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AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON

The Medical Student

SUBMITTED TO THE

PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND MEDICAL FACULTY

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University of Nashville,

FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY

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Dedication

Dr. Paul F. Eve, M.D.

Being desirous to manifest, and
appreciation of your high attainments
as a public lecturer, this little work
is most respectfully inscribed
to you by the author.

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The Medical Students

There are few persons in this enlightened age who are not able from experience to give an idea of what is comprehended in the word Student. The little boy and college-student that figured so largely in years gone by among primmers, spelling-books, Arithmetics, and Philosophies, are too well-remembered for the now sober-thinking man not to know something of what constitutes, and befalls one in pursuit of knowledge. But a vast difference exists between an ordinary literary student, and the one whose labors extend over a regular scientific field, one limitless, and abounding in streams of knowledge that must be

traced to their very fountains; and hidden
 caverns dark and full of profound
 mysteries, and perplexing problems which
 must all be unraveled, and solved
 if he ever attain to what the world
 calls "learned" Among scientific
 students the one who has chosen that
 branch of science called "medicine"
 stands out most prominent from the
 fact that the responsibilities resting
 upon him are more weighty, and of
 more vital importance; while the
 path along which he has to tread
 is full of thorny prickles and
 winds toward the summit of a hill
 rugged and tortuous in ascent;
 but upon whose top lie honors
 thick and dangling awaiting
 the deserving and successful

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The labors of the "Medical Student" are indeed arduous and full of bitter disappointments. It is not his taste to follow the Botanist amidst the sweets and beauties of the Floral-Kingdom - carefully noting the fragile stalk, tender leaf, and delicately-tinted corolla, and attentively watching the tiny germ in its various stages of development till he views as a recompense for his labors the expanded petals of a matchless flower, or the spreading and leafy branches of a majestic tree. Neither does he wander with the Geologist over the broad expanse of Earth, noting pebble, rock, and mountain; nor with the Astronomer as amidst far-off worlds he roves weighing them as

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in a balance, and estimating the
power of the mighty force that holds
them in their shining orbits.

Neither is he a companion of the
Lawyer in the perusal of dry and
musty books filled with wise and
learned explanations as to the manner
of awarding justice to the oppressed,
and punishment to the transgr-
-essor. But it is his task to study,
examine, and understand the
inimitable, and most perfect works
of God, - man

The structure, object, and peculiar
functions of the most delicate
nerve, bone, tissue, and organ
included in the economy of the
human body must be familiar
and clearly understood, not only

as they exist in a sound and healthy state, but as they appear and act when disease has enfeebled their energies - marred their proportions and transformed them into a decaying and unshapely mass

Beside all this, he must from the infinitude of vegetable and mineral substances find either in combinations or alone an antidote for the thousand ills to which human flesh is heir, something that has power to arrest the invasions of disease, and to send the life current bounding with renewed energy through its every channel, To accomplish all this requires faithful, laborious, continued study, not for a few weeks only and then a time for

Social enjoyment, but study through long days, weary nights and years till the chest is pallid and the body rendered weak and nervous, And while companions and friends are passing life's hours happily and gaily by, the "Medical Student" must be either engaged alone in his room poring over his books or in the Chemical Laboratory, or dissecting-room listening to the explanations of wiser ones than he, if he gain the knowledge necessary to constitute a skillful practitioner. He must visit also the suffering couch, feel the throbbing pulse - note the wasted form - flushed cheeks, and costive tongue, carefully watching the effect of the prescribed dose upon the

disease if he would render practically
the knowledge acquired,

One might ask
will he ever be rewarded for so
much effort, for surmounting so
many difficulties and the outlay
of so much time and energy? -

Yes! amply so. Think you the Phy-
sician feels in degrees of pride and
heart-felt satisfaction when from the
very brink of the tomb he raises
a cherished idol, or when he has
alleviated the torturing pain of a
fellow-creature? - Then he receives
nothing in return but a hearty
"God bless you". Ask him, and if
he be a true man, his answer will
be such moments are among the
happiest of life. Beside this the,

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very study in which he has expended so much, not only fits him to battle successfully with disease and death but it elevates and develops all that within him is high, noble, and benevolent, making him almost to forget in his devotion to the cause of suffering humanity the sordid Gro. at whose shrine millions have and do yet humbly kneel; and to win whose smiles they would willingly barter honor, friends, and their very souls, whose existence is as undying as the Being from whose immortality they are emanations.

