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1851 Charge to the Graduates of Jefferson Medical College

Thomas Dent Mutter, MD

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CHARGE TO THE GRADUATES

OF

JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE, PHILADELPHIA.

Delivered March 8th, 1851.

BY PROFESSOR THOMAS D. MUTTER.

WITH A LIST OF THE GRADUATES.

PUBLISHED BY THE GRADUATING CLASS.

PHILADELPHIA:

T. K. AND P. G. COLLINS, PRINTERS.

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PHILADELPHIA:
T. K. AND P. G. COLLINS, PRINTERS.
1851.
PHILADELPHIA, March 1, 1851.

Prof. Thomas D. Mütter.

Dear Sir:—In compliance with the wishes and instructions of the Graduating Class of Jefferson Medical College, we would respectfully solicit a copy of your valedictory address for publication.

Hoping that you may be pleased to comply with our request, we are, very truly,

Your obedient servants,

James G. Dickson, Pa., Secretary.

Henry R. Rogers, Me.

John Everette Herrick, N. H.

Albert D. Smith, Vt.

Ira L. Moore, Mass.

Charles C. Foote, Conn.

De Witt C. McIntire, N. Y.

Winslow Jackson, N. J.

Samuel G. Statler, Pa.

John A. Thomson, Del.

Beverly P. Reese, Va.

Edward Warren, M. D., N. C.

Maurice A. Moore, S. C.

Flournoy Carter, Ga.

Jesse P. Hope, Va., Chairman.

Philadelphia, March 8th, 1851.

Gentlemen:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note soliciting a copy of my valedictory address for publication. In yielding to the request of those whom you represent, allow me to express my thanks for the honor conferred; and I beg that you will convey to them, and accept for yourselves, individually, my warmest wishes for your welfare and happiness.

Very faithfully yours,

Tho. D. Mütter.

Messrs. Jesse P. Hope, Chairman,

James G. Dickson, Secretary,

Henry R. Rogers,

John Everette Herrick,

Albert D. Smith, and others,

Committee.
CHARGE.

GRADUATES OF JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE.

GENTLEMEN:—

In the name of the Trustees and Faculty of your Alma Mater, I am here, on this most interesting and important occasion, to tender you our warmest congratulations on your successful accomplishment of the “first stage” in your pilgrimage of life, and to bid you “take heart” against the difficulties and dangers with which those of the future must necessarily be beset.

I have said that this is a most important occasion to you all. From this day, you “put on manhood.” From this day, you date the entrance of your frail bark of life, freighted with so much of joy and so much of sorrow, upon the stormy sea of the world, and bid adieu to the quiet haven of home, with all its childish and youthful endearments. From this day begins your life of responsibility—your “life in earnest!”

“May the glorious morn
Presage the future eve!”

Dawning in joy and gladness, may the genial rays of the sun of prosperity strengthen you at noon; and when the “lengthening shadows” warn you of its close, may honor and renown, and peace with God and man, rest upon you!

To-day, 228 physicians leave this hall. What an influence must they exert upon the communities in which hereafter they are to move! What fountains of good or of evil may, nay must, they become! Has this fact occurred to you before? Has each one of you asked himself the question, in what manner is my future life to be passed? Am I to live an influential, well-informed, and man-loving physician, blessing and benefiting those by whom I am surrounded; or shall I endeavor, in the vulgar phrase, to “enjoy life,” caring nothing for my profession, or estimating it as a trade, make money the basis of all my aspirations, leaving honor and reputation to him who values them? If you have never asked yourselves these questions, the time has come when you must do so. Your first
step must be directed towards either one or the other of these positions. May I not hope that all will select the better path, sterile and thorny though it may prove, and carefully shun the facile and flowery one, that too surely leads to dishonor and despair?

To aid you in this determination, I have thought that the brief period allotted to us for this address could not be more profitably employed than in the consideration of those aids and appliances by means of which success in professional life is most generally obtained; I mean honorable success, for the mere acquisition of notoriety, or the accumulation of fortune, may most readily be reached by the possession of qualities directly the reverse of those with which every conscientious and virtuous physician should be imbued. Examples illustrative of the truth of this position are too rife for us to delay a moment in an attempt to sustain it. But to attain the eminence to which each one of you should aspire demands the presence of certain attributes of mind and heart, which, if not possessed, should be eagerly sought after.

I cannot admit the opinion of Helvetius, that every one is born with equal capacity; but I am very sure that nearly every human being possesses natural intellect sufficient, if properly nurtured and trained, to enable him to become at least a useful member of society, if he does not ultimately reach distinction. Starting, then, with this position, it will be my task in the lecture to point out the mental and moral culture to which each one of you should from this day diligently subject himself. To some, the task will be easy and delightful; to others, a warfare, in which indolence, perverseness, pride, ill-nature, and sensuality will present themselves as foes. But let those who may unfortunately belong to this latter class "strengthen their hearts" with the truth, that all these natural enemies may, by proper strategy and courage, be certainly overthrown.

