

and Counter Currents." The eloquent denunciation of "Homeopathy and its kindred Delusions," is an illustration, however, of the direct, scientific method, and the fact that Holmes was in so large a degree a writer for magazines, in no way lessens his merit as a clear scientific thinker and writer. We think it the second notable point as evidenced by both the subjects chosen by him and their treatment, that a great part of the power exercised by him as a writer, even on ordinary literary topics, has been due to the fact that from the beginning his mental habit has been an exact one, acquired through the methods of scientific study cultivated and the clinical experiences obtained through practice. A third point of interest referred to frequently in this biography of Holmes, is the evidence gathered from almost every page of his life of the persistency of hereditary tendencies. We learn that his maternal ancestors were Dutch on the Wendell side and English on the other, while his paternal antecedents were English. Both lines had become completely naturalized, and Holmes, for better or for worse, must be considered by birth and largely by education, an American product. Along the Wendell line, we have it pointed out that his caution and business thrift might naturally be expected. Dr. Oliver, whose daughter married a Wendell, may fairly be considered to have transmitted a medical tendency, to which we must add the judicial inheritance through a grandfather, Judge Wendell, (who married a lady of the famous name of Quincy). Along the Holmes line we have amongst the direct ancestors, a lawyer, a soldier-physician, and the author's father, a clergyman, "whose blood seems to carry the scholarly and personal virtues with it to their descendants, oftentimes for successive generations."

When to this the intellectual home-life, and joyous college days, so frequently alluded to by Holmes, are added, we have, as we might naturally expect, a development of a character so rounded in many respects, as to give us delight in its very contemplation.

What we find in all his writings as a constant accompaniment of the *humour*, more keen and finished in its expression than Hood's, is the intense vitality of the man. He has lived intensely,

and has taught us to know that life's winter has its flowers even as the spring and the summer. From the day he drove to Andover to school till the autumn morning on which he delivered his last lecture as Parkman Professor of Anatomy, at Harvard, life was full for him. Says Kennedy, "In person, Holmes is a little under the medium height . . . he is quick and nervous in his movements, and conveys in speaking, the impression of energy and intense vitality . . . when he warms up to his subject in conversation he is a very rapid, vivacious speaker."

But we have indicated in outline the characteristics of a man who has often been pointed to as an ideal, and with reason, which every physician may profit by studying. All must, to live worthily, have an ideal; and none surely can say that for the physician the mere routine of practice and book-keeping is sufficient. His work, in large measure, precludes him from being a public man, hence the daily newspaper cannot, or ought not, to be his only pabulum. How many are the needs for a true enjoyment of life to the rural physician deprived in large measure of literary companionship! If he does not read, mentally he becomes vacuous, and the petty annoyances of his profession weigh upon him, warping his judgment and destroying his *bonhomie*.

The physician of to-day is in some measure a partaker of the fashions of the day; and we take it that if in business methods he is the superior of a generation now fading away, with regard to the development of those many qualities which lend force, breadth and dignity to the profession, he is too often greatly their inferior. Why should it not be a physician, who can be at once so pungently sarcastic as, when speaking of the *neo*-type of American chryso-aristocrat he says:

"A gentleman of leisure

Less fleshed than feathered: bagged you'll find him such;
His virtue silence, his employment pleasure;
Not bad to look at, and not good for much;"

and write with such lofty sentiment as:

"If word of mine another's gloom has brightened,
Through my dumb lips the heaven-sent message came;
If hand of mine another's task has lightened,
It felt the guidance that it dare not claim."