Lawson (L. M.)

AN

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE

Thirty-Eighth Course of Lectures,

IN THE

MEDICAL COLLEGE OF OHIO,

BY L. M. LAWSON, M. D.

Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine, and Clinical Medicine.

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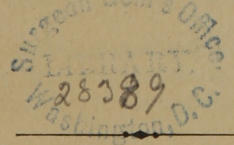

CINCINNATI:

WRIGHTSON & CO., PRINTERS, 167 WALNUT ST.

1857.

Correspondence.

CINCINNATI, *Oct. 19th*, 1857.

PROF. LAWSON,

Dear Sir: At a meeting of the students of the Medical College of Ohio, Mr. J. Ludlow being called to the Chair, and Mr. Wm. H. Taylor appointed Secretary, the following resolution, offered by Mr. S. Bonner, jr., was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to solicit a copy of Prof. Lawson's introductory address for publication.

The committee appointed in accordance with the above resolution, take great pleasure in performing the duty assigned them, and we hope you will respond favorably to the wishes of the class.

We remain, Dear Sir, Yours respectfully,

GEO. E. JONES,
W. M. JOHNSON,
E. R. HAWN,
S. BONNER, JR.,
W. H. MCREYNOLDS. } *Committee.*

CINCINNATI, *Oct. 24th*, 1857:

GENTLEMEN: In compliance with the wishes of the Class, rather than my own desires, I will place at your disposal the manuscript of my Introductory Address.

Please accept for yourselves, as the Committee, and convey to the Class, my most sincere thanks for this expression of kindness; and believe me truly, Your friend and obedient servant,

L. M. LAWSON.

Messrs. GEO. E. JONES,
W. M. JOHNSON,
E. R. HAWN,
S. BONNER, JR.,
W. H. MCREYNOLDS.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE MEDICAL CLASS:—

We have convened this evening for the purpose of opening in due form, the thirty-eighth course of lectures in the Medical College of Ohio. Allow me, gentlemen, in the name of the faculty, to welcome you to this institution, and to give you the voluntary pledge, that it will be our most ardent desire to promote your welfare, while you sojourn among us.

The Medical College of Ohio bears an ancient and honorable name. For thirty-seven years she has stood before the profession, and now has her numerous alumni scattered throughout the West and South. Her faculty, at various periods, has embraced many of the ablest men of our country, —few schools indeed can exhibit a brighter galaxy in years gone by, than this. The names of Drake, Eberle, Locke, Mussey, Moorhead, Harrison, Shotwell, Cobb, were chief among those who made a name and reputation for this school, equal to any of her sister institutions.

But many of these jewels of our profession have, in the fullness of time, been gathered to their final homes. Drake, Eberle, Shotwell, Harrison, Locke, have passed to that "undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveler returns." The pendant boughs of the weeping willow point in sorrowing silence to the oblivion of the tomb; but the fame of those we loved and honored, lives on fresh in the great heart of our profession.

These great lights having, in the destiny of our nature, passed away, we, in humble imitation, attempt to supply their places. We welcome you to the same institution which was honored with these great names, to learn the mysteries and beauties of the same science which they taught. It will

be our constant desire to profit by the example of those who have gone before, and with untiring zeal to fulfil the responsible duties which pertain to our respective department.

It is proper to state for the information of those who may not be familiar with the circumstances which surround us, that our present organization is the result of a union between this institution and the Miami Medical College. For several years past, these schools have been in active competition; and as it was believed that the field was not sufficiently large to sustain two flourishing medical colleges, and that the interests of the regular profession were seriously impaired by the division of patronage, the general opinion was that the two should unite. This object has been accomplished; and it is gratifying to know that the opinions of the profession, both here and abroad, fully sustain the course. And the large assemblage of pupils to participate in the opening of the present course of lectures, is a substantial proof that the union has been approved by those most interested.

But while we congratulate the profession on the advantages which must arise from this union, it is but just to add that it has not been accomplished without individual sacrifices. It was originally agreed between the parties concerned in forming the new organization, that a certain number should be retained, while others, with a magnanimity worthy of the highest praise, determined to retire. By this arrangement, able and distinguished teachers have left the professorial corps; but while we regret their loss, the motives which induced the step must meet with universal approval.

