

Here before me are some hundreds of men in the morning of existence. Where will the noon day find you? And the evening hour, when labour is over, and, looking back, the conscience, undisturbed by new ambitions, shall make up the ledger of a life—will it leave you weighted with the debts of wasted chances, or rich with the honest interest of accumulated character? That the veteran, like myself, should look with a certain sad curiosity at a group of young soldiers is not strange. Here are men of varied individuality, of unequal fortunes, of every condition of life—some for whom all their ways have been thus far made easy, some for whom life has been always hard. Here, at least, within these walls you have all had equality of opportunity. Let me hopefully presuppose you one and all to have used with diligence the precious years of training. You have thought, of course, of what you want to win. You vaguely call it success—success in life. That may mean many things you did not want or expect. You will fail where you least look for failure. You will win what you never dreamed of getting.

I shall try to remember only that you are all to be of the great army of medicine. First of all, I own for you the wish that in this vast organized body you shall take honest pride. Through it you will earn your bread, and, I trust, much beside a mere living. That you may correctly estimate its splendid history, that you may fitly comprehend the opportunities it gives, let us look a little broadly for a time at some of its virtues and some of its values. I could wish that you were really taught something of the wonderful history of medicine. I have myself ancestral pride in the splendour of its conquests, the courage and heroism of its myriad dead. I am fond of saying it is a guild, a fellowship, a brotherhood, older than civilization. It had a creed of moral life antique when Christ was born. No other organization is like it. Customs, code and creed separate the lawyer and clergyman of different lands, but we in all lands hold the same views, abide by the same moral law, have like ideas of duty and conduct. From Japan to London you may claim medical aid for self or wife or child, and find none willing to take a fee. There is something fine and gracious in this idea.

I once asked the care of a physician I never saw or heard of before in a German town. As I was

about to pay him a card dropped from my pocket book. He glanced at it, and said, "But you are a doctor; I can take nothing—nothing." I remonstrated in vain. "No," he said, "you will make it up to some other doctor." I believe that I have paid this debt and other like debts with interest. I hear now and then of men who break this beautiful rule which makes professional service given by one physician to another a friendly debt for which the whole brotherhood holds itself responsible. Doctors are said to differ, but these bonds of union and generous amity are mysteriously strong. Try to keep them so, and when you serve medical men go about it as if they were laymen. Put away all thought of wasted time, of the commercial values of what you give. The little biscuit you cast on the waters will come back a cheerful loaf. I consider it a glad privilege to help thus my brothers in medicine, and let me assure you few are more heavily taxed than I.

And there is another privilege your profession brings. From the time you graduate until you cease to work, whether in town or country, hospital or wretched homes, the poor will claim from you help in time of sickness. They will do it, too, with tranquil certainty of gracious service on your part.

The greatest of moralists has said, "The poor ye have always with ye." I think He meant to speak of the poor as representing opportunities for self-sacrifice never absent. Of a certainty it applies to us. The poor we have always with us—the sick poor.

On every Friday I conduct the clinical out-service at the Infirmary for Nervous Disease. I never go through these long and tiresome hours of intense attention without feeling that it is needful to put some stress on myself that I be not negligent or hasty, vexed or impatient, or fail as to some of the yet finer qualities of social conduct. I want you also to feel that such self-watchfulness is needed. These early years among the poor, or the class of uncertain debtors, are apt to make some men rude, and uncared, and ill-tempered. Most honestly do I say that such work is what I may call an acute test of character.

A part of your life-work consists in giving of your best to those who cannot pay. A part consists in work for honest wages. I think you happy in that