

Hodge H. L.

A
VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

TO
THE GRADUATES
OF THE

University of Pennsylvania,

DELIVERED
APRIL 6, 1850.

BY
HUGH L. HODGE, M.D.,
PROFESSOR OF OBSTETRICS, &C.

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PHILADELPHIA:
L. R. BAILEY, PRINTER, NO. 26 NORTH FIFTH ST.
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Correspondence.

Philadelphia, March 28th, 1850.

PROF. HODGE.

Dear Sir :

The Medical Class of the University of Pennsylvania, through the undersigned their committee, respectfully request for publication a copy of the Address to be delivered by yourself at the ensuing Commencement.

Permit us to express for ourselves the hope that you will accede to their request.

Very respectfully,

W. H. BARR, Del.	ALEX. C. TAYLOR, N. J.
J. S. BEAZLEY, Miss.	A. J. TERRELL, Va.
R. H. TATEM, Va.	CHAS. R. M'ALPINE, Va.
WM. J. GAUTIER, TEXAS.	WM. CARSON, Ohio.
CHAS. C. BENTON, N. Y.	J. HENRY SMALTZ, Phila.

Philadelphia, April 3d, 1850.

GENTLEMEN :

Although the Address to be delivered on the 6th inst., has been written, "*currente calamo*," under an unusual pressure of professional duties; it is submitted to your discretion under the hope the matter may be useful, although the manner remain unpolished.

Your's very respectfully,

HUGH L. HODGE.

TO DRs. W. H. BARR,
J. HENRY SMALTZ, &c.
Committee, &c.

A D D R E S S .

GENTLEMEN,

GRADUATES IN MEDICINE :

I am commissioned by the Trustees and Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, to congratulate you on the events of this day.

Your desires are accomplished ; your fond anticipations have been fulfilled : you have reached the goal for which you have so long struggled, and have borne off the prize on which your minds and hearts have been for so many years steadily and anxiously fixed. You have received the honours of this time honoured University. You have been formally clothed with the robes of the profession and admitted to all the honours and privileges connected with the Doctorate in Medicine. We most sincerely congratulate you on this auspicious event ; and bear now, public testimony to the excellency of your talents, and to the superiority of your attainments.

You have had, in some respects, greater privileges, than any class which has preceded you, not only in the more elaborate lectures from experienced teachers, but from the now well known fact, that you have attended the longest course of instruction which has ever been enjoyed in the United States of America. For six long and wearisome months, have you been in faithful attendance in the halls of the University ; and lent, by your attention and courtesy, your encouragement and support to the medical faculty, while endeavouring to impart more information to the students, and thus to elevate the standard of medical instruction. Your examinations for degrees have evinced, that you valued and profited by the privilege ; and you

are justly entitled to the thanks of the profession and of the public, that you have sustained, by your devotion to your studies, this great effort made by our school, at the recommendation of the American Medical Association—the representatives of the medical practitioners of these United States—to prolong the course of study; to more fully indoctrinate the students with the principles of medical science; to elevate the standard for graduation; and thus, the character and usefulness of our beloved profession.

Actuated by your love for science, by your anxiety to understand the principles of medicine, and by a noble determination, to have the foundation of your professional character, laid as deeply and as broadly as possible, you have resisted all the temptations, so abundantly offered, to pursue some shorter route, some more easy access to the temple of medicine. You have turned a deaf ear to all suggestions; you have chosen and wisely chosen the longer route—the rough, the rocky accesses to that beautiful and chaste building, whose fair proportions, and whose glorious elevation amidst the dark and mysterious clouds of science, have so long attracted your eyes, and excited the warm glowing aspirations of your souls.

You have your reward. You have this day entered the vestibule of this temple, and have received your diploma, the certificate of your admission to her precincts, with more satisfaction, and with far greater rejoicing, because, it has been well earned by the sacrifice of time and of labour. You will not, you cannot regret this sacrifice. No: It will be your pride. It will be your boast in years to come; it will be the source of a just rejoicing by your future patients and by your families, that you have received, as the reward of your own exertions, a diploma from an institution in the United States, which holds the standard of the profession high, and which opens not its portals to those who may carelessly seek the honours of the profession.

Receive then our warm congratulations, and our sincere thanks, and accept also our best wishes that the work, so well begun, may be carried forwards vigorously and heartily to perfection.