Gentlemen, we are about to engage in the curriculum of studies embraced in a "course of lectures;" and this is designed to represent all the branches of medical science, in an elementary sense, and their application in the treatment of disease. The conventional arrangements governing our course, is, in many respects, faulty; but while conscious of the defects, it is not in our power to apply the proper corrective. Thus the course of study is too brief, the lectures too much crowded, and too large a mass of matter is forced on

the student in a short space of time. But these are the faults of the country and the age, rather than of schools or individuals. It is our boasted privilege to live in a land of freedom; and in the exuberance of patriotism which followed the release from bondage, the old land-marks of society—social, religious, political and scientific—melted away like fleeting shadows. The good went with the bad. The robes of office were replaced by the plain attire of the citizen; the ponderous machinery of universities gave way to free and independent schools; and science was left to the mercy of popular ignorance, caprice or prejudice. Science has no recognition in our republic. Medicine is regarded as much a matter of fair and ligitimate commerce or trade, as any pursuit from agriculture to the fine arts; and any laws enacted for the regulation of practice, are regarded by the people as unjust, oppressive, and anti-republican. And in the absence of appropriate legal restraints, medical schools can offer no effectual barrier to unqualified persons entering into practice. Nor can we with propriety greatly extend the course of instruction, or increase the difficulties of obtaining diplomas; for if such were the case, our edicts would be disregarded, the schools passed by, and pupils would engage in practice without the formalities of a course of lectures. Our law makers refuse the necessary safe-guards to protect the people; and as a legitimate consequence, the country is flooded with degraded charlatans, impudent empirics, and ill qualified physicians. And here, too, the unnumbered hosts of nostrum venders find an unchanging elysium. The sun of freedom never sets on their glorious privileges, and with unstinted hand they strew their vile compounds broad-cast over the land,

Thick as leaves of Vallambrosa."

And herein the great public permit their love of unlimited freedom to work a most pernicious result. They declare in fact that the inner as well as the outer man shall be the recipient of this unbounded liberty, albeit nauseous doses of

vile compounds flow into the great Democratic stomach. Our republican doctrines will not permit us to sanction a monopoly in the sale of sugar, whiskey or tobacco; and it is equally apparent that special privileges should not be extended to medicine.

Thus the ultraism of the doctrine of equal rights runs throughout, not only our civil and social fabric, but also invades our scientific institutions, and reduces to a common level, the vilest quack and the most learned physician. The most abstruse science is subjected to the same laws of competition that regulate commercial transactions, as though the public could judge of the nature of disease and effects of remedies with equal accuracy that they can of the quality and value of flour and bacon.

The great mistake which underlies all this, consists in the almost total abnegation of the existence of a science. Medicine, in popular eyes, is nothing more than an assemblage of accidents. The accumulated wisdom of past ages, swelling on like the mountain rill into the vast ocean, is cast off with supercilious scorn by fools and cynics; and they bury beneath a cloud of ignorance, prejudice and superstition, that knowledge which stands next to inspiration itself. Indeed, he who interprets aright the mysteries of nature, passes beyond the veil which shuts out the vulgar eye, and stands in the presence of Deity. But while the man of science approaches the mysteries of nature with the greatest caution and most profound veneration, the ignorant and reckless, at one gigantic stride pass all obstacles, and

"——— Fools rush in, where angels fear to tread."

Science is like the tender plant which requires protection from the rude blasts and withering frosts of winter; but instead of that fostering care which the interests of humanity demand, the department which we represent is ruthlessly cast aside, or positively degraded by depreciating associations.

Our governments deem it right and proper to establish

common schools for the education of the masses, and military institutions are sustained at public expense to prepare young men for the army, navy, or civil engineering. But as for the medicine, its only recognition in law is the granting patents to quacks, the institution of suits for mal-practice, or sending ardent students to the penitentiary for availing themselves of the only means of obtaining anatomical knowledge.

In the absence of a recognition of our science on the part of government, it is evident that we must, as best we can, protect ourselves. And for this purpose we must look exclusively to ample and complete qualifications. The half educated physician is liable at any moment to bring ruin upon himself and disgrace on the science he assumes to represent. The mere quack rests his success on the blind faith and credulity of his dupes; but the scientific physician is held to a high standard of accountability. The bold and impudent charlatan seizes upon the weakest elements of the human mind; the enlightened physician appeals to the highest qualities of intellectual discrimination and judgement.

