VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

TO THE

GRADUATING CLASS

OF THE

FEMALE MEDICAL COLLEGE

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

FOR THE SESSION 1854-5.

BY ELLWOOD HARVEY, M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

PUBLISHED BY THE CLASS.

PHILADELPHIA:
REGISTER ASSOCIATION, PRINTERS.
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PHILADELPHIA:
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1854.
To Ellwood Harvey, M.D., Professor of the Principles and Practice of Medicine in the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania.

Esteemed Sir:—At a meeting of the Class, held at the College rooms, it was resolved that a copy of your earnest and eloquent Valedictory Address, delivered at Musical Fund Hall at the close of the Session, be requested for publication.

It is our sincere desire, that the sentiments advanced in that address may serve to arouse the spirit of inquiry in the minds of many, and that it may prove a useful stimulus to the cause of Female Medical Education.

Respectfully, on behalf of the Class,

ELIZABETH H. BATES, N. Y.
JANE S. HEALD, Maine.
PHILA O. WILMARTH, Mass.
MARTHA L. ARNOLD, R. I.
MARY REED, N. J.
MINNA ELLIGER, Pa.
JANE E. HUNTINGTON, Ohio.
MINERVA F. HOES, Wis.
LUCINDA R. BROWN, Texas.

Philadelphia, Feb. 27th, 1854.

LADIES:—

It gives me much pleasure to comply with your request, on behalf of the class, for a copy of my Valedictory Address for publication.

Affectionately, your friend,

ELLWOOD HARVEY.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

It is an established custom with Medical Colleges, for the Faculty to deliver, by one of their number, a Valedictory Address to the graduates, on the occasion of conferring upon them their degrees.

This usage, so long established, and always appropriate to the occasion, becomes of more than ordinary interest and importance, under circumstances so peculiar as the present.

It is yet a new thing for females to assume the highly responsible position of Doctor of Medicine.

But it is not an untried experiment. You are not the first who have graduated in medicine, and gone forth from this Institution to claim a place, as physicians, in the respect and confidence of the public.

The flattering success of those who preceded you, has removed anxious doubts from the minds of many friends of the cause of female medical education.

The question of success or failure is already settled. The question of right and propriety was fully understood; and the necessity appreciated by very many intelligent minds, before the experiment was tried; and success has settled all these questions in our favor, in the minds of all who had doubts before.

The dove has returned with the olive branch, the bow of promise is set in the heavens, and a world of science and usefulness welcomes you to an inheritance.

Your course of collegiate instruction is finished. We sever now those ties that have bound us in the agreeable relation of teachers and pupils. We have travelled together the fields of medical science. It
has been our duty to point out to you the work that is to be done, and
to describe the best methods of performing it; and it gives me great
pleasure to say, on behalf of my colleagues, and for myself, that our
task has been rendered less laborious by your unremitting attention
and diligent efforts.

I need hardly remind you now, of what must have already forced
itself upon your conviction, that you have but laid the foundation for
future eminence and usefulness in your profession.

The superstructure is to be erected by practice and study, by working
and thinking, by strict attention to practice, to the exclusion of all
other leading objects; for by these means alone can you attain skill, and
acquire reputation.

The science of medicine is progressive. In no other department of
learning are so many valuable discoveries made, so many interesting
facts established, and so many new principles brought to light, as in
medicine. This is, perhaps, quite different from the popular apprehen-
sion of the subject, for I believe it is a vulgar notion that medicine has
not kept pace with the other sciences. Medicine is the fruitful mother
of all the sciences. Physicians have been, in all ages, pioneers in
scientific research, and conservators of scientific knowledge.

Every year brings us some new discovery in medicine; and hence the
necessity of our being, all our lives, students. The duty is imperative
on us, of keeping ourselves well informed of all discoveries and im-
provements made by others; and something more is required of us,—
we should be ourselves discoverers.

We should not be content with following blindly the opinions of
others; we should test those opinions by our own observations and
judgment, and if we become the fortunate discoverers of a new truth,
we should give it at once to the profession and the world.

