VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

TO THE

GRADUATING CLASS

OF THE

FEMALE MEDICAL COLLEGE

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

FOR THE SESSION OF 1857-58.

By ANN PRESTON, M. D.

Professor of Physiology and Hygiene.

PUBLISHED BY THE CLASS.

PHILADELPHIA.

A. KETTERLINUS, BOOK & JOB PRINTER, S. E. COR. THIRD AND RACE STS.

1858.
FEMALE MEDICAL COLLEGE.

You are particularly invited to attend the
Ninth Annual Commencement of the Female
Medical College, at the MUSICAL FUND HALL,
on Saturday next, the 27th instant, at eleven
o'clock, A. M.

Valedictory Address by Prof. Ann Prestow.

C. D. CLEVELAND,
JOSEPH JEANS,
ISAAC BARTON,
MARMADUKE MOORE,
Dr. E. FUSSELL, Dean.

Committee.

Please take a seat on the platform.

Philadelphia, February, 1858.
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1858.
CORRESPONDENCE.

PROF. A. PRESTON:

DEAR MADAM:

The Students of the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania, believing that a diffusion of those principles you have so worthily and efficiently sustained, will greatly advance the interests of Woman's Medical Education, have appointed us a committee to solicit a copy of your Valedictory Address, for publication.

With sincere regard,

Committee on behalf of the Students:

REBECCA L. FUSSELL,
C. ANNETTE BUCKEL,
MARY E. PRICE.

PHILADELPHIA, MAR. 27, 1858.

R. L. FUSSELL, A. C. BUCKEL & M. E. PRICE:

DEAR FRIENDS:

In response to your solicitation, made in terms of such kindness, I herewith transmit you a copy of my Valedictory Address.

Accept my warmest wishes for your welfare and that of those whom you represent, and believe me most sincerely

Your Friend,

ANN PRESTON.

115 Marshall Street, Philadelphia.
February 27th, 1858.
THE SEVENTH ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

Was held in the Musical Fund Hall, on Saturday, the 27th of February, 1858, when the Degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred by the President, Professor Charles D. Cleveland, upon the following Ladies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>States</th>
<th>Subject of Thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca L. Russell</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Anaesthetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Parry</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Annette Buckel</td>
<td>New York,</td>
<td>Insanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie W. Jones</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Sleep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ladies:

We are about to separate, and I am deputed to-day, on behalf of my colleagues, to give you the parting word.

If it were not that truth, like the morning, is ever fresh and new, it would seem a poor office to speak at all.

The list of truisms has been exhausted; a round of advices to medical graduates, has been repeated, with variations, from year to year.

But it is not a very common thing for women to receive degrees in medical schools, and as you pass on to the duties before you, the lovers of humanity look with no ordinary interest upon your progress, and especially do the hearts of true women go out to you in hope and sympathy.

You, ladies, after years of faithful and unwearyed study, have earned for yourselves the honor of taking your places in the ranks of a noble profession, as candidates for its responsibilities and successes; but while, in some directions, you possess peculiar facilities for a fortunate career, there are others in which you will encounter difficulties that do not meet the young man who, like you, is entering upon the practice of medicine. That sympathy and assistance from older members of the fraternity, which the inexperienced practitioner so much needs, will indeed be given you by many of the wise and good; even now, numbers of those who are recognized as standing among the highest in the profession, will meet you freely in consultation; but still we cannot ignore the fact that, as a body, physicians have not yet welcomed women into their ranks as a needful or desirable auxiliary.

No lordly Turk, smoking on his ottoman, could better depict the depravation which public manners would suffer, if Turkish women
should openly walk, side by side with fathers, husbands and brothers, to the solemn Mosque, than some among us have portrayed the perversion our society must undergo if woman shares with man the office of Physician.

Ladies, we should gain nothing by meeting such as these in argument. Prejudices are not amenable to reason. Your business is, not to war with words, but "to make good" your position "upon the bodies" of your patients by deeds of healing.

As you mused in your quiet homes, you felt burning within you faculties that demanded exercise, a heaven-implanted necessity for something satisfying to do, for a career of usefulness.

Looking about you to see your work, you perceived that society needed and demanded woman as physician; you were convinced that this was a natural and legitimate, as well as an imperative want; you decided for yourselves that here was a worthy and fitting channel for your energies; and your own convictions and the Providence which guides events have led you where you are.

The relative intellectual ability of the sexes is altogether an irrelevant question. You do not pretend to be something which you are not, but you are aiming to develop your own powers and to perform your own duties. You feel that you have not gone out of your way to seize upon medicine as on some far off thing, but that, with the widening of the range of woman's employments, which marks advancing civilization and the fuller appreciation of the scope of Christianity, it has come to you.