Under these circumstances it becomes our duty to make the line of separation between ourselves and the empirics as broad and distinct as possible, so that there may be no more resemblance than exists between day and night or good and evil. And the only method by which this distinction can be clearly and fully established is by the thorough and complete education of all who aspire to the dignified and responsible position of a medical practitioners. To accomplish this, we must descend to the most accurate minutiæ. The great fault of our profession is an evident desire to pass by the finer elements of study, as unimportant and insignificant, and attempt to grasp the whole without following the details. In pathology, physiology, therapeutics, chemistry, anatomy—the most vague and unreliable generalities take the place of close and minute investigation so essential to the truly scientific physician. It is not enough that we learn the

names of disease, and a few of their more common manifestations; but we must descend to the minutiæ—trace each globule of blood from its primary development to its ultimate relation to the tissues; we must comprehend the different classes of aliment, their transformations and uses in the physiological state, and perversion in morbid conditions; the forms and uses of each fibre in the body, and the development of normal tissues, and pathological products. Nay, more than all this—we must go still deeper into the mysteries of human organization: the actual atoms must be measured and weighed, and their special and general relations computed. These constitute the basis on which practical medicine rests, and which make it a science.

But the acquisition of this knowledge will require sleepless nights, and long days of observation and experience. Well may the timid shrink from the herculean task. And yet, if we neglect, through indolence, to acquire all that is necessary for the good of our patients, we become guilty of a crime of omission of the direst nature.

I am inclined to measure human actions by a postulate which is thus expressed: "The morality or immorality of an agent consists in the goodness or badness of his intention, the goodness or badness being determined by the nature of the consequences which are foreseen, or might have been foreseen, as resulting from the act." The criminality of an act is to be measured, not alone by the *motive*, but by the consequences which naturally arise, and which were foreseen or might have been foreseen. Neither the dogmas of the schools of philosophy, nor the technical definitions and suppositious abstractions of the sectarian polemics can modify the intrinsic nature of crime. The science of ethics admit of no selfish restrictions. The metaphysician may weave his intricate web, and elaborate his mystic chain of ideal principles, until the author himself is lost amidst the mazy shadows of his own creation, and the deluded follower falters and faints in laboring to gain the end of a circle; but yet, neither the

genius of the one, nor the blind credulity of the other, can change the eternal principles of truth, nor convert the turpitude of crime into a commendable virtue. National compacts and statutory enactments may be variously modified to suit the capacities and conditions of different people; ecclesiastical formulæ and state polity may vary with the diversified condition of nations; public sentiment, or tacit acquiescence, may permit certain indulgences incompatible with theoretical morals; but all these affect merely the interests or privileges of persons and communities, restricting or enlarging their natural or acquired rights, and therefore are not criminal.

But in our scientific relations—those great elements which become an integral part of the constitution of civilized society, the mind and morals are presumed to act in unison, and the rules of ethics, which govern what may be called a natural morality, are recognized as the safeguards of community. In medicine it is impossible that non-professional persons can comprehend the intrinsic character of the science, or the qualifications of the practitioner; and in the absence of laws regulating the course of study, or the acquirements prior to entering on the practical duties of the profession, the public must depend largely on the *conscientiousness* of those who assume the title of physicians. And hence those who fail to acquire an adequate knowledge of the science, but recklessly plunge into the mysteries of the human organization, producing the most disastrous consequences, become positively criminal, because the evil results were foreseen, or might have been foreseen.

Nor will the plea of *motive* shield the ignoramus from merited condemnation. Such reasoning is eminently a fallacy "in dictionem;" the premises are unsound, and consequently the conclusions are vitiated. The *motive* is not always the proper criterion, for, in a moral sense, it is often secondary in the act; and hence the motive may not be positively *bad*—nay, it may be positively *good*—and yet the act itself unconditionally criminal. Thus, the motive of the ignorant

physician is pecuniary emolument—a motive, in a moral sense, neither good nor bad—and yet the act itself is clearly and unequivocally wrong.

