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ART. VIII.—*Valedictory Address delivered to the Students in the Faculty of Medicine, at McGill College, on Wednesday, May 8, 1850, by A. F. HOLMES, M. D., Professor of Medicine.*

GENTLEMEN,—Before closing this ceremony, and as a Valedictory to you, who, having terminated your course of study, are about finally to leave us, permit me to call your attention to the Oath you have just now severally pronounced. The solemnity of a promise cannot fail to be increased by being attested by an appeal to the Almighty; and the feeling of responsibility to be proportionately increased. It must, however, be a considerable relief to the mind of one who feels the awfulness of failing under such circumstances, to know that by the Oath, nothing more is required of him than the performance of such duties as his own mind will tell him are in accordance with the honest and upright discharge of his duties as a physician. To exact an oath of you to follow a certain conduct seems almost supererogatory; since to exercise your profession in a cautious and upright manner—to care for the safety and comfort of your patients, and not to use the opportunities your profession may give, for the unnecessary or careless divulging of their secrets, especially where this may tend to their injury or disparagement—all these are nothing more than every well-principled man will feel disposed to make the rule of his action. Again, we ask of you to keep an affectionate remembrance of the University whose children you are become, so as to desire her advancement

and to promote it if you can. In this, also, there is nothing that might not be expected to be the spontaneous outgoings of your minds, inasmuch as you have become incorporated with the University: its honor is reflected upon you, and the more eminent it becomes, the more satisfaction you will feel in belonging to it. We do not wish, therefore, that you should consider that this day severs the connection between us—that it should be as if it had never been; but we wish you should feel a kindly interest in her welfare and progress, and manifest it as occasion may allow, by any good offices which it may lie in the power of your hand to do: in fact, that the appellation “alma mater” so commonly applied in reference to seats of learning, should be applied and felt in regard to ourselves.

While pointing out, however, the accordance of the Oath with what you will at once allow to be the correct and necessary deportment of a right-minded individual, there are included in some of the parts certain duties, which the required brevity may render less perspicuous to your minds. I shall, therefore, detain you a short time to notice one or two of them; all of them, however, being matters of more importance to your own advancement, than to the interests of this Institution, in which is again seen the fostering arms of Alma Mater.

Firstly, then, you will fulfil your promise of persevering “in omnibus gratiis animi officiis” towards this University, by paying attention to your own