

Till fever's throb, and pain's relentless rack,  
Stretch you all helpless on your aching back—  
Not till you play the patient in your turn  
The morning visit's mystery you learn ;  
'Tis a small matter in your neighbor's case  
To charge your fee for showing him your face,  
You skip up stairs, inquire, inspect and touch,  
Prescribe, take leave, and off to twenty such.  
But when, at last, by Fate's transferred decree,  
The visitor becomes the visatee—  
O, then indeed it pulls another string,  
Your ox is gored, and that's another thing.  
Your friend is sick-plegmatic as a Turk,  
You write your recipe and—let it work.  
Not yours to stand the shiver and the frown,  
(And sometimes worse) with which your draught goes down.

Calm as a clock, your knowing hand directs :—  
Rhei, jalapæ—ana grana sex,  
Or trace upon some tender missive's back :—  
Scrupulos duos—pulveres ipacac.  
And leaves your patient to his pains and gripes,  
Cool as a sportsman banging at his snipes.  
But, change the time, the person, and the place,  
And be *yourself* the "interesting case,"  
You'll gain some knowledge which it's well to learn,  
In future practice it may serve your turn—  
Leeches, for instance, pleasing creatures quite,  
Try them, and bless you ! don't you find they bite ?  
You raise a blister for the slightest cause,  
But be yourself the great sublime it draws.  
And trust my statement, you will not deny  
The worst of draughtsmen is the Spanish fly.  
It's mighty easy ordering when you please  
Infusum sennæ—capiat mucias tres.  
It's mighty different when you guzzle down  
Your own three ounces of the liquid brown,  
Pilulæ—pulveres—pleasant sounds enough,  
When other jaws receive the shocking stuff ;  
But, oh, what flattery can disguise the groan  
That meets the gulp that sends it through your own.  
Be gentle, then, though Art's inspiring rules  
Give you the handling of her sharpest tools,  
Use them not rashly—sickness is enough,  
Be always "ready—but be never "rough."  
Of all the ills that suffering man endures  
The largest fraction liberal Nature cures,  
Of those remaining 'tis the smallest part  
Yields to the efforts of judicious Art.  
But simple kindness—kneeling by the bed  
To shift the pillow for the sick man's head,  
Give the fresh draught that cools the lips that burn,  
Fan the hot brow, the weary frame to turn ;  
Kindness untutored by our grave M. D.'s,  
But Nature's graduate, whom she schools to please,  
Wins back more sufferers with her voice and smile  
Than all the trumpery in the druggists' pile.

Once more—be quiet coming up the stair,  
Don't be a plantigrade—a human bear,  
But stealing softly on the silent toe  
Reach the sick chamber, ere you're heard below  
Whatever changes there may meet your eyes  
Let not your looks proclaim the least surprise,  
It's not your business by your face to show  
All that your patient doesn't wish to know.  
Nay—use your optics with considerate care,  
And don't abuse your privilege to stare.  
But if your eyes should probe him overmuch,  
Beware still further how you rudely touch.  
Don't clutch his carpus in your icy fist.  
But warm your fingers ere you take the wrist.  
If the poor victim needs must be percu-sed,  
Don't make an anvil of your patient's bust.  
Doctors exist, within a hundred miles,  
Who thump a thorax as they'd hammer piles.

If you must listen to his doubtful chest,  
Catch the essentials and ignore the rest,  
Spare him—the sufferer wants of you and art  
A track to steer by—not a finished chart.  
So of your questions—don't, in mercy, try  
To pump your patient absolutely dry.  
He's not a mollusk, squirming in a dish,  
You're not Agassiz—and he's not a fish.  
And last, not least, in each perplexing case,  
Learn the sweet magic of a cheerful face,  
Not always smiling—but at least serene,  
When grief and anguish cloud the anxious scene,  
Each look, each movement, every word, and tone  
Should tell the patient you are all his own,  
Not the mere artist—purchased to attend—  
But the warm, ready, self-forgetting friend,  
Whose genial visit, in itself combines  
The best of tonics, cordials, anodynes.  
Such is the visit that from day to day  
Shed's o'er my chambers its benignant ray.  
I give him health who never cared to claim  
Her babbling homage from the tongue of Fame,  
Unmoved by praise—he stands by all confessed  
The truest, noblest, wisest, kindest, best.

#### INCREASE IN SUICIDES IN ENGLAND.

The interest felt in Great Britain over the increase in lunacy is now supplemented by that felt in the increase of suicide. Naturally enough, the two go hand in hand. It has been held that no one in a perfectly sane state will commit suicide. That opens the old and large question of "What is it to be sane?" Most thinking men, we believe, do not attempt to draw a hard and fast line, at least so far as words and definition go, between sanity and insanity, but look upon it as a relative matter, which would go pretty near to saying that we are all insane in some particular line or lines.

The time was when the friends of a suicide could not recover insurance on his life. Now, however, the suicide clause having been elided, it has been suggested that this elision may have something to do with the increased number of persons taking their own lives, the supposition being that many a man would be willing to "face the clay" but for the fear of leaving those dependent upon him, without any proper means of support. Now that his heirs can recover his insurance, he may often feel that he would be of more service to them dead than alive, and being weary of bearing fardels, flies to that "bourne," etc. Following out this line of thought, several English insurance companies have been lately prosecuting an inquiry as to whether the known increase of self-murder has any connection with their business. The unanimous expression of