Under these circumstances, gentlemen, there is a high moral obligation resting on you as pupils, and ourselves as teachers. Legislators, in their supreme wisdom, having failed to recognize our profession, it remains for us, in our united capacity, to supply the deficiency. It is your duty to study the science which you have selected with that care and diligence which the important interests involved demands. You must rise above mere mercenary considerations, and view your profession as involving the lives and happiness of your fellow-beings, and, therefore, too sacred a calling to be debased to the purposes of mere pecuniary gain. Science, while it justly acknowledges a temporal relation, possesses also an essence which claims affinity with the pure benevolence of a higher sphere. It is a benevolence which, like the rays of light springing from a great center, illumine the darkness of distant spheres, while its own great fountain remains undimmed and inexhaustible. You must study medicine as a science, and not as a trade. In mere commerce, success is measured by the accumulation of money; in science, by the absolute knowledge attained. "The end of literature," says Thomas Carlyle, "was not, in Schiller's judgment, to amuse the idle or recreate the busy, by showing spectacles for the imagination, or quaint paradoxes and epigramatic disquisitions for the understanding; least of all was it to gratify in any shape the selfishness of its professors, to minister to their malignity, their love of money, or even of fame. * * * Genius, even in its faintest scintillations, is the inspired gift of God; a solemn mandate to its own to go forth and labor in his sphere, to keep alive the sacred fire among his brethren, which the heavy and polluted atmosphere of this world is forever threatening to extinguish. Woe to him if he neglect this mandate, if he hear not its small still voice! Woe to him if he turn the inspired gift into the servant of his evil or ignoble passions;

if he offer it on the altar of vanity, or if he sell it for a piece of money."

Let me say to you, then, cultivate your profession as an ennobling and exalted benevolence. Look minutely and profoundly into the deep mysteries which belong to the several departments of this science. Do not rest satisfied with a superficial and imperfect knowledge of anything which bears on the practical duties of your profession; but with untiring vigilance, and an unfaltering determination, pursue your studies until you learn all that others know, and add new materials from your own observations.

But, gentlemen, while we admonish you as *pupils* to avoid the errors of indolence and cupidity, and to seek by exalted deeds an exalted position in our profession, the question forcibly recurs, are none of the sins which degrade the profession attributable to professors and schools who assume to be monitors and guardians of our honor and prosperity? It is greatly to be feared that the mantle of charity, with all its amplitude, is scarcely sufficient to cover the delinquencies of schools, or to shield their professors from merited condemnation. In this land of freedom, every half-dozen physicians who aspire to the title of *professor*, can readily obtain a charter and erect a medical school, whether it be for the purpose of promoting the improvement of the profession, the good of humanity, or a more sordid and selfish one of individual interest. The establishment of medical schools at points where they are not required, or in too great numbers in any location, give rise to precisely the same results which follow competition in trade, namely, *cheapening* of the article produced. But, unlike the same result in trade, the cheapening of medical education has a tendency, in more ways than one, to deteriorate the quality of the product, and thus to damage the whole profession. When schools are established at points not requiring them, an unusual effort becomes necessary in order to *force* them on the profession; they require the prestige of numbers; and for this purpose every inducement will be held out in the reduc-

tion of fees, free schools, and conferring degrees on all who apply. The process of cheapening is a direct inducement to persons out of employment to enter the profession ; and thus hundreds of persons, wholly unfit for physicians, and who have failed in other pursuits, finding medical studies the cheapest, and the most likely to yield a large interest on a *small capital*, at once enter a free or cheap school, and soon become competitors for the emoluments of practice. There can be no question that these facilities have the direct tendency to overcrowd the profession; and as a natural and inevitable consequence, to cause undue competition in practice, with all the evils which arise from such a condition. Those who obtain their education for nothing, can well afford to practice at cheap rates, and thus supplant abler and better men ; and the whole system has a direct tendency to withdraw the mind from the *science*, and fix it on the mere *trade*.

In making these remarks, I do not intend to assert that a student's intellect is proportioned to his money ; on the contrary, I speak of the system of cheapening in its general effects, and its certainly disastrous influence on the profession. The whole tendency is necessarily and unconditionally evil ; and it seems to me strange that the mental vision of any one can be so clouded as not to perceive the tendency, or his conscience so stultified as to permit him to engage in a traffic so criminal in its character and so pernicious in its results. And it becomes the duty of every student and physician to frown on all such paltry exhibitions of selfishness, cupidity, and criminal disregard of the exalted duties of the physician, and the dearest interests of humanity. Those persons, in the judgment of Schiller, who pervert science to minister to their own selfishness, malignity, love of money, or even of fame, betray the sacred trust reposed in them, and therefore richly merit the severest condemnation. But fortunately, such schemes are ephemeral as the passing cloud; and like the shadowy spectre of the mountain, flee away before the light of the rising sun.