1st. To secure true eminence, not popularity, not notoriety, not the distinction that friendly or family influence or wealth may for a time confer, the medical man must, as the first and most important requisite, obtain a thorough medical education. Whatever may be your natural power of intellect, however happily it may be constituted, rest assured that, without proper culture, it can never secure you the position in the profession at which you should from this day direct your gaze. I need not stop to indicate the various subjects which enter into a thorough system of medical education, most of these having already been pointed out during the courses of lectures just concluded;
but it is my duty to tell you frankly that, although we this day admit you into the portals of our temple, and place in your hands a testimonial which “inter nos et ubique gentium,” will secure to you all the rights and privileges of the doctorate, your life of true study has just commenced. Be not then too anxious to commence your professional duties. A few months additional investigation of the great principles of our science will enable you to enter upon practice with tenfold advantage to yourself and to your patients. But a mere medical education, however complete, is not sufficient to obtain for you the elevated position you should seek. So wide is its range, not only in the objects of its study, but in the extent and number of sciences that are tributary to it, that it would seem scarcely possible for one to become a proficient in medicine, without, at the same time, acquiring a respectable general education. But unfortunately this is not always true, and often we meet with doctors, so termed, who seem utterly ignorant of all save their peculiar science. Such never attain either the social or professional rank so desirable to all; for, as the public is sure to judge of a man’s professional information by the information he displays on other subjects, any manifestation of ignorance is always charged upon him. An error in grammar, a vulgarism in expressing himself, or a display of ignorance upon ordinary topics of conversation, will most effectually blast him for ever in any refined or intellectual society. Study, then, to acquire a liberal, apart from your professional, education; and while I would not quench a spark of medical enthusiasm, I would yet have you something more than a mere doctor of medicine, a man of one idea.

But I would caution you against attempting eminence in any other department of science, if you desire to secure it in your own.

“One science only will one genius fit,
So vast is art, so narrow human wit.”

A general acquaintance with other sciences is all that a physician can hope to attain—an attempt to excel in all is sure to entail mediocrity in his own.

A recent author has capitally portrayed the mistake so often committed by a medical man, grasping at honors to which he has no legitimate claim. I would not, says he, “have you known as the best fiddler in the village, and yet you may love and understand music. I would not that you should scribble verses, and fancy yourself a second Milton, and yet you may read and appreciate poetry. It were better not to write a novel, although there is no harm in ad-
miring Scott, or Irving. It is best to leave preaching to the clergy­
men, and yet you should attend church.”

“Meddle not with the law, for fear the law may meddle with you
when you least expect it. Above all, shun military titles, for there
is nothing more ridiculous than Col. Smith, M. D.”

The physician must also be a thinking, observing, and reasoning
man. One may be very diligent and industrious, and yet get no
farther than this through the whole period of his education. He
may become an accomplished person, full of information; a walking
cyclopædia; and at the end of his labors may have attained the
reputation of a learned and agreeable person. But is this sufficient
to satisfy a man of ambition? Far from it! One who thus limits
his views can by no possibility become conspicuous in his profession,
or ever prove useful to the community in which he moves. “He
may be learned, but he is not wise. He may be a cogent reasoner,
but he wants practical common sense. He may be familiar with
every authority under the sun, and yet fail to distinguish one dis­
case from another. He can tell you what Hippocrates and Galen
say, but for himself he has no opinion. He forgot, in the outset of
his career, that the best part of every man’s knowledge is that which
he has acquired for himself, by observing closely, pondering deeply,
and diligently sifting the wheat from the chaff—a knowledge, which
cannot be fully communicated to another, but which to him is a mine
of gold.”—Let me advise you, therefore, to commence at once ob­
serving for yourselves. Don’t trust to what you are told in lectures,
or read in books, but make the knowledge your own, by your own
labors.—Lectures and books will serve as guides and beacons, but the
goal can only be reached by travelling the road yourselves.

The physician should have a reverence for his art. “It has become
a very common complaint among physicians that medicine is not as
much honored as it was in the earlier ages, that it has in some de­
gree lost caste, and that men are not so thoroughly educated as in
former times, and do not receive the homage once paid them.” To a
certain extent this is true, for as the sun of civilization and the light
of science have changed the medium through which all objects and
arts are viewed, and for the mists of doubt and superstition have
substituted the brightness of day, hero-worship in all professions has
gradually died away. In truth “medicine is no longer held to be
the offspring of the gods. Apollo no longer claims the title of
The great physician!” No Hippocrates now sits enthroned, pre­
scribing laws for the medical world. No sage of Cos is tendered a bribe
to avert the pestilence from a neighboring realm. No Idomeneus sings the praises of a Machaon in language fit only for the gods. No Æsclepiades trace back their noble origin to the son of Apollo, the fabulous Esculapius.” The era for such things is past; but that medicine maintains its proper rank among the learned professions is fully attested by the position in society maintained by nearly every eminent physician in Europe or this country.

In monarchical countries, where kings and princes hold sway, all professions are held somewhat in disrepute; but notwithstanding this, no men are more respected or more honored than the “wise physicians.” Wealth, and rank, and social position are within the reach of all who desire them; and the history of the profession will bear me out in this assertion. But in our own country our position is far more honorable, inasmuch as there are no ranks above us; and I appeal to each one of you, if the chief motive for entering upon the study of medicine has not been the contemplation of the social eminence of your preceptors. In every village in our land, the parson, the lawyer, and the doctor are the “great men of the place,” and none stands higher than the doctor. Whose friendship is more highly prized; whose name is so often coupled with expressions of gratitude, and love, and confidence; whose visit is more anxiously expected or more warmly received; whose cheerful smiles and kindly expressions so readily banish gloom and sorrow; whose hand is so eagerly grasped by the devoted wife when she thanks him for the care with which he has watched over her husband, herself, or her children; into whose ear is the tale of private griefs, hidden sorrows, blighted hopes, and dreadful anticipations of the future, so readily poured forth! Be ye sure, gentlemen, that such a position is far happier and far more honorable than that held by the “richest Croesus of them all.” It is an object worthy of the utmost desire, and is a reward more “precious than rubies,” for the fatigue, anxieties, and sorrows, with which the pursuit of his calling is almost necessarily attended.

