

profession. Many of the doctors of that time considered vaccination as pure quackery, and even charged the vaccinator with flying in the face of heaven.

About the middle of the century Semmelweis made a great discovery in midwifery. In 1847 he enunciated the view that puerperal fever was caused by the introduction of putrescent substances from without, and used chlorine as a disinfectant. By his new method he reduced the mortality in one of the lying-in hospitals from 11.4 to 1.27 percent. Notwithstanding the proof he adduced, his views were bitterly opposed by the great mass of the profession. We have been told by Cullingworth, that he was ridiculed and despised, and finally died insane, the victim of continued persecution.

It is much more satisfactory to consider the work of another hero in the latter half of the century—that grand man of our own time—Lister, who has reached so high a niche in the temple of Fame. It is pleasant to think of those “gifts of nature which gave him a happy combination,

The patient thought, the steadfast will,
Resolve and foresight, strength and skill,

which he has laid upon the altar of suffering humanity” (Mr. Jno. Wood), and through them the great work he has accomplished. We all rejoice that Lord Lister has received his reward; that all peoples of all nations of the civilized world have united to do him honor.

We have heard much in recent years about the advances made in medicine, and the greatly improved status of the profession; and yet it is difficult for the student of to-day to fully realize the truth of such statements. The following advertisement taken from a newspaper of Shakespeare’s time will give us an idea of the position, social and otherwise, of a physician of that era:

WANTED.

In a family who have had bad health, a sober, steady person in the capacity of doctor, surgeon and man-midwife. He must occasionally act as butler and dress hair and wigs. He will be required sometimes to read prayers and preach a sermon every Sunday. A good salary will be given.

In those days the physician was generally depicted by writers (dramatists and others) as a cunning knave or an ignorant charlatan. What a contrast is presented in considering the position of our profession to-day. The painter makes the physician a hero. For instance, take Mr. Luke Fildes’ picture, “The Doctor,” which you have probably all seen. Mr. Mitchell Banks speaks about the original painting as follows: . . . “Of the