We may profitably turn, however, to another view, in which you have a right to demand of professors the most scrupulous fidelity. It becomes the duty of every teacher of medicine to present to his class a full, comprehensive, and complete view of his department, according to the accredited doctrines of the best informed of the profession. Partial views, or hasty and crude generalizations, should not be tolerated in the lecture-room; nor are we justifiable in discarding the opinions of those whose opportunities and candor entitle them to respect and confidence. It is the duty of a teacher to be familiar with all the important facts which have been established in his department; he should weigh well the opinions of others, and so far as he can, correct the errors of his predecessors; but a blind and obstinate adhesion to speculative views contrary to the leading doctrines of the great body of the profession, is an arrogant presumption, unworthy a philosophical mind and a true science. Superficial, partial, and dogmatic teaching is the bane of our profession. Those who are too idle to keep pace with the rapid advance of our science, or too egotistical to learn of their compeers, endeavor to hide their deficiency beneath a storm of words and a dogmatical manner, wholly at variance with a calm and deliberative judgment, and an accurate knowledge of the subject attempted to be taught.

In attempting to follow our prelections during the ensuing session, you will at once perceive the natural distinctions which exist among the several branches taught;—a portion are styled *elementary*, embracing chemistry, anatomy, physiology, pathology, and therapeutics, while others are made up of the practical application of those several elementary departments. You will likewise perceive the importance of studying with due care these elements, for it is those branches which constitute medicine a science; and if you neglect this great basis, it must necessarily follow that you will sink to the level of mere empirical practitioners. Allow me to warn you, then, in the beginning, that you have a broad and deep science to study, which will require all of your physical energies and

mental discipline to master. No sluggard can successfully pass the ordeal of medical study;—it demands mental discipline, untiring energy, and ceaseless devotion to the great object before you.

It is an acknowledged fact that the most rapid and successful method of imparting knowledge is by lectures, accompanied by suitable demonstrations. Hence you resort to medical schools, wherein the various demonstrative departments can be successfully taught, and clinical medicine can be illustrated in connection with hospitals. But as the great object of all medical study is the practical application of principles in the cure of disease, it is abundantly evident that hospitals are indispensable aids to the acquisttion of knowledge, and that without them medical schools utterly fail to fulfill the objects of their creation.

But, gentlemen, you will speedily discover that a course of lectures embodies a vast amount of teaching, and that many different subjects will be presented for your comprehension and remembrance. This is the great difficulty which you will encounter—the necessity for comprehending, remembering, and fully digesting all of the departments which are taught. There is but one method by which you can successfully pass through the term, and that is by *systematizing* your labors. For the purpose of accomplishing this object, you should take notes of lectures during the day, which you carefully re-write and review in the evening. I am satisfied that it is a great mistake to attempt an extensive course of reading during attendance upon lectures; on the contrary, an occasional reference to text-books, and a careful review of manuscript notes, in clubs formed for that purpose, constitutes the best and most successful course. The teacher will present you a faithful out-line of all that is requisite—quite as much as you can retain, and this foundation becomes the basis of future reading and study; which, with the improvements in clinical observations and practical tact enable the diligent and faithful students, ultimately, to become accurate, able and distinguished practitioners.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

A due respect for the non-professional part of the audience who have honored us with their presence this evening, requires of me a passing remark in regard to the interest which they evidently feel and actually possess in this our cherished science of medicine. All mankind, civilized and barbarous, repose a high degree of confidence in the curative power of medicines; and all recognize in certain persons, skill in the application of these agents in the treatment of disease. True, Pliny asserts that Rome was without physicians for a period of six hundred years; and Petrarch warns Clement the VI, against physicians, as a troop of enemies. But these events convey no idea of public conviction of the utility of medicine. The incantations and superstitious devices of the barbarous and ignorant; the ready faith and unreasonable expectations of the thoughtless and credulous; no less than the hopes and confidence of the refined and scientific, proclaim the universal belief in the necessity and existence of a healing art.