Well did the wise son of Sirach declare that “the skill of the physician shall lift up his head, and in the sight of great men he shall be in admiration.” “For of the Most High cometh healing, and he shall receive honor of the King.”

The physician should be an honest man. I do not mean by this, that he should be a man that would scorn to steal his neighbor’s goods, or consider it a crime not to pay his just debts; such honesty is the attribute of most men; but I mean that he should be honest
in claiming for his profession no more than is justly its due; that he should be honest in faithfully sustaining the code of ethics promulgated by the profession among whom he dwells; that he should be honest in all professional intercourse with his brethren; that he should be honest in his opposition to all empiricism, in whatever garb it may arise; that he should be honest in upholding the dignity of his art; and finally that he should be honest at the bedside of his patient. Much injury is inflicted upon the profession by its members claiming too much for its power in controlling disease; we have taught the public to look upon medicine with a feeling near akin to superstition and awe; to rely upon our dicta as infallible, to suppose us in some way the positive arbiters of their fate; the dispensers of health and vigor, and even life itself. Thus falsely taught, is it not natural for them to consider the death of a patient under most circumstances the result either of negligence on the part of the physician, or a shameful ignorance of his profession, a profession so rich in resources, so powerful when these are rightly applied? Is it wonderful that quackery should flourish, and the profession be thrown into disrepute, when the promises of its members are so often falsified? Let us hasten to disabuse them of their error. Let us tell them candidly that, although our resources are in reality great, and that often, by their proper administration, dangers are diminished; yet without the help and blessing of Him who gives knowledge to the physician, and health to the sick, these resources are feeble and powerless! Do this, and the doom of quackery is sounded, and the interest of our noble art materially advanced.

How modest, and yet how true, was the reply of good old Ambrose Paré when complimented upon his skill in curing the Duke de Guise of his terrific wound: “I dressed him, but God healed him.”

I have said that a physician should honestly abide by the code of ethics advanced by his professional brethren. No one can or will deny the correctness of this position; and yet how constantly are laws by which each one should consider himself religiously bound, broken and trampled under foot. Look well to your code then, and hold it sacred.

Why is it that physicians are so frequently at variance with their brethren of the same neighborhood? I do not mean that we quarrel more than the members of the other learned professions. But why should we quarrel at all? Is it because—

“Quarrels ginger life,
And help to season friends?”
Is it not rather because we are not honest and straightforward in our intercourse? Some interference, real or imaginary, in our practice, on the part of some brother, is diligently reported to us. Instead of going at once, and asking an explanation in a kind and conciliatory manner, we take fire immediately, indulge in harsh remarks, which are duly carried by our officious friend to some friend of the other party, treat the latter coldly, or when we meet, perhaps, cut him at once. It is in this way that nine out of ten of the difficulties are brought about. *A kind word in season would have prevented the occurrence.*

Be honest, then, in your dealings with professional brethren, and recollect that he who degrades a colleague, degrades himself and his art. But, above all, *scorn* the mean, assassin-like crime of secret detraction. Never be ashamed or afraid to say to a man's face what you have said behind his back. "Non fraude, neque occultis, sed palam et armatum populum Romanum hostes suos ulcisi"—not by fraud, not by secret machinations, but *openly* and *armed*, the Roman people avenges itself on its foes—was the answer of the Senate of Rome to the proposition of the King of the Catti to take off Arminius by poison. Well has it been said, that "he who hesitates not by falsehood, either known to be falsehood, or recklessly taken up without care whether it be false or true, to destroy the fair fame of an adversary, wants but little of the guilt of him who would stab an enemy in the dark."

I have said that the physician should be honest in upholding the dignity of his profession, and in his opposition to quackery. Many physicians, I fear, lose sight of the *dignity of their science*, and in the struggle for bread, come to consider it as a mere *trade*. To such the practice must be considered the most thankless, uninviting, and painful pursuit of man. They realize to the full the assertion of Johnson, "That it is a melancholy attendance on misery, a mean submission to peevishness, and a continual interruption to rest and pleasure." They are day laborers, and feel as such. Their whole conduct is in keeping with their feeling, and if money is to be made, it must be made, even though the whole profession of medicine is disgraced in its accumulation. Such are ever ready to become quacks themselves, or sanction quackery in others. Scarcey a paper comes to us that is not filled with the advertisements of quacks, and, what is worse, backed up and sustained by the certificates of regular physicians. A good rule is to refuse a certificate to every patent medicine or instrument, for I hold that every honorable physician
is bound to make public any discovery calculated to benefit his fellow-man.

Lastly, he should be honest at the bedside. I would not have a physician magnify his works, even although he may have been the instrument of great good. If a man says to another, I have saved your life, it is most natural that the patient should look with reverence and affection towards one who has bestowed so great a boon. But is the physician honest in saying this? Hardly; and although he may have been the agent in many cases in the accomplishment of the end, yet, in the vast majority of diseases, the risk is too trifling for any physician to suppose that he has been of great use to his patient.

