

professional acquirements. Beware then of strong drink. Touch not. Taste not. Handle not. Remember that at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. Many fair prospects have been blighted by it and indelible disgrace and poverty firmly fixed, where permanent honor and success might otherwise have been achieved.

We shall hereafter be called upon to act upon our own responsibility, and I feel confident, that we shall all be found equal to the occasion, for the chief use of all our studying during the past four years and upwards, of hearing lectures, of dissecting, of hospital practice, has been to furnish materials for thinking, and so the great end of thinking is acting, the conversion of knowledge into practical wisdom. But although we have this day become graduates in medicine and "finished our education," as the phrase has it, we must nevertheless continue to be students, and apply ourselves diligently to acquire a further knowledge of the mysteries of nature, if we do not wish to be left behind by our compeers. In all our studies, gentlemen, in all our speculations, in all our researches and pursuits, let us recollect that to discover truth and to do good are of all things in this world most worthy of our labor, consideration and care; that all true and ennobling ambition, all for which life is really valuable and useful, resolves itself into duties of self-improvement, self-government and the communication of means of instruction to others. These duties comprehend every professional, every social, every private duty, and enter into every design which man can possibly conceive. In proportion to the advantages we have enjoyed, our engagement to these great duties are the stronger, and they are the only duties for which no worldly circumstances can disqualify us. To use the words of an elegant writer, "the science of medicine, like every other branch of natural knowledge, is not the production of a vigorous imagination, nor a lively invention, but it is the offspring of a long and diligent experience, and if a man attempts to learn it in any other way than by going to his patient's bedside and returning thence to his study again, he will find himself mistaken." Gentlemen, there is yet much to be done; many who have gone before us have made important discoveries and added valuable knowledge to our science, but let not this consideration lull us into inactivity, but rather let it excite us to additional exertions. There is a void which yet remains in our science to be filled up, and we ought all of us to labor and make such additions and improvements to it as our abilities and opportunities may enable us. We should direct

our most ardent studies to the works of Him who has ordained the production and disposal of every substance in nature, from the thin and almost intangible gossamer, that floats on the feeblest breath of air, to the massive and immovable rock, that withstands the most boisterous tempests of the ocean.

All men, it is allowed, are accountable for their time, but none more so than the medical practitioner. The man who with unwearied assiduity pursues his studies possesses a happiness within himself denied to others; the cares which rankle in the bosom of the ignorant and unamiable touch not his conscience, therefore let us not waste our spare moments in trifling pleasures or idle pursuits. If we neglect to register the experience which we have individually acquired, it becomes lost in forgetfulness; thus a man passes away, his name perishes from record and recollection, his history is a tale that was told, and his very monument becomes a ruin.

As in morals, so in science, there is a standard of ideal excellence, to which indeed no one can hope to attain, but which all may endeavor to approach. We may all follow in the great path of human exertion, adding our names to a long catalogue of men, who had the same hopes and fears, the same ambition and desires as ourselves. Pressing closely upon us, will follow another generation, succeeded by others equally busy and equally short lived. Then let us endeavor to conscientiously say whilst we live, as the immortal Harvey said, when reviled by his unworthy enemies, "I follow truth alone," and no little obstacles, no narrow opposition, no worldly disappointments need decompose us. And should we live to find our exertions rewarded by fame and gratitude, let it be our honest pride, in that advanced age, when the ear will be becoming dull to the voice of praise, and our feeble grasp must soon let go its hold on all influence, that we did not reach either the one or the other by mean arts or mischievous policy, but that all our dealings and conversation were governed by truth, and no less fair and open than our intentions were pure and honest, having kept pace with our years. Let us speak the truth from our hearts, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last. Let us look well to the end, and live as though we expected to die.

The practice of medicine then, as viewed as an intellectual and moral duty, is calculated to improve and elevate the mind, though an opinion has been