But medicine is viewed very differently by different minds. It is one of those departments of science with which superstition has been, and still is, largely blended. This melancholy fact is abundantly attested by the records of the past, as well as observations of the present time. Among the ancients, the Magi of the Assyrians and Chaldeans, the Brachmans of the Indians, the Magi and Pastophori of Egypt, and the Druids of Gaul are well known repositories of blind faith and superstition; while the specious devices of Mesmer, the fanciful theories of Hahnemann, and the demoniacal assumptions of the spiritualists, are so many modern evidences that the ancient superstition has been duly transmitted to our own time and generation.

In the application of this element of superstition to the realities of life, there is always, and necessarily, a motive of interest. The deception arises from the efforts of systematic charlatans to impose a false practice on the people for the

sole purpose of self-aggrandizement; and it will be remarked that in all those departments of natural and moral science, in which the imposition would not lead to pecuniary gain, no attempt is made to impose on the credulous or superstitious. Thus, in the departments of astronomy, geology, chemistry, natural history, and kindred sciences, the elaboration of false systems could not be made to yield a pecuniary gain, and therefore offer no temptation to those who live by falsehood and deception. And thus, certain sciences having remained exempt from the defilement of sacriligious hands, are regarded as true beyond the possibility of doubt. What would the public say if a mountebank should elevate a new order of telescope to the heavens, and declare that your astronomer on Mt. Adams, with all others, was entirely mistaken; that the law of gravitation was a mere fable; the centrifugal and centripetal forces nothing but the vagaries of a disordered fancy; that the erratic comets were merely the fiery steeds from Mount Parnassus bearing messengers to some remote colony—and, in fact, that the moon *was* a huge Western Reserve cheese! Such a proclamation, I am quite sure, would be received with jeers and laughter, and the proclaimer declared a fit subject for the lunatic asylum. And why? Not because the great public happen to possess any very accurate knowledge on these abstruse points, but for the more simple reason that astronomy has offered no inducements for the deceiver's genius, and has, therefore, remained an uncontradicted science.

And yet, this science of astronomy rests on no more demonstrable basis, is made up of no more indubitable facts, than the science of medicine. If Grecian astronomy had her Hipparchus, Grecian medicine had her Hippocrates. While Copernicus, in the 16th century, discovers the true motion of the earth, Harvey in the 17th century, discovers the circulation of the blood. If Newton deduced the law of gravitation from the planetary motions discovered by Kepler, and the cental forces of Huygens; so Bichat, by the powers

of his own great observations, assisted by the discoveries of his predecessors, classified the tissues, and laid the great and broad basis of pathology. Nor are the discoveries of Kepler, Napier, or Newton, in astronomy, more clearly demonstrable than those of Magendie, Flourens, Sir Charles Bell, Marshall Hall or Liebig, in medicine.

The two sciences, indeed, although their objects and nature are so widely different, exhibit a remarkable parallel in many respects, and evidences, demonstrable and philosophical, are no more decided in favor of one than the other. Nor can a spurious system of medicine be invented with more propriety than a spurious system of astronomy. But the practical fact is different. Medicine offers a large and profitable field for imposture and deception; and the cunning charlatan does not fail to profit by the opportunity. In regard to medical doctrines and assumptions the public credulity is as unbounded as it is incomprehensible. If our pseudo-astronomer were to assert that the moon *was* green cheese, he would be rewarded with the jeers and derision of the multitude; but when Hahnemann declares that the principal part of chronic diseases are produced by the *itch*, the remark is considered one of stupendous profundity, and entitles its illustrious author to the first rank in the great army of reformers. If the fanciful paleontologist should point to the myriads of fossils locked up in the bosom of the earth, and declare that they had been destroyed by the noxious exhalation from the minerals which surround them, the delusion would excite only a smile of derision. But when the medical reformer declares that physicians poison their patients by whole hecatombs, and that the electric bath will extract the metal from the system with more ease than galvanic gilding can be practised; the assertion is regarded as evidence of profound wisdom and of great moral honesty.

In these errors of judgment the public seem to ignore the existence of a science of medicine, and that the conjuror or witch doctor, guided by the chances of probability, will be as

likely to stumble on an effective remedy as the most learned and skillful physician.

Allow me to say on this point, and with all due deference to public taste and discrimination, that individual judgment is worthless on subjects of which they are of necessity ignorant, and that they must reason, as in other matters, from certain data, from the nature and fitness of things, and from high authority. By these rules of logic the existence of our science is clearly and emphatically established.