This is termed a "commencement"—your commencement day. Emphatically is this the true meaning of the word, when we regard your condition and prospects. This day you commence the duties and responsibilities of life. Your connexion with colleges and universities is dissolved. You leave the guidance of teachers and professors, and, immersing yourselves in the business of life, must, henceforth, trust to the experience of your own minds for the accomplishment of all your purposes. You must make the knowledge you have acquired from books and lectures, and which has been laid up in that great chaotic store-house—the memory—your own. You are to submit all the knowledge acquired, or yet to be acquired by observation and reading, to the alembic of your mind. There it is to be analysed by the wonderful powers of the intellect. Every integrant portion is to be separately examined, and to be thrown, it may be, into near combinations. You must mentally digest the intellectual food of which you are the recipients, and thus establish your own principles for your own guidance. You must think, that you may act for yourselves and not by the direction of others.

It has been well remarked by a late professor* of this University, "that to observe and remember are the humblest operations of the human mind. Brutes do both; but to theorize, that is, to think, is the high prerogative and interest of man." It is his distinguishing characteristic. He, therefore, who thinks most, is the superior man; is emphatically the intellectual man, the great man, who guides not only his own actions, but also the actions of others; establishing principles which influence those around him, give the impulse and direction to their thoughts, changes the tone of society, the condition of states, of governments, indeed of the whole world. For who can limit the influences of the human mind, when of a superior order, well furnished, thrown into energetic action and establishing principles which bear on the business of life—principles, rules of action, deduced by the operations of the mind, from the facts

* Benjamin Rush, M. D.

collected by observation and experience? Look abroad in society; cast your eyes on the past and present state of man; and speculate, if you please, on his future condition.

The dark ages have rolled away. The darkness has been dissipated by the light of truth, divine truth, which, penetrating like the first rays of morning light into the dark cloister of the secluded monk, fired his intellect, warmed his heart, gave energy to every thought of his mind and every feeling of his soul, emancipating him at once, as if by supernatural influence, from the mental and moral thralldom in which he was immersed, and forced him to declare in tones distinct and loud, that the mind and heart of man are free, and ought to be free; that they ought not, neither will they, be kept in subjection to any finite being.

This voice has echoed and re-echoed through state to state, from nation to nation, till the world has felt its influence; and the reformation, commenced by Luther in the cloisters of Germany, is rolling onward, and still onward from east to west, triumphantly demonstrating the influence of principles in regulating and directing the character and destiny of man.

Glance also for a moment at the political history of man, and observe how slowly the human mind imbibed the first principles of rational liberty, and what dreadful struggles against tyranny were made, too often unsuccessfully made, by the few, who dared to vindicate the freedom of thought and the liberty of action. Indeed, it was not until a congenial climate was discovered in this western continent, that the seeds of liberty could take deep root and spring up, bearing fruit for the healing of the nations.

The American Revolution is the enduring evidence of the power of the human intellect in establishing political principles, and causing them to bear on the well-being of man. It was indeed the triumph of mind. It was a revolution, not only of the outward but the inward man. It was a deliverance, not only from colonial servitude, from a subjugation to the aristocrats, the despots and the autocrats of the day, but it was more emphatically a deliverance from intellectual bondage, from a blind subjection to the dogmas of the schools, the hypotheses of

the learned, the superstitions of the ignorant and the prejudices of societies and of nations. Liberty of thought and action was then proclaimed, and has ever since been enjoyed.

Look at the results. Standing, as it were, on a lofty eminence, at the closing period of another half century in the world's history, behold the reaction of those glorious principles on the destinies of man.

We have all read of their immediate effects and of the terrible results, in the violent throes of revolutions and of the desolating wars, which swept the cities and plains of Europe, as by some mighty tempest. Terrible indeed was the conflict between the despotism of the age and the principles of liberty. But these principles, not being generally diffused, and not well understood, were abused, even to licentiousness, by its friends, and were partially overcome by its enemies in Europe: while in our favoured country, they have found a more congenial soil, and have steadily advanced towards perfection. They are daily equalizing the condition of man; diffusing abroad a knowledge of his rights, his interests and his duties; emancipating his thoughts from the slavery of superstition and of prejudice; giving energy and efficiency to his actions, so that every talent may be developed to the utmost. There is no restraint, there is no difficulty from the prejudices of an aristocracy, the rights of nobles or the power of despots. Every man may obtain—yea,—will obtain that station in these free states of America to which his talents and industry entitle him. This is true liberty; this is genuine republicanism.