Here is work for a lifetime, and the ablest physicians have found
life too short for the study of medicine. You enter now upon a new
life. Your opportunities for exertion will be immeasurably increased,
and you will realize, that with every effort comes new strength; that
the full development and harmonious play of all our faculties, physical,
mental, and moral, is to be obtained only by their legitimate employ-
ment. Hence the great advantage to you of this enlarged opportunity.

You enter now a sphere of greater usefulness. Your mission is to
bring health and comfort to the sick and suffering. Yes, more, it is
and prevent disease as well as cure, and to prolong life as well as make it comfortable.

By virtue of their knowledge of the causes of sickness, and the unbounded confidence reposed in their skill and integrity, physicians are the conservators of the public health. It is their duty to point out to the people and the authorities the causes of disease, and the proper means of prevention.

No intelligent person doubts, that if we were obedient to the laws of health, so far as they are now understood, sickness and suffering would be greatly diminished. The average of human life would be prolonged, and its usefulness and happiness increased. In the earliest ages of which we have any recorded history, rules for the preservation of health, and regulations for the prevention of diseases, constitute a conspicuous part of the legal code. The law-givers of the ancient Jews were not ignorant of the importance of this object. The necessity for sanitary laws still exists, and these are made and executed in every civilized country, in obedience to the knowledge and wisdom of the physicians of the country.

In this country, where the people govern themselves, it is the people that must be enlightened, that they may govern themselves wisely. Though there is not a more law-abiding nation on the earth, we are blessed in having but few laws to be obeyed. There is a larger individual liberty here than elsewhere, and consequently a greater individual responsibility. It is to the people, then, that you are to convey a knowledge of the laws that govern their being. You have ample scope for usefulness in this capacity. In your own sex, you will find wives and mothers, ignorant of their own constitutions, bringing wretchedness and misery upon themselves, discomfort and suffering upon their families, and worse than all, entailing enfeebled constitutions and diseases upon their offspring. To enlighten these, to teach them the duty they owe to themselves, to their families, to society, to posterity, and to Him who created them, and instituted the laws they violate, is your peculiar province. Do this, and the world will owe you a debt it can never repay,—but you will have your reward.

To be a teacher of others, is always, to the benevolent and conscientious, a delightful employment. But in the cure of diseases, you will be compelled to perform duties that are far from agreeable. You must enter the abodes of squalid poverty, and witness the results of licentious
indulgence, of drunkenness and crime, the wail of suffering and the anguish of remorse. Your sensibilities will be shocked, you will recoil from a scene disgusting to your senses, and painful to all the better feelings of your nature.

But a high sense of duty will urge you onward. Here is most need of your valuable services: bring to a suffering body health and strength; to a bruised and crushed spirit, hope; to a remorseful conscience, repentance,—and angels will rejoice.

When pestilence covers the land with disease and death; when strong men are stricken down in the streets at noonday, and unburied corpses lie festering in the sun; when the well fly from the contagion of the sick, and the dying are left without a helping hand to minister to their last wants; when love is forgotten, and fear mocks at friendship, duty impels the physician to the dreadful scene, where, in the performance of noble offices, the mind is elevated above all sense of danger; and, as with Peter, who walked upon the water, when the soul is filled with a lofty sentiment, there is no danger. To render these services, to feel in your hearts the reward of a good deed, to be filled with this ennobling faith, becomes your glorious privilege.

The relation of physician and patient is one of peculiar interest. You are entrusted with the health and life of another. Think of this; think of the importance of the trust. One person does not trust another with large sums of money, usually, without legal security for its repayment; and yet we all value life and health more than money. What is it our patients rely upon, when they so unreservedly place that which is so dear to them in our keeping? Upon our skill and integrity; nothing more.