This is why the faithful Physi-
-cian bends with the same solici-
-tude over the Silken Couch of

affluence, and the lowly bed
of penniless misery as quickly
responding to the call of Poverty
as of Wealth, this the night be
dark and dismal, and chilling
winter winds like demon spirits
shriek and howl; and naught
else but this ardent sympathy
aroused within his bosom by the
study and practice of the medical
science could nerve his hand
and heart when amid the devas-
-tations of sweeping epidemics and
deadly contagions he unwaveringly
keeps on in ^{the} even tenor of his
way, the only one possessing a
calm exterior clear head, and
sound judgement, unmindful
of self he still moves on

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faithfully discharging the duties of
his profession, the ghastly death
strews his helpless victims like
autumn leaves around him, and
all-panic struck have fled for
refuge, save a few noble sacrific-
-ing souls like himself and if
a flying arrow pierces his heart
gallantly he falls, and firm at
his post. Well may we pause
to ask what laurels more, green
and fadeless could a mortal brow
ever wear, than those twined and
placed there by grateful hands
once pallid and weak with suffering
or cold and damp with the graves
chilly dews? or what monument
more proud and enduring than the
one upon which is inscribed "he died"

not pierced by a reeking sword upon
a bloody battle-field, but a sacrific-
ice upon the altar from whose
tortures he had expended his last
feeble strength in delivering his
fellowmen. Such a Monument
will not only last till earth and
time shall have passed away
but will win a smile of approba-
-tion from Him who said "whoever
shall give to drink unto one of these
little ones a cup of cold water only
in the name of a disciple verily
he shall in no wise loose his
reward." Who now can truthfully
say that the Medical Student
receives no reward? nay! it is
one sufficient to arouse his every
latent energy, and to stimulate

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him to brook every difficulty and surmount every obstacle, however formidable in appearance, This however is not true of all for there are those who with much show of spirit and determination commenced the study of physic and persevere it with apparent zest and success for a time; but the science becomes intricate, - difficult to be understood and requiring great mental effort at the same time social pleasures increase in attractiveness - halls of public entertainment more inviting than the silent study, - a friendly chat with born companions to while away some of the long hours of night with an occasional spree are found exceedingly

relaxing to the weary body and
perplexed brain; and a pleasant
tete-a-tete with some fair one becomes
much more entertaining than the
Professor's scientific lecture - beside
they must keep posted in regard
to the current literature and general
news of the day. In order there-
-fore to relax and enjoy their seats
at College are necessarily often left
vacant - consequently a knowledge
of the nature and treatment of
obscure, and obstinate diseases is
lost beside a vast deal of valuable
general information.

Time flies - the session
closes - and some by hook or by
crook pass - get their "diplomas"
and start out in the world as

regular M.D.'s, Yes! they have learned
a good many technical phrases found
by observation and otherwise the ex-
-act position of the head, feet and
hands; and know very nearly the situ-
-ation of the heart, lungs, and some
other prominent organs, and are
quite sure that the remainder are
scattered about some-where over the
body; it not being very material
whether in bundles or strings,
beside they know precisely what is
good for the colic, for the recipe
is safely preserved which was never
known to fail - they have also a
host of others suited to a number
of diseases which in foreign lands
were successful in the hands of
some prominent Physician-thinking

perhaps (if they think at all) that diseases having the same names at the north as ~~at~~ the south-pole have also the same characteristics, and pursue the same courses,

From this belief the same amount of Stimulus required to cure man of Chills in the arctic regions would be prescribed for one similarly affected at the Equator all other diseases being treated in the same way. And if the patient happens to have sufficient vital energy to sustain the shock he recovers if not Providence removes the sufferer! Such students are ^{not} entitled to the name, neither are they worthy ever to be classed among honorable Physicians! If however he gain a footing in the world as such

it will be of short duration: for
the regular scientific student who
has almost learned to read in the
very countenance - a language of
suffering soon displaces him,
leaving the unfortunate man the
reputation ~~only~~ of a brainless
quack, or at best, a
respectable humbug. — —

Sany, the 30th / 5th

W. B. Woolbridge