

of their acquisitions, and we must undergo the same depleting process.

Yet we must pause before we infer that our teachers were in fault when giving us facts not directly convertible into practical purposes, and likely to be forgotten. All systematic knowledge involves much that is not practical, yet it is the only knowledge which satisfies the mind, and it is the easiest way of acquiring and retaining facts which are practical. There are many things which we can afford to forget, which yet it is well to learn. In the new season we see nothing of the fertilizing soil which we placed about the roots of our plants, but we *do* see increased and more luxuriant growth. So with the constant change of thought; the knowledge of to-day finds a soil in the forgotten facts of yesterday.

We must not worry if after a few years the list of accomplishments on our diplomas, which seemed so broad, has shrunk very narrow indeed, for all the while there will be making out for us an ampler and fairer parchment, signed by old Father Time himself, as president of that great university in which Experience is the one perpetual and all-sufficient teacher. Our present plethora of acquirements will soon cure itself when we come to handle life and death as a daily business; our memories will bid good-bye to such inmates as the foramina of the Sphenoidal bone and the familiar oxides of Methyl, Ethyl, Amyl, Phenol, Ammonium. But let us be thankful that we have learned them, and remember that even the learned ignorance of a nomenclature is something to have mastered, and will serve as pegs to hang facts upon which would otherwise have strewed the floor of memory in loose disorder.

But still our education has been somewhat practical more so lately. We have been taught the theory of medicine and surgery by the professors of our own college, and, thanks to the kindness of the visiting physicians of the General Hospital, we have had the advantages of lectures at the bedside, and have been present at operations in the amphitheatre. But it must be confessed that we get far too little of the practical education here, and that the great hospitals, infirmaries and dispensaries of large cities, where men of well-sifted reputations are in constant attendance, are the true centres of medical education, and each one of us should make an effort, before commencing to practice, to spend a longer or shorter time at some such place. But I am not underrating your abilities, for, even without that extra experience, I'd much rather be cared for in a fever by one of my classmates than by any of the renowned fogies of years ago, could they be called back from that better world where there are no physicians needed, and, if the old adage can be trusted, not many within call.

In fact, at this time we know much that time alone will teach us the applicability of, for even the knowledge which we may be said to possess will be a very different thing after long habit has made it a part of our existence. The *tactus eruditus* extends to the mind as well as to the

finger-tips. Experience means the knowledge gained by perpetual trial, and this is the knowledge we place most confidence in in the practical affairs of life. Our training has two steps: The first deals with our intelligence, which takes the idea of what is to be done with the most ease and readiness; but, again, we have to educate ourselves through the pretentious claims of intellect into the humble accuracy of instinct, and we end at last by acquiring the dexterity, the perfection, the certainty, which the bee and the spider inherit from nature. Book-knowledge, lecture-knowledge, examination-knowledge are all in the brain; but work-knowledge is not only in the brain, but in the senses, in the muscles, in the ganglia of the sympathetic nerves—all over the person, as it were, as instinct seems diffused through every part of those lower animals that have no such distinct organ as a brain. See a skilful surgeon handle a broken limb, see a wise old physician smile away a case that looks to a novice as if the sexton would be sent for, and we realize what we may yet learn if we are willing.

Soon we will enter into relations with the public, to expend our skill and knowledge for its benefit, and find our support in the rewards of our labor. And what do we expect? We must take the community just as it is and make the best of it. We wish to obtain its confidence; to do this there is a short rule which we will find useful—deserve it. But to deserve it we must unite many excellencies, natural and acquired. As the basis of all the rest, we must have those traits of character which fit us to enter into the most intimate relations with the families of which we are the privileged friend and adviser. Medical Christianity, if I may use the term, is of very early date. By the oath of Hippocrates the practitioner bound himself to enter into his patient's house with the sole purpose of doing him good, and so conduct himself as to avoid the very appearance of evil. And we, also, can come up to this standard and add to it the more recently discovered graces and virtues. The greatest practitioners are generally those who concentrate all their powers of mind on their business, and if we are ambitious in our practice we may hope to win honor therein. The community will soon find out if we mean business, or if we are of those diplomaed dilettanti who like the amusement of quasi-medical studies, but have no idea of wasting their precious time in putting their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their suffering fellow-creatures.

I need not speak of the importance of punctuality, for if we have ever been sick and waited for the doctor we will not need to be told that much worry and distress are often avoided by keeping appointments. I read of a doctor who always carried two watches, so as to be exact, and who took great pains to be at his patient's house when expected, even though no express appointment had been made.

We are to keep doubts from our patients. They have no more right to know all the truth from us than they