

upon you gradually lost that sense of vital importance you at first attached to them; that you came to consider them as of no value, or if valued at all, merely as the means to an end and the outward tokens of a certain degree of proficiency in your studies, and that *knowledge itself*, and not your degrees, was what you most earnestly desired to possess. If such has been the feeling that has actuated you during the latter portion of your academical career, I would most strongly recommend you to cherish it. It will be an assurance, satisfactory to your friends and to the professors who have taken and will continue to take deep interest in your progress, and an earnest to yourselves, of your ultimate success in erecting that edifice of lasting renown in your profession, the foundations only of which you have hitherto laid; and which I am sure each one of you anxiously desires to leave behind him, as a memorial to future generations of his endeavors to further the cause of science and improve and add to the means at present in the hands of physicians of diminishing and alleviating the ills to which suffering flesh is heir.

But no mere theoretical knowledge of your profession will be of avail. While you will have to keep up with the advancement of science, and the march of new ideas, as enunciated in the pages of medical journals and other writings of contemporary practitioners, you will have to depend greatly on your own close observation of the never ending phenomena of nature manifested in the various phases of disease as they come under your notice, and your own acuteness in diagnosis and prognosis. In order to show you to what a degree of proficiency it is possible to attain in this respect of close and accurate observation, I may mention a fact related by Archbishop Whately, in a lecture delivered by him on the influences of the professions. The Archbishop said; speaking of a celebrated Surgeon, whose attention had been chiefly directed to cases of deformity: "He scarcely ever met an artisan in the street but he was able to assure himself at the first glance what his trade was. He could perceive in persons not actually deformed, that particular gait or attitude, that particular kind of departure from exact symmetry of form, that disproportionate development and deficiency in certain muscles, which distinguished, to his anatomical eye, the porter, the smith, the horse-breaker, the stone-cutter, and other kinds of laborers from each other. And he could see all this, through, and notwithstanding, all the individual differences of

original structure, and of various accidental circumstances."

It cannot be expected that every one of you will arrive at a like degree of excellence, but you can all strive to approach it as closely as possible. Acute and practised observers, it may be remarked, are not always able to precisely explain the indications that influence their judgment; and if, when called upon you should ever fail to define all the reasons on which your decision may have been based, it may be some consolation to you to learn that it has been justly and happily remarked "he must be an indifferent physician, who never takes any step for which he cannot assign a satisfactory reason."

I do not propose to dwell at all on the duties that the practice of your profession will entail on you. Anything that I can say with regard to this part of a Valedictorian's usual address will be better said, and with more weight, by the eminent professor who will just now address you.

Strongly as I have recommended you to preserve those habits of systematic and diligent study of everything pertaining to your profession, which you have all to a greater or less extent already acquired, I would as earnestly urge you not to confine your studies to your profession. In order to become at all eminent in our profession, it is necessary to possess a superior vigor and order of intellect, combined with great diligence, and another quality, in which bright intellects have often been lamentably deficient, I mean, common sense. It will certainly not prove to be any drawback to your attaining eminence, that you devote some little portion of your time to other studies. Such a course has been recommended by the most profound thinkers of all ages. In the pursuit of some other branch of knowledge, let us say literature, for example, you will find a healthful recreation for your minds, a necessary something that will enlarge your sympathies and excite your faculties to a freer play, that will furnish you with a common bond of interest with men of other callings, that will supply you with common topics and common feelings, and enable you to acquire a more complete and generous education, and to act your part as physicians with better grace and more dignity. It will prevent your being influenced by those narrow prejudices and that illiberality of feeling, with which the exclusive study of one subject, or of one profession, must of necessity infect you: and which, in the days of Harvey and of Jenner led all other physicians to reject the magnificent and most important discoveries of the circulation of the blood and of vaccination.