Remorse and bitter regrets on your own part, and the utter desolation perhaps of the fair hopes and prospects of others, will be the penalty of any gross violation of any of the laws of your moral nature.

All men ought to be religious. But this is especially true of physicians. Mingling, as they do continually, in scenes of sickness and distress, they ought to be able, when their art fails, to point the dying to the Great Physician of souls, and comfort the living by assurances that "God will temper the wind to the shorn lamb." If, however, you cannot be christians according to the orthodox notions of the day, I entreat you not to adopt the other extreme and run into infidelity. It is too cold and heartless for the peculiar duties of your vocation. It will cut off the right arm of your power in the treatment of diseased action. Every practical man is aware of the powerful influence which the mind exercises over the body, and how much a tranquil mind aids him in combatting disease. How can the mind imbued with infidel sentiments be at ease? There is, perhaps, no more appalling contemplation to the human mind than annihilation. If I could this night demonstrate, with the clearness of the sun-beam, the fallacy of the whole christian system, I would sooner part with my right arm than do it. No earthly considerations could induce me to rob so many thousands and millions of human beings of every earthly hope and comfort. No. Palsied be the hand that could write, and stilled in death be the brain that would conceive, a wrong so monstrous!

Avoid bitter and acrimonious disputes upon religious subjects. Do not unnecessarily attack the religious opinions of your neighbors. There is no point upon which men generally are so sensitive and vulnerable as their religion. It is right upon all suitable occasions to avow your religious sentiments and maintain them firmly yet temperately, remembering, at the same time, that the same privilege belongs to your neighbor, and that we are all highly blessed in living under a government and laws which guarantee to every man the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

Punctuality, gentlemen, has been well said to be the key to every man's chest. I would therefore impress this duty upon you. In all your relations in life, whether professional or otherwise, be punctual. I know of no one quality which so much commends a man to the confidence and esteem of his fellow-citizens as punctuality in all his engagements. This is especially true in money matters. Physicians, by some means or other, have brought the fraternity into disrepute by disregarding their pecuniary obligations.

This is doubtless often the result of necessity. But as much as possible avoid contracting debts without some reasonable prospect of meeting them.

We have this night, gentlemen, introduced you into full fellowship and equality with us. Henceforth we recognize you as equals and co-laborers in the great field of scientific research. You have but just entered upon the threshold of the temple of medicine. Its spacious halls and splendid apartments are yet to be traversed by you, and this can only be accomplished by intense labor and application. It is a law of this temple, that its beauties will never be unfolded to the sluggard. You have, during your pupilage with us, we trust, laid a good foundation; but it will now devolve upon you to raise the superstructure. This can only be done by patience and labor, adding each day something to your stock of general knowledge.

A few years ago, the stately public edifices which adorn our city, were heaps of earth, sand, stone and forest-trees. But, by the skill and energy of our mechanics, those rude materials have been moulded into the most beautiful and symmetrical proportions. So it must be with you. Every facility is afforded. A climate embracing every variety almost, from the torrid to the frigid zone. A soil adapted to the growth of almost every vegetable production, and mineral resources almost unsurpassed by those of any country upon earth.

In fact it is almost bewildering to contemplate the vastness and the variety of the field before you. Nature yet holds in the deep recesses of her bosom thousands of secrets which she will unfold only to the inquiring mind.

Let us, for a moment, contemplate the achievements of science in the last century. Some of the most wonderful results of the human intellect have been witnessed in the last fifty years. It is remarkable how the mind of the world has run into scientific investigation, and what achievements it has effected in that short period. Fulton launched the first steamboat in 1807, now there are more than three thousand traversing the waters of America alone. In 1825 the first railroad was put in operation in Massachusetts. In 1800 there was not a single railroad in the world. Now there are about twenty-two thousand miles of railroad in America, and in the United States alone about nineteen thousand

miles, costing nearly three hundred millions of dollars. In 1845 the electric telegraph was discovered, and as long as the livid lightning plays upon the bosom of the portentous cloud will the name of Morse live throughout the civilized world. Hoe's printing press, capable of printing twenty thousand copies in an hour, is a recent discovery. In 1800 gaslight was unknown; now every city and town of any pretensions is lighted with gas. The art of daguerreotyping was not communicated to the world until 1839. Gun-cotton was but lately discovered, and chloroform, which has robbed the surgeon's knife of half its terrors, was discovered but a few years ago. Astronomy has added a number of new planets to the solar system.