The nature and fitness of things most indubitably declare that an omnipotent and omniscient ruler would not create a world of pain and suffering without adequate means of relief. In the whole economy of nature there is no example of an evil without its appropriate remedy. Every poison has its antidote. The rose has been planted amidst the thorn. Harmony reigns throughout the illimitable domain of material creation. The laws of attraction and repulsion, of heat and cold, of day and night—so accurately fulfill the objects of creation that all is harmony and beauty. Spring follows winter, and summer spring—the golden fruit follows the fragrant flower. The vast spheres which hang on the seeming verge of creation, equally with the atom which enters into each particle of matter, obeys the primal laws of creation. And can it be presumed that man—the highest of all created objects—would be left to the blind course of chance, or the irremediable results of fate! On the contrary, the remedy has been placed within his own grasp, with a balm for each human ill.

Nor is it within the limits of probability that the application of remedies for the cure of disease would be left by an all-wise Creator to the ignorance of empirics, or the caprice of mountebanks and jugglers. In conformity to the great and immutable laws of nature, every department is reduced to a certain harmonious relationship, developed with unvarying precision, which we denominate science. We have attempted, as the exponents of *medical* science, to carry on from age to

age those investigations which shall perfect our knowledge, and enable the enlightened physician to relieve pain and disease, and prolong life. For twenty-two hundred years this spirit of investigation has assumed a systematic and scientific form. Every nation of the earth has contributed its share. The ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Arabians, Greeks and Romans — together with all modern civilized nations—have contributed to swell this great fountain of knowledge. No class of men have been so laborious, philosophical and disinterested as those engaged in this great science. And now, as the reward, we have the proud satisfaction of knowing that not only has human suffering been mitigated, but the duration of life has been greatly prolonged. And still our labors continue. The friendly voice of greeting comes from the banks of the Neva, the Seine and the Thames, and mingles with those of our own Ohio. The Academy of Medicine of Paris, and the Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society of England, labor as much for your good, as their own. There is a universal philanthropy, which, like the dew of heaven, spreads over the broad face of the earth. It is the same light which glimmered in the lamp of Hippocrates, but now, bright as the meridian sun, illumines every land. The lonely habitation of the widow, and the dreary hamlet of poverty, equally with the pomp and pride of the palace, bless the hand of the "good Samaritan" as it relieves their pain and suffering.

This is the testimony of the great world of letters. Governments and individuals—philosophers, sages, divines—bear testimony to the truth of this great science. And yet, a frivolous or ignorant few turn away with supercilious cant, and declare that neither Hippocrates nor Galen—Bichat nor Louis—Sydenham nor Hunter—are worthy of confidence; that this long wrought science, rich with ancient wisdom and modern research, with its golden links binding every age and nation—is but a specious assemblage of hypothetical fallacies and dangerous dogmas! But that the crazy theories of

Hahnemann, or the impudent assumptions of pretended reformers, embody all that is known in medicine!! Strange infatuation! We can almost behold the prophetic hand, tracing on the broad face of Heaven, in letters of fire,

"Ye would be dupes and victims, and ye are."

No, fellow citizens, the mind of man could not have labored two thousand years in a false science. A merciful Providence would not permit the best interests of his creatures to suffer by such a protracted and fatal delusion. Every fact connected with human suffering proclaims that God designed to create a healing art; and not all the ingenious devices of bad men and demons, aided by the credulity of weak, infatuated and misguided minds can inaugurate a spurious system, or annul the great purposes of Deity in the creation of our science.

For ourselves, gentlemen, let us persevere. Our duty is plain and obvious. The great field of nature and truth is spread out before us. Pure Castalian springs gush forth from every land, and imbue the true physician with an inspired love of science. And although false systems rise up like spectre giants, and mar the harmony of nature, the true science never falters in its course. It was the eternal will of God which created our science, and it became a part of the divine government.

The dignity and success of our profession, no less than the demands of suffering humanity, require of each member the highest order of candor, of integrity and of truthfulness. We are pledged to an absolute disregard of all false lights and spurious systems. Our profession must be not only pure, but above the suspicion of false pretensions. This integrity is the ægian shield of our science. It will protect us through the journey of life. And when the toil is ending, and the lengthening shadows proclaim the declining sun of life, the good deeds will stand forth as the gilded mountain tops in the last rays of light, while the calm zephyr will bear on its balmy wings, "Well done, good and faithful servant."