The work of renovating the world is however but commenced. This liberty of thought and liberty of action is not universally enjoyed; but the principles are at work everywhere among the masses of mankind; and the leaven will work until the whole be leavened. Continually do we observe the influence of these principles in ameliorating the sufferings and elevating the condition of the poor and the ignorant, and ever and anon, we perceive some explosion, more or less terrible from the smothered fires which burn in the heart of society and are labouring to be free. Europe it is said is resting on a vol-

cano.* The pent up gases are continually finding vent, sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another, and every moment we look for some terrible explosion, by which all that is inimical to the rights and liberties of man shall be swept away; when man there also shall be free; when he shall understand and enjoy the liberty of mind and of heart.

The triumphs of the human mind are also evinced in ameliorating the condition of man, and in elevating him higher and still higher in the scale of existence, by the wonders, accomplished in the improvements of the arts and sciences. How slow, very slow was the progress of the human family in the arts of life, until within the compass of the last century, indeed it might be said in the last *half* century, within the memory of many now living. So long as man trusted to simple observation and experience; so long as he was under the influence of mere hypotheses, his mind was tardily illuminated and he could add but little to the knowledge of his predecessors. But with liberty of thought came freedom of action. Fact was compared with fact; one observation with another; one experiment was followed by another. Every thing was subjected to intellectual analysis. The character and relations of each were discovered. New arrangements were made—the laws of matter were established, and thus, the human intellect, by the exercise of its wonderful powers, deduced from such examinations and comparisons, general facts, laws, principles.

These laws or principles were founded and sustained by careful observation and comparison of facts. Hence they also became facts, and sometimes more to be relied upon than the results of pure experience. The combination of these principles constitute a science.

This process of intellectual operation has, especially during the last half century, been applied to nearly all the arts of life: and each art, originally founded simply by observation, and experience, has been raised to the dignity of a science; its principles have been investigated, and in many instances, established. Examine now the results of this intellectual combination, and see how rapidly, in more than geometrical ratio, the condition of

man has been changed, elevated, and, as it were, renewed. Witness the influence of these principles, thus made to bear on the business of society, in the enlarged intercourse, the rapid communication between nations, in the improved and more prolific state of their agriculture and manufactures ; in the generation as it were, of new arts and sciences, all bearing on the physical, intellectual and moral character of man.

Centuries passed away, during which every human being noticed the delicate vapour issuing from water in a state of ebullition, but what practical result ever followed, this well known fact, until the scientific chemist pent up this same delicate vapour in his strong receiver, and there discovered its wonderful capability of condensation, and its immense overpowering expansibility ; what practical result, until the immortal Watt connected this hitherto indomitable power to his machinery, and thus revolutionized the business of society? You all know the wonders that have been daily wrought, since the time of Watt, by the mighty agency of steam. How our own Fulton, by a happy thought, made it subservient to the navigation of rivers ; how its influence has extended from rivers to lakes, from lakes to oceans, so that continents now communicate rapidly and certainly with each other. Even valleys and hills and mountains afford no longer obstacles to the power of steam. The mighty locomotive, an apparent self-moving machine, bounds with a rapidity almost incredible, even to an inhabitant of the nineteenth century, over valleys and through mountains, on its iron roads, bearing with it, to distant and even desolate places, the arts and sciences, the civilization and the religion of the intellectual and cultivated man.

Permit me to make one more allusion to the improvements lately wrought by science for the welfare of man. A century has hardly elapsed since Benjamin Franklin, in this said city of Philadelphia, sought communication with the thunder cloud, suspended in the heavens. He sent his messenger, and brought the lightning of the heavens to move in obedience to his command. A new era in Philadelphia was thus commenced, new discoveries in electricity, magnetism and galvanism have been

made ; new combination of these subtle and mighty agents, the results of which are not yet determined. We know not how great, how wonderful they may prove. We have however these wonders foreshadowed, as it were, in the silent, mysterious communications which are made, with the rapidity of thought itself, from city to city, and from one extremity of a continent to the other, by means of the electro-telegraph, binding together, more and more closely, the mind and heart of man with his fellow man ; diffusing, with inconceivable rapidity, the blessings of knowledge and of virtue.