The intellect of man is evidently awake, and we may look for still greater discoveries in the next half century. Will you then sit down and fold your arms together, and say, there is nothing for you to do; or will you gird on your armor and work out your destiny under the influences of the best government and country upon which the sun ever shone? American genius and intellect have out-stripped the world wherever they have been brought in competition with those of other countries. This results from the very nature of things. There is an adaptation and a harmony pervading nature's works. Our country is made upon the most gigantic scale. Our impenetrable forests, our boundless prairies, vast lakes and magnificent rivers, are all but so many indications of the high destiny which awaits our country; for they all tell us in prophetic language that the mind, the intellect of the country, will be moulded after the same gigantic pattern.

The young medical men of America, and especially of the Mississippi Valley, owe it to themselves and to their country to transfer the seat of medical education from Paris to St. Louis. The idea may appear preposterous to some; but I look forward confidently to the time when, instead of Americans going abroad in search of medical education, our own halls will be crowded with foreigners, listening with rapture and amazement to the learning, eloquence and transcendent genius of American physicians and teachers.

Now, gentlemen, comes the most painful part of my duty—that of bidding you farewell. No one that has not experienced it, can form any estimate of the near and endearing relations which spring

up between professor and student. But the dearest and most sacred ties and associations of this life are destined to be broken. Change is written upon every thing in this world, and we too must part. The kind and courteous manner in which you have demeaned yourselves towards me, has made an impression which can only be effaced by death; and I trust there are those among you who will remember me kindly after this tongue has been silenced in death.

Go then to your several fields of labor, of disappointment and of trial. Think not that a placid sky will always look down upon your pathway. The poisoned tongue of calumny and detraction will often be busy with your reputation. The purest motives that ever influenced the human heart will be distorted, perverted and made to appear as the most unworthy. Often when you have exerted your utmost skill, spent sleepless nights, and bestowed every energy of body and mind, you will be censured, and perhaps accused of killing your patient. If you attend church, you will be accused of hypocrisy; if you do not, you will be held up to the world, if not as a deist or atheist, as a publican and sinner. All these things, and more, will be heaped upon you by mean and little contemptible minds.

Well, I have a recipe for all this, and now, at parting, let me impress one more truth upon your minds. During the whole of our intercourse, God being my judge and you my witnesses, I have sought only to engraft high, moral and scientific truths upon your minds; and now my recipe is this: in all your relations in life, whether professional, social, political, or religious, preserve a conscience void of offence towards God and man. In this way the poisoned shafts of their venom will fall harmless at your feet. You cannot expect to escape these attacks. He who opened his mouth only to bless and save the world, was accused of having a devil, and of eating with publicans and sinners; and if, like Caesar's wife, your life is above suspicion, you will not escape. So far as I know, it is the common lot of all who have attained to any distinction in their profession. If you should enter a strange orchard in quest of fruit, I can tell you how to find the very best in it. Go to the tree in which you find the most clubs and sticks lodged in its branches; there you will find the choice fruit. So with the medical man of true worth. You will find the clubs and sticks of inferior minds lodged in the branches of his reputation.

But I must close this already long address.

In the name, therefore, of the Medical Faculty, whom I, upon this occasion represent, I bid you farewell. In doing so, we commend you to the protection of that God who is able to shield you from all harm, and devoutly pray that each of you may be blessed with a long life of usefulness and honor, and that, finally, in the ripeness and maturity of a virtuous old age, you may be translated by death to the home of the good and upright in the haven of eternal repose.