

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE TORONTO ACADEMY
OF MEDICINE.

BY JOHN FERGUSON, M.A., M.D.

ON the receipt of the cablegram from Col. Herbert A. Bruce, informing the secretary of the Academy that, owing to his military medical duties abroad demanding a prolonged absence from Toronto, he felt it to be his duty to resign the office of president, to which he was elected last spring, the Council placed upon me the responsibilities of the highest office in the gift of the Fellows. When I look back over the list of the distinguished gentlemen who have preceded me in the presidential chair, and recall their many gifts and talents of head and heart, and their brilliancy of expression, it will at once become apparent with what trepidations I appear before you on this occasion. This difficulty is brought to the point of positive discouragement when I think of what a wise and genial ruler my immediate predecessor, Dr. W. H. B. Aikins, on all occasions proved himself to be. You will, I know, be lenient in your criticisms; for I have not had the time, and I fear I have not the ability, to prepare a message worthy of the audience I see before me this evening. But I am here at your command, and, as Locksley said to Prince John, "Nevertheless, I will obey your pleasure," and, like Hubert in his turn, "A man can but do his best." Compared with the communication that Col. Bruce could have given us from the stirring events in Europe, anything coming from me must prove tame, indeed; and cannot but be regarded as *longo intervallo* from that to which you have been looking forward.

The Toronto Academy of Medicine is now entering upon its tenth session, and, although still quite young, has attained great strength, has struck its roots deep into a fertile soil, has reared its branches aloft to the gaze of all, and is yielding splendid fruitage in its social and scientific achievements. When the Academy of Medicine speaks out on any public question its voice has weight, and is heard over a far flung area, like that of Stentor. It is becoming more and more apparent that the objects of the Academy are not selfish or for class privileges, but truly altruistic and for the good of the public. This is well borne out by the origin of the Academy. It is now a little over nine years since the Ontario Library Association, the Toronto Medical Society, the Toronto Clinical Society and the Toronto Pathological Society realized the true meaning of the words of Longfellow that "All your strength is in your