What evidence have they that their confidence will not be misplaced? In this country, at least in most parts of it, any person may assume the title of Doctor. I see no fault in this. It throws the responsibility of choosing between the educated physician and the mere pretender, upon the chooser. This, in its turn, calls for some investigation of their respective merits; the investigation leads to some knowledge, and it is only the ignorance of the public mind that quackery feeds upon. There can be no permanent harm in allowing the people to think and act, and choose for themselves. What claim, then, have you upon the confidence of the community? Your Diplomas are proof that you do not assume such a responsible position without adequate preparation.
This preparation has consisted in a course of three years' study, or longer, during which you have attended two or more full courses of lectures on each of the seven branches usually taught in medical colleges. Besides this, you have sought in the dissecting-room for that practical knowledge of the wonderful mechanism of the human body, that lies at the foundation of all other medical knowledge. In the study of chemistry, another important elementary branch, you have had, in addition to the usual lectures and experiments, a course of practical instruction, that has made you familiar with the whole subject. And that you might be fully prepared to enter the profession, you have witnessed twice every week the actual treatment of the sick. Patients have been examined and prescribed for in your presence, and afterward submitted to your care, under the supervision of your teachers. You have been examined on all the different branches in which the science of medicine is taught, and were deemed worthy of admission to the ranks of our noble profession. These, the studies you have pursued, and the examinations you have passed, are the guarantees offered to the public, of your ability to well and faithfully perform the duties of physicians.

Not only do our patients entrust us with their health and lives, but, often, with what they value more than life itself—their reputations. In the practice of medicine it not unfrequently happens that we obtain the knowledge of circumstances, which would, if known to the public, ruin the reputation of individuals, and degrade the social position of whole families. In the agony of suffering, or in the fear of death, confessions of crime are forced on our unwilling ears, and we become the recipients of knowledge it is painful to keep, because secrecy makes us feel as if participants in the guilt, and honor forbids us to betray the confidence reposed in us.

Under all ordinary circumstances, the knowledge of the private affairs of our patients and their families, obtained during professional intercourse, should never be divulged. The trust reposed in us should be ever held sacred. But this knowledge may be demanded of us by the legal tribunals of the country; and justice to injured persons may call for the same exposure. I can give you no rule for action in such trying emergencies.

Your proper course will be indicated by the attending circumstances.

You will consider what is due to the sacred obligations implied by
the relation of physician and patient; you will consider also what may be due to society for its protection; and to those others who may be injured parties, and demand redress or recompense; and above all, you will consider what is due to yourselves, to your own consciences, as honorable women.

"This above all,—to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Some of the obstacles that oppose the entrance of the young practitioner to a remunerative practice, will offer less than their usual amount of resistance to you. It commonly happens that the young physician has to wait long years of probation, during which much work has to be done for small pay, before he begins to reap the full reward of his labors. Not only is it necessary for him to acquire a reputation for skill and attention to business, but a respectable age must be attained, before he can hope to be employed in some of the most profitable departments of practice. With you the case is very different, there is an existing demand for your services, which none others can so well supply. Each city in this country is ready to give employment to a large number of female physicians, each lesser town and country village is waiting for one or more; numerous applications from various parts of the country have been made for female physicians. At a moderate computation, we may estimate the number now in actual demand in this country at not less than five thousand.

You are wanted for a kind of practice that most male physicians would gladly relinquish to you, whenever they are convinced that you have been regularly educated, and are competent to perform the duties of the position you have assumed.

But it is due to yourselves that you do not allow the impression to be received by the public, that you are only prepared to practice certain specialities. Let it be distinctly understood that you have been educated in every branch of medical science, and are prepared to practice in all its departments. Let it be also understood that you do not expect to supersede male practitioners. There are places in the practice of the healing art for both; both are required.

There is no competition between you and them, other than that which exists between all who are engaged in the same calling. Indeed, there
is less than this, for you and they will fill somewhat different places in
the profession; but each alike profitable and honorable.

Several eminent physicians in this city, themselves professors in col-
leges for male students, have expressed their approval of females be-
coming physicians. Almost every physician of good standing, who has
seriously thought on the subject, is ready to acknowledge the propriety,
the necessity, for females in the profession.