In cases of great danger, when life is really at stake, unless some cogent reason forbids, it is the duty of the medical attendant to deal candidly and honestly with the friends of the patient or the patient himself. Each one of us has some preparation to make, some kind word to utter, some fond embrace to exchange, ere he quits this “earthly tabernacle,” and passes to that “bourne from which no traveller returns.” If the physician fails under these circumstances to discharge his duty, painful and heart-rending though it be, he assumes a responsibility of the most momentous character. The worldly affairs of his patient may, by his negligence, be left in irretrievable confusion; the happiness of a whole community may be destroyed; but, above all, he may become the direct agent by which an immortal soul is lost.

The physician should be a discreet man. One who was wise above all men, long since railed against “tattlers, tale-bearers, and meddlers in other men’s matters!” but the evil was not eradicated. It still flourishes. It seems scarcely possible that one possessed of the ordinary attributes of a gentleman could ever forget the sacred character of confidence, and allow himself to promulgate and divulge what has been revealed to him under this pledge. But the love of notoriety, the disposition in some cases to make mischief, or mere indiscretion, often causes this barrier to be crushed to the ground, and the most secret concerns of an individual or family entrusted to him by those who confided in his honor and discretion, blazoned forth to the world by the physician. Rely upon it, such a man’s career will be marked by constant bickering and heartburnings, and must to a certainty end in disappointment and disgrace. “Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles.”

The physician should possess self-respect. In no profession,
probably, does a man more need the possession of this truly honorable attribute. The very nature of his avocation, which places him at the beck and call of every one, tends to diminish his self-respect; and the desire to please all drags him still lower. But it is your duty, from the outset of your career, to shun this spirit, which, if indulged in, leads the physician to become a fawning sycophant. The readiness with which some yield to the whims and caprices of their patients is in the highest degree disgusting. Bear always in mind who you are and what your office is, and determine never to add another to the disgraceful herd. "The well qualified physician should ever regard himself as the superior, in his proper sphere, to every other person, of whatever rank or condition. He must combine suavity of manners with his independence; but he must not yield a rational opinion without reasons perfectly satisfactory to his judgment for so doing." The noble conduct of Sir Mathew Tierney in the case of George the Fourth, or that of Hoffmann, the physician of Frederick the Great, might serve as your model of self-respect. "Sire," said the latter, when grossly abused by the king because he was unable at once to relieve him, "I cannot bear reproaches which I do not deserve; I have tried all the remedies art can supply or nature admit; I am indeed a professor by your bounty, but if my abilities or integrity are doubted, I am willing to leave not only the University, but also the kingdom; and you cannot drive me into any place where the name of Hoffmann will want respect!"

The physician should be a self-relying man. One who, while he treats authority with all due deference, yet has the spirit to feel that he is no man's man—who knows that he can trust himself—who experiences

"The generous pride
That glows in him who on himself relies,
Entering the lists of life!"

Who realizes with the old poet that—

"Man is his own star; and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Commands all light, all influence, all fate;
Nothing to him falls early or too late;
Our acts our angels are, or good, or ill,
Our fatal shadows, that walk by us still."

_Epilogue, Beaumont and Fletcher._

Who feels that, when called to combat with the "King of Terrors"
himself, he is fully armed at all points; who is assured that the shield, which he boldly thrusts forward to screen his suffering patient, is polished, strong, unyielding; so that, however sharp or well directed the dart, it must glance or be broken. Such a man is indeed a treasure to the community in which he lives, and an honor to the noble profession of which he is a member.

The physician must be a determined, persevering man; a man of steady purpose. There is scarcely a quality which so much dignifies human nature as consistency of conduct—and no weakness more deplorable than that of instability. We daily witness the truth of the aphorism, “Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.” The wavering, uncertain, aimless man is entitled to no confidence, and for the most part receives none. At the appearance of the first difficulty, he falters; at the first temptation, he flies from his post. Examine, choose, compare, reject, but having once made your selection of a profession, stand by your decision. Difficulties, and privations, and hardships, must be encountered; but determination will overcome them all.

“The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them; sloth and folly
Shiver and sink at sights of toil and hazard,
And make the impossibility they fear.”

And not only sloth and folly, but even genius will be outdone by perseverance. It often is the case that he who can endure the most is in the end the most successful, or, as Hudibras has it,

“’Tis not now, who’s stout and bold,
But who bears hunger best, and cold;
And he’s approved the most deserving
Who longest can hold out at starving.”

He that resolves upon any great end, by that resolution has scaled the great barrier to it. He will find it removing difficulties, searching out or contriving means, giving courage for despondency, and strength for weakness, and, like the star in the east to the wise men of old, “guiding him nearer and still nearer to the sum of all perfection.” If we are but fixed and resolute, bent upon the accomplishment of our end, we shall find means enough to do it on every side—and at every moment; when, therefore, difficulties present themselves, when friends and fortune fail, when we realize that hope has told us flattering tales, when the enemy oppresses us, and the future is shrouded in “terrible darkness,” be not dismayed, but
"Stand like an anvil," when the stroke
Of stalwart men falls fierce and fast;
Storms but more deeply root the oak,
Whose brawny arms embrace the blast.

"Stand like an anvil," when the sound
Of pond'rous hammers pains the ear;
Thine but the still and stern rebound
Of the great heart that cannot fear.

The physician must be an industrious man.