The question of the success of woman as physician is not now an open one. Her success is already a matter, not of hope or of prophecy, but of history. That women, as well as men, who are unqualified and incompetent, have entered the ranks, we cannot deny; but there are medical women in practice, amply sustained pecuniarily, who walk daily amid the benedictions of those whom their skill and knowledge have relieved.

Ladies, should you meet with those who, with a medical teacher and writer of this city, are pleased to say of woman, "She discerns not the courses of the planets, Orion with his belt and Arcturus with his suns are nought to her but pretty baubles set up in the sky;" it were worse than useless to remind such of the names of Caroline Herschell, Mrs. Somerville, and our own countrywoman, Miss Mitchell; it were idle still to expend vitality in feelings of indigna-
tion, but looking up to those same serene stars, ever shining as they march on in their appointed circles,—filling the listening ages with their spherical melodies, you may learn from them sublime lessons of rejoicing and unaltering labor.

We grant, what is so often repeated, that home is woman’s sphere, where her character is most symmetrically unfolded: we revere the holy name of home, for we also have hearthstones around which our dearest associations are clustered; but if woman’s exertions and charities were confined to these, where would be the teachers of the land? Where our benevolent associations and the thousands of missionaries of charity that have left the privacy of their own homes and at this hour are threading their way through lanes and alleys to make joyful the abodes of others? Miriam and Deborah, Phebe and Priscilla, and they who were “last at the cross and earliest at the grave,” found their spheres where they could sympathize with the suffering or minister to human welfare!

The lights would be dimmed in the homes of the civilized world to-day, if the names and deeds of the Veturias and Hypatias, the Joans of Arc and Laura Bassis, the Lady Guyons and Mrs. Fletchers, the Elizabeth Frys and Grace Darlings, the Dorothea Dixes and Florence Nightingales of the world, were blotted from the page of history and the memory of man! In medicine too, an irreparable blank would be made if the writings and observations of Madame Boivin and Madame Lachapelle were swept from its records.

Ladies, it is for the very purpose of making home enjoyments more complete, that you have been delegated to day to bear health and hope to the abodes you enter. You go into them when pain and sickness prostrate the body, often when fear and anguish prey upon the spirit. You meet your patients where dissimulation is laid aside, and the character is bare before you. Those who are thus admitted into the very sanctuaries of society, and entrusted with the most sacred confidences, should indeed be strong and wise and pure and good.

It would be superfluous here to dwell upon the virtues requisite in the physician. Although the poet has said “all the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players,” yet you feel that you have no artificial part to act; you have simply “to do the duty that lies nearest to you,” and everywhere to be true to your own souls.

Moral principles and duties are the same for the professional and the unprofessional. Probity, simplicity, modesty, hope, patience,
benevolence, prudence, are needed alike by the woman and the physician.

The rules of Medical Etiquette, with which you are not unfamiliar, are, in the greater part, simply rules of propriety and delicacy, of general application.

None can be successful physicians who are not able to secure the confidence of their patients, and none can sustain others who are not themselves self-sustained.

To you also there will come seasons of care and trial; you will bear your beating human hearts amid your professional duties; you may be misrepresented and censured; and nothing but strict inward rectitude can give that repose and strength to the spirit which will enable it to bear up safely through every difficulty and sorrow.

Ladies, while I sympathize with you in view of the untried path before you, I can still congratulate you upon its enjoyments. Your business relations will be principally with women. In this city, and I presume elsewhere, those who are ready to employ their own sex as physicians, are found largely among the lovely and intelligent, and among those too who stand highest and fairest in society.

Notwithstanding the common reproach that women are ungenerous to women, and that they exhibit pettiness in transactions of business, I am glad to be able to tell you that in my intercourse with them I have found, with few exceptions, the reverse to be true: nobleness, generosity and sympathy all unlooked for, have been largely manifested, and my professional experience has deepened my respect and regard for woman and for humanity.

Ladies, if you prove yourselves capable and worthy, as we believe you will, society is ready to receive you; on every side the demand for your services is becoming more imperative.

But you must not expect a lucrative practice to spring up in a day. Solid superstructures are the work of time; and slowly, carefully, woman also must work her way, building up the reputation which is her professional capital.

