

AN

INAUGURAL DISSERTATION,

ON

*The Medical Student*

SUBMITTED TO THE

PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND MEDICAL FACULTY

OF THE

University of Nashville,

FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY

*Theo. P. Crutcher*

OF

*Bethesda County  
Williamson County  
Tennessee*

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CHARLES W. SMITH,

BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER,

NASHVILLE, TENN.

The Medical Student  
 has to contend with  
 almost insurmountable  
 difficulties. For notwithstan-  
 -ding the utility of the  
 important sciences, to which  
 he has turned his attention,  
 he finds it very difficult, to  
 convince the world of this  
 important truth, even  
 after he shall have completed  
 his collegiate course.

Though when all the  
 various organs of his wonder-  
 -fully wrought frame, is being  
 revealed to him by the  
 different branches of this  
 Profession, he is inspired

with new zeal, and a hope  
 that his name may yet be  
 enrolled with the great  
 ones of the earth; in advancing  
 the noble science of medicine.

He is well aware that the  
 voice he now raises in  
 behalf of the Profession is  
 feeble, yet he has a hope  
 that his position in  
 society as a Physician,  
 may be one worthy of imi-  
 tation and note; and why  
 not if he will but  
 apply himself and avail  
 himself of the opportunities  
 of spreading his name,  
 we can conceive of no one

who has more or better  
 opportunities than he of  
 adding to the ranks of his  
 illustrious and scientific  
 predecessors, and of swelling  
 the faint echoes into a  
 more perfect knowledge of  
 what yet remains to be  
 unfolded by man.  
 In aspiring to such  
 a position he should  
 consider the work before  
 him the work of years, yea  
 the work of a lifetime,  
 for so long as there is  
 a single faculty of the  
 mind which lies dormant  
 or has not been cultivated, so

long as truth beckons him on  
 To deeper principles and purer  
 Motives, so long as there  
 are chords in his nature which  
 have not been turned to  
 sympathy with suffering human-  
 -arity; just so long is his  
 education incomplete. For with  
 all the light and knowledge now  
 before him, together with a  
 cool and careful judgement, he  
 will be but too poorly prepared  
 to meet disease in all the  
 various ways by which it attac-  
 -ks the human family.  
 Even those who have spent a  
 lifetime in cultivating the  
 science of medicine and

practising under the most favourable circumstances ever  
year and trouble many times when called upon to perform  
the responsible duties of the Profession. For high and respo-  
-nsible are the duties involved when he shall take into his  
care and keeping the lives of his fellow men. His friends  
and neighbours will look to him for help and will judge of the  
cause in which he is engaged by his success in diagnosing and  
treating disease. Then he should be ever able and ready to sustan-  
-in not only his own opinions but the general principals of the

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Profession. His position would be more desirable than that of the nostrum vender who has or knows no responsibility. but use eucrazy as a shield to protect him from the light of the world. Though just and true men cannot fail to see that such a pretext will never relieve a condemned conscience from a conviction of having done wrong. Then the highminded honorable student of medicine should never think of shrinking from his duty or give cause to have such charged to him but endeavour to ornament his Profession by keeping ever before

him. The important Truths, that,  
 "The heights by great men reached and kept  
 were not attained by sudden flight  
 but they whilst their companions slept  
 were toiling upward in the night  
 The student of Medicine in  
 entering this vast field of  
 science, spread out before him  
 as it is in rich fertility; to  
 whatever department his inclination  
 may lead him whether to  
 Surgery alone or the Medical  
 science in general he should see  
 that the product of his labours  
 be as rich and valuable as  
 patient application and untiring  
 industry could possibly make  
 it. If there is any science



in which the student may immortalize himself, and have emblazoned on his shield the dazzling renown which results from services to our friends and country; it is equally within the reach of the Medical Profession. His true he may never be able to sit in the hearts of the people, with the men whose achievements on the field of battle or in the Senate Chamber have made themselves the idol of popular sentiment; but he may nevertheless have occasion to render services to his country not less valuable, than such as give fame to the warrior or renown

To the Statesman, His public services can never excite and dazzle the minds of a people as do the gory victories of the conquering chieftain or the triumphs of a political leader yet good and true men will not fail to appreciate and render due praise to the faithful discharge of his duty as a Physician.

Then he should raise his head above the turbid waters of discouragement and by his unceasing efforts and untiring energies he might possibly attain a position in the science which has not as yet been reached

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by his predecessors. For if true  
glory (as it has been before  
said) depends on services to friends  
and country then no one  
has more or better opportunities  
than the medical student, of  
receiving the highest gratitude  
of all with whom he is asso-  
-ciated; and in the exercise  
of an art which from its  
very nature must bring him in-  
-to relations of the closest intima-  
-cy with all descriptions of persons  
he cannot fail to form friendsh-  
-ips, such friendships, as will  
stand firm, in the buffeting  
storms of persecution, and which  
if properly cherished will afford

abundant opportunities of securing whatever gratification or worldly renown that may spring from those important services to which we have already referred.

The opportunities of doing good and gaining the friendship and confidence of his fellow men will be far more numerous than usually falls to the lot of men in other vocations. Then let him not suppose for a moment as do the vulgar that daily familiarity with sickness sorrow pain and death, tends to harden his feelings and divest him of his more

delicate sensibilities and sympath-  
 -this; but he should know of  
 a truth that whilst the  
 study of medicine includes all  
 other sciences and the practice  
 thereof the purest of motives,  
 that so far from leading  
 him to enmity or hardness  
 of heart, it tends to direct  
 his thoughts to the great first  
 cause, and to beget a dispo-  
 -sition in him to submit  
 with due reverence to the  
 will of high heaven, as  
 revealed in the laws of  
 nature, His true he should  
 learn to suppress his  
 feelings and speak.

1.  
cheerfully that he may anim-  
-ate the drooping spirits and  
cheer the desponding heart  
of the sufferer; but in the  
language of the poet it is  
not less true that

With hearts affected but with looks serene

Intent he waits through all the <sup>scene</sup> column

Glad if a hope should spring from nature's <sup>strife</sup>

To aid his skill and save a lingering life

But this should nature's generous efforts be

And spring from nobler motives than a fee

And these motives too

should be the promptings

of a common philanthropy

naturally improved and cultivat-

-ed by constant exercise; and

it will be rendered more

earnest and doubly energetic  
by the unavoidable friendships to  
which we have before  
referred