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EDITOR:

A. H. WRIGHT, B.A., M.D. Tor., M.R.C.S. England.

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ADDRESS

DELIVERED

BY DR. CRANSTON, ARNPRIOR, ONT.,
EX-PRESIDENT OF THE ONTARIO MEDICAL COUNCIL,

At the Opening of the 38th Session of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Queen's University, Kingston, and on the occasion of the dedication of the John Carruthers Science Hall, October 16th, 1891.

Mr. Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Having been selected to give the inaugural address at this, the opening of the 38th session of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Queen's University, I acknowledge with pleasure and pride the great honor the Faculty have conferred upon me, but feel that the task should have fallen to the lot of some one of Queen's many distinguished graduates, who would have been better able to do the occasion something like justice.

For a mixed audience, such as I have before me, composed of college professors, professional men, and also professional women, students in different stages of the college curriculum, and largely of the lay element, it is difficult to select a subject that is alike interesting to all. I should, however, venture to crave your indulgence while I take a hasty glance at the origin and progress of the healing art and make a few brief observations more or less intimately connected with the profession of which it is my privilege to be an humble member.

I may here premise that, closely connected as the principles of medicine and surgery must

ever be, each being intimately bound up in the other, practically they may be regarded as separate and distinct; yet in tracing the history of one we are, even though unwittingly, more or less treading on the precincts of the other. Our thoughts and limited research in the present sketch will, however, be more especially directed in the line of surgical progress and development. And at the outset we may observe that this science is coeval with man himself. As surely as death came into the world by the fall of our first parents from the full perfection of the Divine model, so surely came pain and suffering, violence and bodily injury, developing subsequently into wars and dissensions of a graver character, each and all calling aloud for alleviation and relief. That surgery, then, in point of antiquity, should take precedence of medicine, before any attention was directed to the nature of disease, seems but reasonable. That external ailments and their corresponding cures should first rivet the attention of those whose thoughts and studies were primarily engaged in the healing art seems but natural. Would we indulge in a research into the realms of fabled and historic lore, we would be confronted with palpable proofs of the antiquity of our science. The prevailing custom of circumcision in Mosaic times rises in evidence. The undying relics left us in the inscriptions on the ruined walls of the renowned temples of the earliest days add their undeniable testimony. The custom of embalming the bodies of the dead among the Egyptians, a process performed