

We have not far to look for illustrations of this fact. A plain, Kentucky doctor—his name was MacDowell—some years ago thought out the treatment of a form of dropsy which was called fatal. It was common, for thousands of victims died from it every year. He was the first to perform an operation for its relief. Thus was introduced one of the most successful of the operative procedures of modern times—one which, in the hands of men like Sir Spencer Wells, Dr. Keith and others, has been the means of saving many, many lives and relieving untold misery. Another of America's greatest men, one whose recent sudden death two continents still mourn—Marion Sims—initiated and advanced the great improvements which have made his name famous whilst still a mere practitioner in a small town in Virginia. True, such men as these would perhaps have compelled greatness anywhere: nevertheless, do not their lives show that professional work of even the very highest importance may be founded and completed along with the apparently commonplace duties of the general practitioner?

General practitioner—that is what most of you will necessarily become. It is only in large centres that the division into physicians and surgeons and specialists can be made. The general practitioner is sometimes apt to look with envious eyes towards his more favored brethren who have devoted themselves to a particular branch of medicine. But the general practitioner—the family physician—is the backbone of the profession. He may have a life more laborious and less freely rewarded than his neighbour the specialist, but never let him forget that his calling is equally respected, more responsible, and requiring the same talents for the full performance of its duties. Some think that this idea of dividing the field of medicine into separate departments is an invention of modern times. Not so, however. Herodotus tells us that amongst the early Egyptians the science of medicine was distributed into different parts. He says: "Every physician was for one disease not more, so that every place was full of physicians: for some were doctors for the eyes, others for the head, others for the heart, and others for occult disorders." Although generally admitted that certain special-