One of the most common errors of practice is haste in diagnosis. Some of us have seen fearful mistakes, not so much because the disorder was obscure, as because pains were not taken to examine carefully, so as to separate the accidental from the essential, and detect, amid varying symptoms, the real seat and nature of the difficulty. Often a circumstance or symptom which the patient
deems of little importance furnishes the physician with the very clue which is needed. If after careful investigation you find you do not understand the case, nor see the proper mode of treatment, you will make no false pretensions! The golden rule does not cease to be binding because you are physicians and those who consult you and confide in you are patients. Besides, the world throws no pitying screen over the mistakes of a woman!

Opportunities of attending hospitals have been only to a limited extent enjoyed by our sex, but there is now at least one woman's Infirmary free to your inspection, and other facilities for seeing diseases and observing the treatment, are, as you are aware, opening and extending.

In your practice, let me remind you of the advantage of taking a note of what you see, of keeping carefully recorded tables of your observations. Statistics are the best commentaries on theories. The profession needs more facts, and it will, I trust, yet owe you a debt of gratitude for the clear, reliable information which, upon some points, you will possess superior facilities for obtaining.

The women of this country are especially the sad victims of wrong hygienic conditions, and they need medical advisers with whom they can communicate freely, who can not only prescribe medicines with skill, but who can explain to them the nature of the functions of their bodies, and the means for the proper regulation of daily habits and influences.

Sound advice is the staple in which the physician should deal, and impressed as you are with the importance of those "despised things" which here also have been chosen to confound "the mighty," and reverencing profoundly the indications of Nature, you will study to make your practice an enlightened co-operation with her healing and preserving forces.

It is scarcely needful to suggest to you the importance of taking medical journals, and of keeping yourselves well posted in regard to the discovery and application of remedial agencies. There are perhaps few things more truly progressive than Regular Medicine, as its principles are expounded by the physiologists and medical philosophers who are now giving tone to its literature.

Narrow-minded practitioners, who know only enough to follow blindly an old routine of practice, whether it "kills or cures," have often brought the profession into contempt; but true medicine, draw-
ing upon every department of nature for its resources, and reverently studying her ways and means, untrammelled by narrow creeds and partial schools, making Air and Earth and Fire and Water its ministers, still discovering new facts, and making fresh applications of the old, must go on conquering and to conquer.

Ladies, I need not enlarge upon the importance of education and general intelligence. She who could not take position in refined and intelligent society as a woman, need never hope to do so as a physician. Nor, without discretion and a sound discriminating judgment, can woman, more than man, make a reliable medical adviser.

The senses as well as the mind, must be cultivated, the physician must perceive as well as understand. You have not yet to learn that touch, sight, hearing, etc. are all susceptible of education, and that the information they give depends largely upon the attention they receive.

Ladies, go on in your chosen career, quietly, but full of trust. Those who may sneer in the distance, when they come into social or professional contact with virtue and intelligence, will feel their power, and will give first to personal character that respect which more tardily they will accord to the professional.

Fitness and capability will vindicate themselves against the world: they are God’s endorsement of the rightfulness of any position. Our true work ever seems natural to us, it opens before us, and quietness and gladness attend its performance.

Go on! The weary sempstress toiling at her ill-requited labor, unable by the sacrifice of the best years of her life to obtain the comforts of a home for her age or sickness; the sad widow, leaving her children day by day and going out into the world to earn the pittance which procures them bread; all the brave, struggling women who in various walks of life are laboring for small compensation, will be benefited by a movement which opens to woman another department of remunerative and virtuous activity. Some, too, among the wealthy and luxurious, who, for want of satisfying and strengthening employment, have had their attention so centered upon themselves that they have become painfully and morbidly alive to every sensation, are awakening to the conviction that their immortal energies were given for better purposes than to be expended upon head-aches and neuralgias, and as their hearts thrill and glow in view of an expanding sphere for woman, they also bid you God speed.
Good men and women on every hand are giving you their sympathy, regarding your success as something gained for the whole race.

While the practice of medicine should be truly a divine charity, of which the blessings of the poor are among the richest rewards, yet we trust it may also prove to you a means of pecuniary independence, available although connexions and trustees may fail, and stocks depreciate. Every woman who has had any experience in these practical matters, knows the keen sense of satisfaction with which she expends the proceeds of her own exertions, and many a sad one can attest that pecuniary dependence is not less bitter to her than to her brother.

Yours is not the fancy of a moment, but a great, earnest work, to which the noblest attributes of our common humanity and the holiest affections of the woman are to be brought. All the discoveries which the wisest have made, have been made for you also, and your nice perceptions and ready sympathies, your tact and taste, and clear intuitions, will be invaluable assistants in your professional labors.