Enough has been said to illustrate the power and efficiency of the intellect of man, when once liberated, and properly educated. Enough also, to establish the importance, the immense, incalculable value of scientific principles. Hence the unavoidable inference, that in all the pursuits of life, our progress will be slow, unless principles be established and be brought to bear on the interests of humanity. Mere experience and observation will not answer ; facts may be stored away in the memory, but unless they have been compared, classified and arranged, they will be comparatively useless. They will not suit emergencies ; they will afford no assistance in times of doubt and danger ; no guide when their possessor is thrown into new scenes, and called upon to act under new circumstances. It is science, founded and guided by the intellect of man, which alone gives efficiency to that knowledge acquired by experience. Without science, man is a mere empiric, an experimenter, who may occasionally succeed by a happy accident, but who has no right to expect success at any time or under any circumstances.

Young gentlemen, I have made these observations, and indulged in this digression, that your minds may clearly perceive the essential difference, between that knowledge derived from simple observation, and that, derived by the wonder-working operations of the human intellect ; the essential difference between an art and a science ; and hence the immeasurable distance which separates the empiric, the mere observer, the experimenter, from the man of true science.

What is thus true of all arts and sciences, is emphatically true

of the science of medicine. Like its associated branches of human knowledge, it was for ages known as an art, and practised as an art, being encumbered by all the superstitions, and all the prejudices and all the false philosophies of the day. Now and then, some great man appeared, and endeavoured by the scintillation of his genius, to illuminate the darkness in which medicine was enshrouded. An Hippocrates, a Galen, a Haller, a Boerhaave, a Cullen and a Brown, have in succession dissipated some of the clouds of prejudice and superstition; yet comparatively little was accomplished in the science of life. Their own minds were under the dominion of a false philosophy. Hypotheses were mistaken for principles; and the vain imaginations of man were proclaimed as the established laws of nature. The result was, that the practice of medicine was little more than mere empiricism, and some of the noble branches of our science were associated with the lowest employments of life.

The reformation came; the mind of man was liberated; accurate observations and careful experiments were instituted, true science appeared almost at the command of the immortal Bacon; new sciences were generated and established; arts were daily improved and elevated to the dignity and usefulness of science. Then, light was shed on our beloved profession. Observation was substituted for hypothesis; rational deductions were made as facts accumulated; principles were established; and all the branches of medicine were gradually elevated from their degraded condition and assumed the appearance, the dignity, and the usefulness of distinct sciences.

The improvements in medical science have been slow, and compared with other sciences must necessarily be slow. This arises not only from essential difficulties with which the science of life is encumbered, calling and fixing the attention of the physician on the subtle and mysterious operations of organic life; modified, in human beings, by the still more mysterious operations of the immortal spirit; but also, from the fact that medicine rests upon all other sciences. There is no art, no physical, no moral science which does not contribute its aid to the cultivated, the scientific physician. He looks abroad through

nature, and up through nature to nature's God, for assistance in discharging his divine mission, of doing good to the bodies and the minds of men. His noble science forms the crowning stone, the apex of that glorious pyramid of science, erected by the mind of man, during the successive ages of the world.

Hence every science must arrive at perfection before medicine can be perfected. Nevertheless she waits not for perfection; she is ever on the alert; no sooner is a discovery made in any other science; no sooner is a new principle in natural or even mental philosophy established, than such discoveries, such principles are made subservient to the advancement of her interests, and with them the interest of humanity. Hence the rapidity of the world's improvement in the arts and sciences, in knowledge and religion, during the last half century, is but the type and evidence of the advancement of the medical profession.

Time would fail me, even if I could accomplish the laborious task, to indicate, even a few of the improvements made in medical science during the last fifty years. The anatomist is no longer satisfied with a general knowledge of the component parts of the human system, but has by his skilful manipulations, penetrated to the minutest organic molecules and fibres of the economy. Yea, he has demonstrated to the eye, by the wonder-working microscope, the minute structure of healthy and diseased tissues so clearly and plainly, that microscopic anatomy is become a new science, and contributes greatly to the advancement of practical medicine.

