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BY

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THE OVERCROWDING AND THE DECADENCE OF SCHOLARSHIP IN
THE PROFESSION.

Gentlemen of the Canadian Medical Association :—

My first duty is the pleasant one of welcoming you all to the Queen City of the West, and to express the hope that your sojourn here may prove at once pleasant and profitable.

My next duty is to express to you my full appreciation of the goodwill and lenient judgment which prompted you to place me in the position of undeserved eminence which, by your suffrage, I occupy to-day.

“Some men are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them.” In the position of the last named I stand at present quite unwillingly; and had it not happened that on the occasion of your last meeting I was absent in England I should have presumed to correct your judgment and have pointed out my lack of fitness for the post. Under the circumstances, therefore, it is not too much to ask of you to cast that mantle of charitable consideration with which one so naturally envelopes one's own mistakes, over my shortcomings and defects.

It is the fashion on occasions like the present to raise the paean of *Lo, triumphe!* and to recount the gains and the achievements of the year or of the decade; but this is done on every hand much better than I could do it and if the less skilful hand be set to point out some defects the less occasion for complaint will the auditors possess.

If, indeed, my screed turn out to be a jeremiad the proneness of the Keltic mind to such indulgence must plead my excuse on atavistic