You have a purpose before you—a satisfying employment for your noblest powers, and the knowledge which has yielded so much joy in the acquisition will be “twice blessed” in the dispensing. There may be difficulties to overcome, but all who go upward in their onward course, find their range of vision continually enlarging, and their pathway becoming ever more open to the blue of heaven, more glorious with the light of sun and stars.

You take into the profession an element essential to its completeness, and silently the spirit and life of the true woman will rebuke the scoffer, and infuse a deeper reverence and purity into the ranks she enters.

In studying the sacred facts of nature as revealed in your own organizations, and in practising medicine in the spirit of that divine Physician who “went about doing good,” you will promote in yourselves and others, a grand and beautiful womanhood, and lose no grace which befits and adorns our sex.

Although you may walk through crowds, or enter miserable abodes, you will still remain within the quiet and guarded pavilion of Duty; you will still be ensphered within the sacred privacy of your own souls. Loving virtue, she will be to you as an angel of protection:

“She can teach ye how to climb:
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heav’n itself would stoop to her.”
Female Medical College
OF PENNSYLVANIA,
627 ARCH STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

THE NINTH ANNUAL SESSION of this Institution will commence on Wednesday, the 13th of October, 1858, and continue FIVE MONTHS.

THE FEES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Second Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor's Tickets, each $10 00</td>
<td>$370 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Anatomy,</td>
<td>5 00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation Fee,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Fees for lectures after Second Session.
Whole cost for two or more courses of lectures and Graduation, $175 00

For the encouragement of those whose means will not allow of the usual expenditure, six students will be admitted annually on the payment of twenty dollars per session—exclusive of the matriculation, demonstrator's 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. Ladies desiring admission on this foundation, must forward to the Dean, at least 30 days before the opening of the session, an application in their own handwriting, accompanied by testimonials as to character, age, occupation, qualifications, and want of means. The successful candidates will be duly notified. Any person who does not incline to become a physician, yet desires instruction in some of the branches taught in a Medical College, as a part of a liberal education, may take the tickets, and attend the Lectures of any one or more of the Professors.

For further particulars, address
EDWIN RUSSELL, M. D., Dean,
No. 627 Arch Street.
The following is from the

APPEAL OF THE CORPORATORS,

AS PUBLISHED IN THE EIGHTH ANNUAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Corporators of the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania, appeal to the friends of humanity in behalf of this Institution and the cause it represents. They regard the medical education of women as a necessity of the age, and a way-mark of the advancement of a refined civilization.

They find the demand for female physicians wide-spread and increasing, and regard the study and practice of medicine as peculiarly adapted to the nice perceptions of woman, and the tenderness and refined graces of her nature.

They consider that woman, as a wife and mother, pre-eminently needs a clear understanding of the functions of the human body and the means of preserving health; and that high-toned and intelligent female physicians, from their relations to their sex, must be most important instrumentalities in imparting such knowledge, where it is most needed and will do the most good.

It is well known that there is a vast amount of suffering among women, which is left without relief, from the shrinking delicacy of its victims, and it is therefore a demand of humanity that women should be put in possession of the requisite knowledge to administer the required treatment in such cases.

They also desire a scientific medical education for woman, because it will furnish her honorable and profitable employment—giving her a new sphere of usefulness and happiness, where duty and the sympathies of her nature lead her,—in the chambers of the sick and the suffering.

Feeling, therefore, that this is a great cause, intimately connected with the improvement and happiness of society, they appeal to generous and true men and women for aid and co-operation.
Philadelphia is peculiarly adapted to the location of a College of this character. It is the seat of medical learning in America, and the facilities for a medical education here are superior to those of any other city on this continent.

The College has firmly and bravely outlived the opposition and difficulties that always attend new enterprises, and especially innovations upon time-honored usages—and, after seven years of trial, it may, we think, fairly claim to be an established medical school. The Professors have labored with much self-denial and great pecuniary sacrifice; for it is well known, that in the early years of an institution like this, the expenses must be greater than the receipts from the students. The burden of these expenses has heretofore been borne by a generous few, but the corporators believe the time has now fully arrived when they may call upon all the friends of the medical education of women, to contribute of their little or their abundance, for the support of the College, and its endowment with a fund commensurate with its scope and purposes.

They desire to place this College—the first medical school of this character of the same extent in the world—on a permanent basis; and wish therefore to endow it with a fund which will place it beyond the contingency of accident.

Contributions may be sent to the President, Professor Charles D. Cleveland, No. 903 Clinton Street; to the Treasurer, Mr. Marmaduke Moore, No. 427 Market Street, or to the Dean of the Faculty.