Some opposition may naturally be expected from those who are afraid
of fair and honorable competition, from those who feel that they
have not inherent in them that ability necessary to sustain them with-
out the aid—favorable circumstance. They will raise the cry, “She
is out of her proper sphere,” because they are afraid they will be pushed
out of places they are not fit to fill; “A woman can’t practice medicine,”
because they are afraid she can. But I am proud to say, on behalf of
our profession, that there are the exceptions to the rule.

You will find that physicians, generally, are high-minded and honor-
able. The nature of their calling makes them so. And when an un-
worthy member finds his way into our ranks, I am always glad that
he is in a position likely to improve him; and beside this, there is no
other profession or calling so able to bear a few such burdens. Treat
all such, therefore, with kindness and forbearance. You can well afford
to be generous toward them.

The rules of etiquette established among physicians for the regulation
of their professional intercourse with each other, have been made a
part of the teachings that you have already received. I have only to
ask of you now that you will ever strictly adhere to them. They are
founded on justice and right; and when obeyed, will always prevent the
possibility of professional quarrels, and secure to your patients your
best services and their greatest safety.

Physicians have, generally, a high regard for their profession. The
daily performance of their duties teaches them the importance of their
vocation. The well-educated and conscientious physician, therefore, de-
spises quackery, and will not, and should not recognise as equals, those
who do not depend upon true merit. He feels that it is a part of his
duty to protect the community from the impositions of pretenders and
charlatans, by treating them with that contempt that is most forcibly
expressed by silence. I have no fear that you will ever deserve this
condemnation, and only allude to it, because the novelty of your position renders you liable to be misunderstood.

You may encounter physicians who have never heard that an institution exists, where females are taught in all the branches of medical science,—an institution endowed by law, with the same rank, power, and privileges as the other colleges in this city, so famous for its medical schools. If such a case should occur, and you should be treated unfairly by any practitioner who did not know that you had been regularly educated and graduated in medicine, you should first learn whether he is a regular physician, and in good standing in the profession, and if he is not, take no notice of him whatever. You can have no intercourse with quacks. But if he is, you should first enlighten him in regard to the facts, and then claim the rights and civilities due from one member of the profession to another. If these are then refused, you have just cause to pity the refuser; but never, never quarrel about it. Never take advantage of his folly to injure him, but treat him tenderly and kindly, and he may come to see the imprudence of his course, and may desire, by better behaviour in the future, to retrieve what he has lost.

Whoever attempts to injure you, places himself in your power. Be you generous and use that power, not to injure him, but to elevate him to a better sense of his duty. Let your presence in the world be always felt for good.

You will probably seldom meet with such annoyances, and they cannot injure you when they do occur; but you are in danger of being sufferers from a very different cause.

Some opposition to be met, some obstacles to be removed, some difficulties to be overcome, are necessary to develop our courage, strength and energy. Without these, the incentives to exertion are so small, that we live lives of more passivity, and the powers and qualities inherent in us remain weak or dormant. No person has ever risen to eminence, to distinguished usefulness, who did not encounter and surmount great difficulties in the beginning. If the opposition is so violent as to crush with its force, or the obstacles so great as to obstruct by their magnitude, the ambitious aspirant still struggles on in the right direction, and

"Being tried by fire,
The spirit will but soar the higher."
What I most fear is, that the usual amount of this kind of stimulus to exertion will, with you, be wanting; that your path to success will be too smooth to invigorate you by the journey.

Your position is peculiar. The imperative demand that exists for your presence in our profession, the urgent call of the sick and suffering of your own sex for relief at your hands, will secure you at once a share of practice much greater than usually falls to the lot of the young physician.

The natural sentiment of gallantry in men will dispose them to extend their patronage to you, to use their influence for you, and to judge your talents and acquirements favorably, and your defects with lenity.