I need scarcely pause to enforce this position. Without habits of industry, the finest talents are, for the most part, lost. But we are forced, if we desire distinction, to industry, by the character of our age—an age of progress—of great discoveries, of rapid advancement in all things. "It is not," remarks an eloquent author, "possibly an age of splendid achievement and remarkable genius. Pericles and Aspasia saw in Greece more great spirits than now tread the habitable globe. It is not an Augustan age of literature; nor do the arts find a munificent patron like Lorenzo de Medici. Nor can we recall the age of Elizabeth, with Howard on the sea; Coke upon the bench; Bacon in philosophy; Shakespeare in poetry; Hooker in the church, and Raleigh everywhere. And yet our age is remarkable. It, beyond all others, reaches forward and reaps the reward of its own progress. Other eras have been fruitful in abstract speculation, elegant literature, and heroic battles. Ours is marked by the rapid spread of thought and the development of the individual man."

And in this progress of light, no profession, no science, no art, has made more rapid and substantial improvement than our own. Upon you, to whom the future interest of this noble profession is intrusted, rests the responsibility of carrying it still nearer perfection. Each day adds something new to the general stock of medical lore, and it is your bounden duty diligently and carefully to investigate the nature and worth of these additions, and endeavor at the same time to contribute your own mite towards the elucidation of difficulties, or the improvement of your art. Up, then, young men; you, to whom a future generation has to look for the decision of the questions which the feeble light of our day prevents us from determining. You, to whom is intrusted the noble work of sustaining the honors and prolonging the glories of a science whose administration is the most dignified of all charitites, and whose author confessedly is God. Oh, yes, methinks I can trace in the glowing lineaments,
the bounding pulse, the deep, strong breathing of determination of some among you; the germ of another Hunter, another Cooper, or another Physick. Quench not this spirit, young men. No! cherish it as you would the "priceless gem;" embrace it with your whole heart; by night and by day, wear it in your bosom, and warm it into life, and vigor, and power irresistible.

The physician must be a charitable man. There cannot be a question that our profession as a whole exercises more positive pecuniary charity than any other. In verification of this assertion, we need only turn to the various public institutions throughout the land, the vast majority of which pay their medical attendants nothing. Again, every practitioner will tell you that he daily gives up a large portion of his time to cases from which he cannot possibly derive the slightest pecuniary reward.

I do not complain of this, although I regret to say we receive but little credit for it from the public at large. But I would not confine the charity of a physician to the mere giving of alms; no, there is a charity far more precious than this, the charity of the heart. The kind expression, the sympathizing tear, will often convey more solace, more heartfelt and permanent satisfaction, than if we poured all the gold of Ophir into the lap of our suffering patient. It is this charity which "covereth a multitude of ills," which will secure to him the widow's love, the orphan's prayer, the poor man's blessing, that the physician should chiefly cultivate.

The physician should be an ambitious man. "The love of fame is a powerful and valuable faculty of the soul. It assumes various appearances, and goes under various names. It is called emulation, pride, vanity, vain glory, a love of notoriety, a thirst for distinction, and by several other epithets, depending upon the original strength of the faculty, and the various objects to which it is directed. It is always of itself a noble passion or feeling, though it may be, and often is, indeed, prostituted to ignoble pursuits and habits. Man would be the most pitiable creature without it, and society could not exist for a day. The love of praise is so congenial to our nature, and so powerful a spur to every undertaking, that the moral world would be a chaos without its animating influences." It is like the sun; it gives life and heat to all around. To say to a young man "be not ambitious," is to say to him live the life of a drone. A man without ambition is a mere "clod of the valley," of earth, earthy. If ambition were a sin, is it probable that a wise Creator would have endowed nine-tenths of his people with it? All acknowledge its wide-spread existence.
"This dug thy living grave, Pythagoras, the traveller from I-lades;  
For this, dived Empedocles into Etna's fiery whirlpool;  
For this, conquerors, regicides, and rebels, have dared their perilous crimes;  
In all men, from the monarch to the menial, lurketh lust of fame—  
The savage and the sage alike regard their labors proudly;  
Yea, in death, the glazing eye is illumined by the hope of reputation,  
And the stricken warrior is glad that his wounds are salved with glory—  
But yet,  
There is a blameless love of fame, springing from desire of justice—  
When a man hath fealty won and fairly claimed his honors:  
And then fame cometh as encouragement to the inward consciousness of merit."

Tupper.

"It is such that thou shouldst seek!"

But the physician should also be a gentleman. The Dictionary tells us that a gentleman is one raised by birth, office, fortune, or education, above the vulgar. But surely such a definition is far from the truth. The veriest cubs I have ever met with have boasted of the rich current that circulated in their veins—have tossed their heads, empty and witless, as they passed by a poor, but honest tradesman. To be a gentleman, something more is necessary than to have had a grandfather.

"What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?  
Alas, not all the blood of all the Howards."

That office does not confer gentility, is so obvious that, in politics especially, a gentleman can scarcely be found to accept one. And who has not heard of "Jacks in office?" If fortune was the key to the sanctum of the gentleman, how many a knave, how many a swindler, how many an ignoramus, would find admittance—and how many a true gentleman be excluded!

Nor does education alone make the gentleman, without being combined with good-breeding and good morals. Education, although it may modify and harmonize, never develops that almost indescribable something which characterizes the gentleman.