Chemistry in a few years has been completely renovated; not satisfied with ancient forms of analysis, it draws assistance from electricity, galvanism, and magnetism, and decomposes bodies originally considered simple; makes new discoveries, forms new combinations, and contributes freely and richly of her accumulated wealth, to the support of almost every art and science. She has even transcended ancient land marks, and leaving, for a time the inorganic mass of which the world is composed, has analysed the fluids and solids of organic beings so effectually, as to incite hopes of still further wonderful discoveries in the organic actions

of the systems, and has already laid a foundation by which the whole system of medicine may be revolutionized.

Through these and similar agencies, our knowledge of the functions of the tissues and organs, has been inconceivably enlarged, modified and often entirely renovated. Physiology is a new science. It has become almost a demonstrative science, substituting facts and clear, intellectual deductions, for the beautiful though false hypothesis, by which the minds of students and physicians were formerly enchanted.

As a necessary result of these transformations in anatomy, chemistry and physiology, the theories of medicine are also modified. The philosophy of medicine is daily becoming more precise, and of course more accurate. Facts have accumulated, observations are more definite and extended; experiments are more diversified; diagnosis is far more accurate; the means even of diagnosis are multiplied; so that medicine is rapidly advancing in the career of improvement, is multiplying and establishing her principles, and thus daily becoming more efficient in pouring forth the rich stores of her knowledge and wisdom; ameliorating the sufferings and diseases incident to humanity.

Thus although as a science she lays no claim to perfection, and readily acknowledges, that much must be done, many observations be made, many experiments be instituted, and much reflection be exercised, by the master minds of the profession, before the philosophy of medicine can be fully developed, she nevertheless takes a high place among the efforts of human genius. She maintains her dignity and demonstrates her essential importance by demanding of her votaries the exercise of their best talents. She gives full employment to the utmost powers of the human mind. She is occupied with subjects the most difficult, the most mysterious in nature, even with the subtle movements of life in healthy or morbid action. She ranges through all science: through literature, philosophy, and religion, for materials in constructing her magnificent temple. She requires the most extensive information, the most untiring industry, the greatest self-devotion, the absorption indeed of all the powers of the mind, to make suitable progress in under-

standing, improving and establishing her fundamental principles. She calls also on her disciples to cultivate all the warm affections of the soul, and all the benevolent sentiments of the heart, that they may be prepared to carry forth, from the hallowed precincts of her temple, the glorious provision she has accumulated for ameliorating the sufferings of humanity, and to impart health and strength of mind, as well as body, to those who are diseased and ready to perish.

Her grand object is to do good. This engrosses every talent and every effort: all other considerations are of minor importance. She knows and inculcates, that the interests of the profession and the welfare of her disciples are inseparably connected with the fulfilment of her great mission of doing good to man.

Such is the character of the medical profession; such the demands made on her votaries, and such the benevolent objects for which she has been instituted.

That physician, therefore, whose mental and moral powers have suitably imbibed the principles of his profession, goes forth armed, as it were, for daily conflicts with disease and death. He is always prepared. However new the emergency, however novel may be the character of his enemy, he has his rules of action, his principles, which constitute his guides for practice, at all times and under all circumstances. He is always armed,—forearmed, from head to foot, "*ab caput ad pedem*," against pain, disease and death. He is under no necessity to hunt up a new remedy for a new disease. When the dire pestilence appears, walking in darkness and slaying at noonday; and, like the wind, blowing where it listeth, so that we know not whence it comes, nor whither it goeth; has the scientific physician, think ye, to fold his arms and wait patiently, until some happy accident has furnished him with a certain something, termed a cure, a remedy, an antidote for this modification of morbid action, or, must he, in the despair of the moment, ignorantly, blindly and rashly, at the imminent risk of the unhappy sufferer, already quivering under the deathlike grasp of the pestilence, try this medicine or that medicine; make this experiment

and then another, while the poor victim of such experimental investigations sinks to his resting place in the grave? Are thousands to perish at his side and ten thousand at his right hand, before the educated physician can discover a weapon, by which resistance can be made against this terrible foe, and its victim snatched from its embraces? No, gentlemen; blessed be that Being who has given an intellect to man, this is not the case.

