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Original Contributions

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AND ITS WORK*

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President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—At almost every meeting of the Association the President may choose for the subject of his address anything in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, or in the waters that are under the earth. But this year the subject of the President's address is strictly prescribed by the circumstances of his election. You might have chosen a man far more distinguished in his profession, of greater fame, with title or riband, but you have deliberately taken in preference a less distinguished person for the sole reason that he has worked for the Association, and that you know that he has the interests of the Association at heart. You have, as it were, said to him: "Thou good and faithful servant, take thou the presidential chair." And the only way in which he can repay you for the honor you have done him is to speak of the Association, to tell what it has done in the past and what it now is, and, perhaps, what it may yet do. If it were not my duty it would be my pleasure to do this, for it is good now and again to look back into the past and ponder over the

*Delivered at the Seventy-eighth Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association.