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AN ADDRESS.*

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FOR my presence here and the permission to address you, I am indebted to the kind invitation of your faculty. They have prompted me to speak to you, my fellow students, of medical education in my early days, of my contemporaries, medical and lay, and some other subjects. Unfortunately, that theme demands that now and then I shall have casually to mention myself, not as a co-operator, it is true, but as an interested looker-on, when great things happened and good and great men worked for the realization of what you in these days are harvesting as a spontaneous and legitimate heritage.

Indeed, I have lived under the eyes of and with great men and during the very development of modern medicine. The history of these times should be known to every student of medicine and of social science, for truly as we cannot comprehend any country without the knowledge of its origin and the circumstances in which it grew, and of the men who thought and fought for it, so there is no way of understanding and appreciating modern medicine without a fair acquaintance with its annals.

What you are expected to learn in four years is a part of the results of previous labors performed during hundreds, ay, thousands of years by legions of men of industry, honor, and sometimes genius. What any single generation of men has created, however, should be considered an episode only. Part of such an episode I shall, at the suggestion of the great and good men assembled on this platform, recall to your mind as belonging to our common history.

I began the study of medicine only fifty-eight years ago. Now, you have often noticed that in a clear atmosphere a distant height separated from you by ever so many extensive ridges and deep valleys that your weary feet have measured ever so often, seems to you near by, almost within reach. Thus that early time appears to me, looking backward these six decades replete with the exertions of persevering men working in the same direction, for the same ends, in different ways it is true, in laboratories and clinics, all in behalf of the welfare—individual and collective—of mankind.

* Introductory to the course of study delivered before the Medical School of McGill University, Montreal, Sept. 19, 1905.