The physician properly educated is ready; yea, alert for the conflict. He hastens at once to the scene of danger, of suffering and of death, under the guidance of the principles of science. He goes however prudently, circumspectly. He is not anxious for some grand discovery by the botanist, the mineralogist, or even the chemist, to disarm his enemy; but all the powers and energies of his mind are concentrated on the nature of the disease; its type, its phenomena, its progress, its consequences, its termination. He thus analyses, in the furnace of his intellect, the character of the pestilence; he detects its peculiarities; he forms his plans; and, on the instant, carries them into execution, with boldness and confidence of success. He perceives, he feels, he knows the truth and power of his principles, and often, very often, he gains victory under circumstances the most appalling.

Would, gentlemen, that this essential characteristic between science and art would be generally understood; the difference between the scientific physician and the mere empiric, the mere experimenter on the health and lives of men.

What is disease? It is disorder; disorder of the vital functions and actions of an organic living being. It is modified by all the innumerable agents which act on the economy; by the peculiarities of the different tissues and organs; by the different temperaments, constitutions of individuals, and even by all the powers and passions of the human mind and heart. Disease is not an *entity*, a new being, a poison, a something superadded to the animal economy; an emissary from the box of Pandora, which takes possession for the time being of the patient, and is only to be exorcised, driven out, by charms and enchantments, or destroyed, within the vitals of the economy, by a counter-acting poison, by some cure, some specific, some single medi-

cine, whose powers are infallible. No! disease is disorder. The functions of the system are disturbed; order is to be brought out of confusion; the commotions are to be allayed; all impediments are to be removed; all facilities are to be afforded, that the inherent powers of life may resume their proper functions; that the "*vis medicatrix naturæ*," the organic, dynamic force may exert its supremacy. Now, how can this be accomplished? Not certainly by one grand effort, not by one medicine however powerful:—no; there is no specific for disease; there is no one measure which can calm the terrific commotions of the system and throw, as it were, oil on its troubled waters. Let the declaration go forth with all the authority which can be given to it, by the combined influence of the whole medical profession;—that there is no cure for any disease: no single remedy, no happy combination of remedies for any disease which has ever affected humanity.

The same disease so called, never presents precisely the same character. It varies its type, its symptoms, in every patient; yea, in the same patient, every day, sometimes every hour. Hence the remedies must be frequently modified, as to their character, their force, their frequency. Disease, therefore, is to be treated by a series of remedial measures; in other words, by a regular course of medical treatment, and not by a reliance on a single remedy, however powerful; and this treatment must be conducted under the guidance of scientific principles. Under this view of the nature of medical science, it is painful, as well as amazing, to hear the continued and anxious inquiry for a cure for a disease; a cure for rheumatism, or gout, or consumption;—to find nobles and kings advertising pecuniary rewards for a remedy for the plague, the yellow fever, the cholera maligna; and still more painful and mortifying to find men, within the pale of the medical profession, boasting of their prescriptions for the pestilence; their never-failing antidotes to the most subtle and mysterious poisons which float on the atmosphere, or emanate from the caverns of the earth. A cure for cholera!—as well might a single soldier, of Saxon blood, if you please, oppose himself successfully to the armies of Mexico; or a single Hungarian patriot put to flight the Cossaks of Russia.

The ever-varying type of cholera; the multiplied changes which every patient, suffering from this terrible complaint, undergoes, from the first mild, insidious onset, to its terrible termination in fatal collapse, demands a multiplicity of treatment and often a succession of remedial agents, apparently, to the uninstructed observer, the antipodes to each other. Hence, profuse bleeding is demanded in one case, and copious libations of alcohol in another. Calomel will often prove advantageous, while the powerful astringents and opiates are imperiously demanded in other instances.

Who but the well-instructed and scientific physician, can explain such paradoxes? Who else can safely wield the powerful weapons at his command, and successfully urge them against disease and pestilence?

Better, far better for patients, to trust themselves to the inherent powers of the system, to the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, and abandon all attempts at cure, than submit himself to any of the specifics for cholera, or to the tender mercies of the ignorant empiric, who makes experiments as freely on the health and life, as on the credulity of his patient.

The high, the glorious character of the medical profession, as now presented, is the work of modern times, and chiefly has it been established during the present century. Much has been done and is still doing by our professional brethren in Europe, but American physicians have contributed largely towards elevating the character and giving efficiency to the principles of medical science. The proofs of this declaration cannot now be adduced; but permit me to fix your attention for a few moments on the labours of that truly great man, who appeared on the theatre of life, amidst the turmoils and struggles of our glorious revolution, entered the scenes of political strife, and became one of the immortal signers of the Declaration of American Independence. I allude to Doctor Benjamin Rush, one of the founders of the first medical school in these United States, now the University of Pennsylvania, and for many years, one of its most popular and efficient professors.