Some imagine that fine clothes, or, as the poet hath it—

"A braw new hat, a natty coat,  
A yellow glove, a shiny boot,"

make the gentleman. But no gentleman was ever made by a tailor; and although that Prince of Dandies, Brummell, declared that

"Starch made the man,"

he never said it made a gentleman. Others suppose that to do no-
thing, to idle away one's time, to live in fact a mere drone, is the
characteristic of the gentleman. If this were so, then Prince Le
Boo was right, when he said that a pig was the only gentleman he
met in England, as he was the only thing he saw that did no work.

Perhaps I cannot better define the character of a gentleman than
has been done by a most distinguished writer of our own country—
Bishop Doane. "A gentleman," says he, "is but a gentle man—no
more, no less; a diamond polished that was a diamond in the rough;
a gentleman is gentle; a gentleman is modest; a gentleman is courte-
sious; a gentleman is generous; a gentleman is slow to take offence,
as being one that never gives it; a gentleman is slow to surmise evil,
as being one that never thinks it; a gentleman goes armed only in
consciousness of right; a gentleman subjects his appetites; a gentle-
man refines his tastes; a gentleman subdues his feelings; a gentle-
man controls his speech; and finally, a gentleman deems every other
better than himself." Of such, doctors should be made.

The physician must possess moral courage. What profession, what
art, what calling demands a courage so unyielding, so self-sacrificing
as that of medicine. He must be a brave man who can meet, with-
out flinching, "the pestilence that walketh at noonday." He must
be a brave man who can, unmoved, take his place by the bedside of
a patient suffering from a contagious disease. He must be a brave
man, who, like Guyon, could leave a blooming bride, friends, fortune,
and fame, and rush to certain death, in the cause of humanity and
science. He must be a brave man who can remain at his post, when
the "plague-spot" breaks every link of affection, turns father from
child, and child from father, and causes even cowardice and ingrati-
tude to pass unnoticed.

Oh, tell me not of the warrior's courage, brilliant though it be,
who, to save his country, rushes into battle! He advances with hope,
and is sustained, admired, and seconded by a whole army. But
what sustains the physician, in the stillness of night, in the chamber
of pestilence, in the reeking hut of the sick beggar—in the cell of
the maniac? A moral courage, which bids him die rather than desert
his charge—a God, who tells him that "a faithful shepherd must
give his life for his flock!"

The physician must not only possess moral courage, but he should
also be a man of strict integrity and virtue.

It is with much gratification I can assert that no profession, not
even that of our holy religion, boasts a higher code of morality than
ours. The marvel is, that any one who pursues it with honesty of
purpose, should ever evince a disposition to stray from the path of rectitude; and we find that the statistics of crime, both at home and abroad, prove conclusively that glaring or vicious derelictions among medical men are exceedingly rare. From a statistical document, recently published in the Moniteur, a French paper, it would appear that, of all the liberal professions, medical men furnish the smallest number of criminals; the number is indeed so small that it has been found impossible to fix a fractional ratio, as with other classes. Since the year 1829, only two physicians have been tried, in all France, for criminal offences. In the ten years, from 1829 to 1839, there were tried, in the various criminal courts of France, 41,679 male prisoners, above the age of twenty-five years; among these, there were thirty-five priests, thirty-three lawyers, seventy-five notaries, sixty-six tip-staffs, but not a single medical man. If in France there exists so much virtue among the doctors, what must be the amount in these United States! Seriously speaking, with the exception of theology probably, no pursuit so speedily and so thoroughly purifies and elevates the character of its votaries. The nobleness of the physician's art, as Lord Bacon hath it, is well shadowed by the poets, in that they made Æsculapius to be "the son of the sun," the one being the fountain of life, the other as the second stream; "but infinitely more honored," he continues, "by our Saviour, who made the body of man the object of his miracles, as the soul was the object of his doctrines!"

How edifying, and how eminently calculated to direct the thoughts of the medical man into the noblest channel, are the daily instances with which he meets, of exalted and touching fortitude, of sublime patience, of heavenly faith—"Who that has kept vigils at the couch of genius, and marked the wayward flickering of its sacred fire, made yet more ethereal by disease, or seen beauty grow almost supernatural in the embrace of pain, and has not felt his mission to be holy as well as responsible? And when a voice that has thrilled millions is hushed, or a mind upon which rest the cares of a nation is prostrated, who has not realized how intimately the healing art is knit into the vast and complex web of human society and human griefs? Oh, can there be a more worthy vocation than that which summons us to minister, as apostles of science, to the greatest exigencies of life? to cheer the soul under the acute sufferings of maternity, and alleviate the decay of nature? to watch over the glimmering dawn and the fading torchlight of existence? to stand beside the mother, whose sobs are hushed that the departure of her
first-born may be undisturbed? and be oracles at the bedside of the revered minister of holy truth, the halo of whose piety softens, on his brow, the lines of mortal agony? What a mastery of self, what requisites, mental and corporeal, are demanded in him who is the observer of scenes like these, whose sympathies are awakened to services such as are befitting the mighty crisis, and whose talents are efficiently enlisted for the triumphant accomplishment of his devout trust!"

Yes, yours is truly a moral, yea, a religious profession. Receive its teachings, embrace them with all the ardor of your age, and be assured that when, with tottering step and sinking frame, you grope through the "valley of the shadow of death," His rod and His staff shall support you; and at the last, when the frail barrier which separates our fleeting world from that whose duration is eternity is passed, you will be greeted with the cheering welcome,

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant; I was sick, and ye comforted me."

