

There are sundry other instances of improper motives which might perhaps be profitably ventilated, but these humiliating examples must now suffice. We have no hesitation in affirming that there is only one motive which can be called worthy or acceptable—but one which will bear the examination of a pure and true and just and good mind—none other that will find a resting place in a great, manly, frank, and philanthropic heart,—it alone that will never fail, which, when all else is forgotten as the baseless fabric of a vision, will still flourish in perpetuity “amid the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds.” It is, simply, charity. Charity in its most comprehensive signification—and there is none too ample.

“Whether we name thee Charity or love  
Chief grace below, and all in all above—”  
“True Charity a plant divinely nursed  
Fed by the love from which it rose at first.”  
“Exuberant is the shadow it supplies  
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.”

Pope has also well said,

“All must be false that thwart this one great end,”—Charity.

In starting upon the work of medicine, in commencing his labors, it is not to be expected that this powerful influence should be a personal impulse of the student's own;—in short, that he has independently made a deliberate choice in favor of this unsurpassable virtue. The rule rather appears to be that the profession is entered upon from other considerations such as the advice of friends,—an intuitive preference,—the best account to which one can be turned,—the desire to have a means of livelihood everywhere available—and so forth: while with a lesser number no conclusive reason can be assigned, they may find themselves so engaged without knowing why or because it is vaguely said to be “about as good a thing as any other.” Dark, blind resolves and executions, such as these, by man, are not uncommon in his affairs. As intelligence however increases, as events begin to be understood in their actual causes, premises are placed before the will, it is invited to make its election, the question then to be solved is, shall the reason be fostered as it was, or shall it be brought into accord with the dictate of the newly acquired information. And it is a matter of hearty congratulation to know that many who begin in error, sooner or later end in truth. Leaving the unworthy motives which, through ignorance, they entertained at their commencement, they have, as they have progressed in discretion, rejoiced in experiencing true Charity as their real motive to perseverance.