Returning from his public professional and political duties to

the quiet employments of private practise and study ; his mind, highly wrought by the hand of nature, always active and resplendent, was so thoroughly imbued with the principles of liberty and independence, that it could no longer submit to the dictation of authority, to the dogmas of the learned, or the prejudices of the masses of mankind.

He made his own observations, instituted his own experiments and exercised his own intellect. He liberated his own mind, and then proclaimed liberty of thought to those who were still in bondage. He entered on a crusade against all the evils which afflicted his beloved science, retarding its upward flight, and its benevolent tendencies. Especially did he plant the artillery of his fertile genius against the nosological systems of the day,* and rested not until they fell one after another before his mighty energies. He waged a successful war against all ideas respecting the separate existence, or the invariable character of diseases, declaring that disease was morbid action ; and that its phenomena were ever changing. Hence he denounced in the strongest terms, the whole body of "routine practitioners;" the professional empirics, who, neglecting to exercise their own talents for observation and reflection, blindly followed the dicta of their masters, went to books for their remedies, and prescribed for the name of a disease, instead of conforming their prescriptions to the ever varying condition of the patient's system.

This he emphatically denounced as "Paganism in Medicine;" declaring "that the sword will probably be sheathed forever as an instrument of death, before physicians will cease to add to the mortality of mankind by prescribing for the names of diseases."†

Doctor Rush proclaimed that a revolution must follow the inculcation of this truth, and his prediction was fulfilled. He was the author of the revolution; he liberated the professional mind from colonial bondage, from slavery to systems sanctioned by time and authority, and bade it, to think and act independently.

The results of this mighty effort we all enjoy ; but we cannot

*Rush's Inq. Vol. 1, p. 19, 20.

†Ib. p. 99.

fully estimate their immense value, the great practical utility which has resulted from the genius and eloquence of this highly gifted and most excellent physician, benefits which while they embalm the memory and character of Rush, cast a brilliant reflection on the school, the city and the country with which his name will ever be honourably connected.

Having effected this revolution in medicine, the enthusiastic and ardent genius of Rush carried him further than sober reflection would justify. He proclaimed the unity of disease, and therefore the identity of morbid action. Hence he advised great simplicity in practice and anticipated the most glorious results from the establishment of his system of medicine. "Could we lift," says Dr. Rush writing in the year 1809, "the curtain of time which separates the year 1847 from our view, we should see cancers, pulmonary consumptions, apoplexies, palsies, epilepsy and hydrophobia struck out of the lists of mortal diseases."* Alas! for humanity; this prediction has not been verified, and the system of Rush hardly survived the existence of its eloquent advocate.

Much however had been accomplished in breaking down old systems, destroying hypotheses and giving a right direction to the human intellect, now made free, in its indefatigable quest for professional knowledge. The philosophy of medicine was assiduously cultivated; observations were made with more accuracy—the modifications of disease by their causes, and especially also by the tissues and organs involved, were clearly demonstrated; there was a more thorough examination made of the symptoms of disease during life, and of the results, as ascertained after death; the *materia medica* was purified, its active articles were tested, their *modus operandi* was submitted to strict investigations, and the beautiful actions and reactions of different tissues and organs, under the influence of healthy or morbid stimuli were conspicuously set forth, and the whole theory of medicine was brought, as near perfection as the state of the accessory arts and sciences would permit.

The leader in this great advancement, in these admirable im-

*Inq. Vol. 1, p. 248.

provements in the principles and practice of medicine, was Nathaniel Chapman, M. D., now Emeritus Professor of this University, and whose resignation from the active duties of the Professorship, we are called upon this day to record with filial sentiments of regret and sorrow. Upwards of forty years has he had official connexion with this school. During this long period he has been known throughout the United States, as the eloquent and learned teacher, the judicious, and experienced practitioner of medicine, the excellency of whose moral and social qualities has endeared him alike, to students and patients, to the profession and the public.