Lastly, a physician should be a patriot. I do not mean by this a patriot of the "mob's decree," but a good old-fashioned patriot. A man of honest heart, of pure intentions, of firm and high resolves, of ardent love for his country, because it is his country—a man who, if occasion demands, will not hesitate to shed his last drop of blood in her defence—a man who scorns the petty tricks of the politician, and bids the brawling demagogue stand afar off—a man who takes Washington for his oracle, and Clay, and Webster, and Cass for his associates in principle.

I would have every physician such a man, and especially at this the most fearful period in our political history. While I caution you to shun that "great maelstrom" politics, "which swallows up time and character, morals, reputation, and money, and which makes no return whatever but disappointment and vexation of spirit"—while I entreat you never to be known as a zealous whig, or an unflinching democrat, I would yet have each one of you exert the privilege of an American citizen, and by your influence bind still more closely the bonds which should unite us in all that to brothers belong.

Oh, how strange a spectacle has this our "thrice blessed" country exhibited for the past few months! The brother's love supplanted by the fratricide's hate; the pride of greatness smothered beneath the folds of the serpent of discord; the holy spirit of Union nearly put to flight by the demon of anarchy and civil strife! And all for what?
Simply because our people, forgetting their duty to the "Constitution and laws," have ceased to be true patriots! Will any one believe for an instant that the frantic exhibitions of the fanatics of all quarters could have ever so "disturbed our peace," as they have done, had each one of us been honest in purpose, and a true lover of country rather than self? Will any one believe that the "magnificent fabric of Union" could for a moment have been placed in jeopardy, had we loved it with the true love of the patriot? But how fearful a responsibility do those assume who dare breathe the word Disunion. Disunion!—it makes our blood run cold to hear it even named, and yet men talk about it, predict it, defend it. Oh, shade of Washington! has it come to this? Can it be that this thy noblest monument must be riven to its base, shattered, and cast down? Oh, no, no! I cannot realize that those who call thee "Father" can ever commit such madness. I cannot believe that this "citadel of freedom," based upon a foundation so enduring as thy fame, and cemented with the rich blood of so noble an army of martyrs, can ever be overthrown, even though there may be some so unrighteous and unwise as to desire the catastrophe.

Oh, could these Catilines but realize the glory that even now hangs over our land, or, looking into futurity, picture to themselves the wondrous and gorgeous destiny that naturally awaits the "refuge of the oppressed," possibly their impious hands might be stayed, and the infamy of the traitor transferred to ages yet in the womb of time. Go home, then, gentlemen, determined to do all in your power to avert so fearful a crime as disunion. Go home, determined to cultivate a spirit of conciliation towards all portions of our land. Go home, determined to be patriots. The majesty of the law bids you do this; humanity bids you do this; religious liberty bids you do this; posterity bids you do this; the voices of the illustrious dead of every quarter of our land bid you do this. Go home, and let the noble language of the illustrious Webster sink deep into your hearts:

"For myself, I confess that, if I were to witness the breaking up of the Union, and the Constitution of the United States, I should bow myself to the earth in confusion of face—I should wish to hide myself from the observance of mankind, unless I could stand up and declare truly, before God and man, that, by the utmost exertion of every faculty with which my Creator has endowed me, I had labored to avert the catastrophe!"
But I must hasten to discharge the most painful portion of my duty; I am to bid you farewell; I know that the theme is trite, and that any exhibition of feeling, on such an occasion as this, on the part of the teacher, is looked upon by many as the flimsy covering of sheer hypocrisy. But I envy not the man whose sensibilities are so obtuse as to allow him to approach the conclusions of his labors without the production of a throb of regret. How could it be possible, gentlemen, for me to meet many of you this morning, possibly for the last time in this world, without a feeling of sadness, a single emotion of sorrow!

You have toiled with me, for months, in the broad and teeming field of science; you have daily received me with a smile of welcome; and now that our parting is at hand, you are ready, I am sure you are ready, to extend to me the "right hand" of abiding friendship. I should be more than man, or worse than brute, could I bid you, unmoved, farewell. And, although you have completed your collegiate studies, and have received the testimonial of our satisfaction, you are not to look on the transaction as one that shall diminish the bond of affectionate regard which has knit us so long in one. We shall still regard you, and shall ever claim you, as our sons; wherever you may go, we shall go with you with our love; we shall rejoice to hear that you are happy; we shall mingle our tears with yours, when sorrow shall befall you. You have entwined the best affections of your hearts with ours; and no time, no place, no circumstance, must ever be allowed to sever so holy a union. Go where you will, then, you must bear us with yourselves. Everywhere will you be regarded as the sons of an "Alma Mater" proud to acknowledge so noble a posterity; and into your faithful hands I cheerfully commit her honor, and repose her interests.
GRADUATES

OF

JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE

OF

PHILADELPHIA.

MARCH, 1851.

At a Public Commencement, held on the 8th of March, 1851, the degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred on the following gentlemen by the Hon. Edward King, President of the Institution; after which a Charge to the Graduates was delivered by Professor Mütter.