These circumstances you may properly make the means to increase your usefulness; but always bear in mind the source whence they sprung, and do not give your merit credit for that which properly belongs to the accident of your peculiar relation to the community. Even those who have attained to eminence by lives of toil and privation, by genuine worth, by superior abilities and unimpeachable integrity, are too often warped and spoiled in the end by the sunshine of popular favor. We need not be surprised, therefore, that those who are suddenly and by accident elevated to popularity, should be giddy by the unaccustomed height, and become for a while ridiculous whirligs, to be turned by every breath of public opinion, and finally suffer a disgraceful fall.

You are in double danger. First, of not encountering those trials in the early part of your professional career, that are necessary to develop all your intellectual strength and moral courage; and secondly, of acquiring prematurely that popularity so dangerous even to those who have been strengthened by long years of toil and effort.

I know that you have not engaged in this enterprise without seriously considering its duties and responsibilities. I know, too, that you have been earnest, faithful students; that you have pursued your studies in the expectation of being severely criticised by the world. This knowledge gives me strong assurance that you are well prepared to encounter the dangers I have pointed out.

Though some of the usual promptings to effort may be wanting, there is one motive that will ever urge you to your duty. The tender sympathy of your nature will respond with quick and strong emotion to the sufferings of your patients. You will feel with more than ordinary pleasure the blessedness of doing good.
The highest sentiments of our natures will impel you onward, and these motives will more than supply the place of those that are absent.

Ladies, we are soon to part, and you will be scattered to far-distant parts of the earth; but whether in northern home, amid family and friends, or in the sunny south, on the extreme border of our wide-spread country; or across the ocean to Father-land, to revisit loved scenes of childhood; or as missionary to far-distant Burmah, to carry glad tidings of a Saviour to the heathens; our best wishes are with you, our prayers are for you, that the choicest blessings may rest upon you, that your lives may be prolonged, and that they may be lives of usefulness to yourselves and to the world.

The Third Annual Commencement was held in the Musical Fund Hall, on Saturday, Feb. 25th, 1854, when the Degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred by the President, Professor Charles D. Cleveland, on the following Ladies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Subject of Thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bates, Elizabeth H.</td>
<td>N. Y.</td>
<td>Means of Preserving Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, Lucinda R.</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Digestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliger, Minna</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>History of Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shattuck, Elizabeth G.</td>
<td>Penna.</td>
<td>Iodine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


President.
PROF. CHARLES D. CLEVELAND.

Faculty.

DAVID J. JOHNSON, M.D.,
Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology.

ELLWOOD HARVEY, M.D.,
Professor of Principles and Practice of Medicine.

ANN PRESTON, M.D.,
Professor of Physiology.

EDWIN FUSSELL, M.D.,
Professor of Anatomy.

MARK G. KERR, M.D.,
Professor of Materia Medica and General Therapeutics.

MARTHA H. MOWRY, M.D.,
Professor of Obstetrics, and Diseases of Women and Children.

K. G. THOMAS, M.D.,
Professor of Surgery.

DAVID J. JOHNSON, M.D.,
Dean of the Faculty, 229 Arch St., Philadelphia.

ALMIRA L. FOWLER, M.D.,
Demonstrator of Anatomy and Chemistry.

HENRY F. BIRNBAUM,
Janitor.
Female Medical College
OF PENNSYLVANIA.

No. 229 ARCH STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

SESSION 1854-5.

The Fifth Annual Session of this Institution will commence on Monday, October 2d, 1854, and continue twenty-one weeks, closing on Saturday, February 26th, 1855.

The fees are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matriculation Fee (paid only the first session)</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each Professor</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the Demonstrator</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Fee</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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For the encouragement of Ladies whose means will not allow of the usual expenditure, a limited number of students will be admitted, on the payment of twenty dollars per session, exclusive of the matriculation and graduation fees. Such arrangements will be strictly confidential, and no distinction in point of courtesy and attention will be made between the beneficiary and other students.

For further information, or for copies of the Annual Announcement, application may be made to the Dean.