Originally from Virginia, he has identified himself with our city and school. Coming here at an early age, he became a disciple of Doctor Rush, finished his course of instruction, and, after a short visit to Europe, commenced the practice of medicine in this city, soon manifesting, by his talents, his literary and scientific attainments, and his delightful social qualities, that he was no ordinary man. He early secured public attention, obtained a lucrative practice, and was honoured, in the year 1807, when still under thirty years of age, by an appointment as the assistant of Doctor James, the Professor of Obstetrics in this University. In the year 1813, he was appointed to the Professorship of *Materia Medica*, and in 1816 succeeded the late Doctor Benjamin Smith Barton as Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine.

It is not for me to become the eulogist of Professor Chapman, or to record the benefits he has conferred on the profession. This must be done by one more qualified to portray his excellencies and to display his character. The early promise of his life was abundantly fulfilled; he practised the profession with great success; manifesting a quick, almost intuitive perception of the actual condition of his patient, and regulating his prescriptions with the most unerring judgment. Quickness of perception, and an accurate, discriminating judgment, were the great characteristics of his mind. His resources were inexhaustible; and the despairing victim of suffering and disease, would feel hope renovated under the cheering influences of his presence, and confidence in his talents and resources.

As a teacher, a professor, his popularity was immense, and deservedly so. Forsaking ancient systems and wild hypotheses, he developed the harmonious action of the different organs of the economy in health, and pointed out their sympathies in disease; he made all knowledge to bear on the everyday duties of the physician; and thus brought his scientific principles to contribute most efficiently to the amelioration of human suffering and the prolongation of life. All this public instruction was imparted in a manner so eloquent, so striking, so sparkling with wit and humour, that attention was arrested and the memory of the student became well furnished for future usefulness. Pupils flocked to his public teachings, and so many were anxious to be enrolled on his private list, that he was forced to call on his medical friends for assistance. He was universally beloved, as well as admired, and so many of us have profited by his teachings and hung upon his eloquence, that he may well be styled our professional father. The sun of his glory is no longer shedding its brilliant and fructifying rays, at the zenith of his strength and beauty: it is sinking towards the western horizon with beams less splendid, it may be, but mellowed and hallowed by the lapse of time, still throwing a glorious light on the scenes of his former labours, and followed by the love and admiration of his friends, his patients and his pupils.

We have thus endeavoured to portray the true character of the medical profession, and to present the bright examples of the two great teachers of the philosophy of medicine in our country, as incentives to follow the glorious path they have indicated, to usefulness and eminence.

Cultivate principles in medicine. Exercise sedulously your own minds, observe accurately, record your observations, think for yourselves; analyse the nature of disease, form your own indications in every given case, and adapt every remedy you administer to the exact circumstances of your patient.

By these means and these alone, you will be raised above the level of the empiric; your superiority will be known, it will be felt. You will honour yourselves, you will honour your profession and you will reflect credit on your Alma Mater. As the

character of a child raises or depresses that of its parents, so the conduct of physicians has a reflex influence on the institutions in which they were educated. You are our representatives, wherever you may practise your profession. See to it, that you forsake not the paths of science for those of empiricism. As for this school her stand has been taken. She was the original founder of medical science in the United States. She has always cultivated and enforced sound medical principles. Her course is onward, and, *Deo volente*, will be onward. Science never grows old, and a scientific institution feels not the infirmities of age. The lapse of time but strengthens her foundations and enlarges her superstructure. It furnishes her with more abundant materials, and improves her capability for imparting knowledge and practical wisdom. Clouds may hang about the base of the temple of medicine, and sometimes may conceal some of her fair proportions from the public eye, but they still exist, and will soon be resplendent with the light of day.

The Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania has suffered a grievous loss in the declining health and strength of their late venerable and beloved professor; but her interests are in the hands of an intelligent, faithful and judicious Board of Trustees, who will speedily cast the mantle, thrown from the shoulders of our friend, on some one of the many deserving aspirants for professorial responsibilities; one, who will doubtless imbibe the spirit, perhaps a double portion of the spirit, of his predecessors, and carry on the work of improvement; so that this institution shall maintain the supremacy she has always, and, we trust, deservedly, enjoyed in the minds and hearts of her children.

One word more of advice from us, your teachers, before our official connexion be forever dissolved. If principles in science be important; principles in morals and religion are equally important. Medical principles will render you great physicians, but they cannot render you, morally good. Cultivate religious principles, in connexion with your profession, if you desire to be perfect. Then you will be prospered; your course through life will be useful and happy; and your end—peace.