NAME. STATE. SUBJECT OF THESIS.
Armistead, William B. Alabama. Typhus.
Baily, Elisha S. Pennsylvania. Peculiarities of the Fetal Circulation.
Barber, James K. Ohio. Ergot.
Bateman, Ephraim New Jersey. History of Syphilis.
Battle, Lucius Lucullus (M. D.) Tennessee. Deleterious effects of Atmospheric Air when introduced into the Venous System.
Berry, William Frederick North Carolina. Typhoid Fever.
Bineck, Abraham Virginia. Delirium Tremens.
Bowell, John J. Virginia. Autumnal Remittent Fever.
Brannock, James M. North Carolina. Comparative Physiology of Digestion.

Typhoid Fever.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>SUBJECT OF THESIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brinker, Reuben</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Acute Meningitis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks, John G.</td>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>Acute Gastritis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownrigg, John</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>Congestive Fever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brubaker, Henry</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Acute Pleurisy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnett, Eliza G.</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Ergot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, Algernon E.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Pneumonia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnal, Renben H.</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Typhoid Fever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carriger, John H.</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>The Young Physician; his Hopes, Fears, and Responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrington, Paul S.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Pneumonia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, Flournoy</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Pneumonia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheney, Francis M.</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Typhoid Fever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian, William S.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>“Propter solum Uterum Mulier est id quod est.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman, Charles T.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Digestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman, Richard M.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Urinary Calculi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collins, Thomas B.</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Pathology of Pneumonia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook, Columbus L. (M. D.)</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Importance of Study to the Medical Practitioner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook, George H.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Sympathy between the Mind and Body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couser, George</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Delirium Tremens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig, James W.</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Local Blood-letting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crouse, William</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Dysentery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutliff, James S.</td>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>Embryogeny.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana, Charles H.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Cynanche Trachealis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davidson, Henry G. (M. D.)</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Comparative Anatomy and Physiology of the Digestive System.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickson, James G.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Lymphosis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dingee, Richard</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Hygiene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dingley, Arasma J.</td>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>Morbid Conditions of the Blood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duffey, John W.</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Acute Hepatitis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan, George K.</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>Acute Gastritis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonds, Samuel C.</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>Hectic Fever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggleston, Joseph D.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Urinary Calculi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esheadman, Isaac S.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Congestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, J. Mason</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Entero-mesenteric Fever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evans, Joshua R.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Epidemic Cholera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearing, Benjamin, Jr.</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Phlegmatia Dolens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher, Preston</td>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>Cynanche Trachealis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitts, William F.</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Oleum Terebinthine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleming, Thomas M.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Digestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flewellen, Edward A.</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Chinin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floyd, Frederic</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Pathological Hæmatology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>SUBJECT OF THESIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foote, Charles C.</td>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>History and Medical Properties of Ergot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort, Joseph M.</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Acute Gastritis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox, Joseph M.</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Typhus Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend, John Edward (M.D.)</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Entero-mesenteric Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend, George W.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Phrenology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fussell, Morris</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>The Decidua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaddis, Elijah Franklin</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Malaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guither, Brice T.</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Typhoid Fever in Middle Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gale, Robert H.</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Milk Sickness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary, Franklin F.</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>Endemic Fever of Cokesbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geare Frederic (M.D.)</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gegan, John, Jr.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Phthisis Pulmonalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibbons, Thomas P.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Intermittent Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenn, Lucius B.</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Cerumin Diseases of the Diastolic Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golding, Walter S.</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Nervous System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gorin, William H.</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Acute Rheumatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griesemer, Enoch E.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Entero-mesenteric Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haggard, William D.</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Rheumatic State of Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall, Samuel E.</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Enteric Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall, William M.</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>Pleurisy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamer, Ellis P.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Intermittent Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton, George S.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Typhoid Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hancock, Charles</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Iodine and its Therapeutical Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hassenplug, Jacob H.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Menstruation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havis, Minor W.</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Physic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazzlett, Robert W.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Gunshot Wounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson, Andrew J.</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Erysipelas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herrick, J. Everette</td>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hershe, Christian</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>A new Method of Dissolving Calculi in the Bladder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heyward, James F.</td>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>Placenta Previa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holbrook, William S.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Inflammation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hood, Humphrey H.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Inflammatio Pleura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope, Jesse P.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Acute Bronchitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howitt, John</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Acute Dysentery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hume, William</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Responsibilities of the Physician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter, George Baxter</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Scarlatina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huntington T. Romney</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>The Pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huston, James M.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irvine, Patrick C. (M.D.)</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Scarlatina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson, Winslow</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Angina Membranacea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James, Nathan</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenkins, William A.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>SUBJECT OF THESIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnson, Emmanuel H.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Endo-gastritis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, William M.</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Dyspepsia Abortiva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judson, Oliver A.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Iris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly, Samuel H.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Cephalalgia Nervosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keenon, John G.</td>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys, John</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Catalepsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamm, William A. B.</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Epidemic Erysipelas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane, E. L. C. (M.D.)</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>De Febribus Miasmaticis in Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layton, Joseph</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Septentrionali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leinbach, Benjamin S.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Rural Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemmon, William</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Typhoid Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lewis, J. Henry</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Loculia Inflam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line, William M.</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Intermittent Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lovejoy, James W. H.</td>
<td>Dist. of Columbia</td>
<td>Acute Rheumatism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luckett, Francis E.</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
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The ad eundem degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred on Thomas G. Meachem, M. D., and on Young, George W., of New York.

Total, 227.

R. M. HUSTON, M.D., Dean of the Faculty.