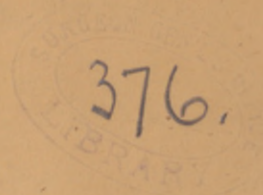


HAMMOND-SAYRE

HAMMOND-SAYRE

CONTROVERSY.



1889.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *August 19, 1889.*

TO DR. LEWIS A. SAYRE :

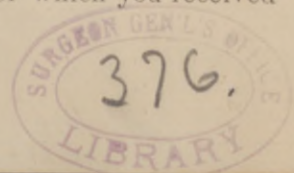
A few days since you asserted to a newspaper reporter that I am making \$1,000 a week out of the so-called Dr. Brown-Sequard "Elixir of Life." You did this without the least evidence in support of the statement, and with that moral recklessness which is so prominent a feature of your character. It originated entirely in your own debased and dishonorable mind. You knew how you would act under similar circumstances, and you affected to believe that I would be equally as low as you are. You knew at the time that you were uttering a wilful, malignant, and deliberate lie. I have not made, nor do I expect to make, directly or indirectly, as much as one cent from the so-called "Elixir."

You undertook to denounce the experiments I am making as though you knew something about them. Every physician acquainted with your scientific status is aware that your knowledge of physiology and pathology is small enough to disgrace an embryo medical student, and that you are utterly incapable of giving an intelligent opinion upon any subject requiring grave thought and deliberation.

You are also pleased to express your opinion of me in such ungentlemanly and unprofessional language that were it worth the while I should bring you to the bar of a court of justice or inflict such personal chastisement upon you as your malignancy and falsehood so well deserve. It is thoroughly known, however, that abuse from you is no slander. The filthiness of your speech, even in ordinary conversation, is such that ladies, to my knowledge, have left your presence in disgust, and have refused to hold further professional communication with you, while your habitual brutality of manner and cruelty have become by-words with the profession and the public of New York. As to horse-whipping you, I am afraid that not even that satisfaction is left to me. You are so broken down mentally and physically by your vicious course of life that the public, whose good opinion I believe I possess, might regard me as taking an undue advantage of your infirmities.

I a "fraud," pronounced so by Lewis A. Sayre, whose name is a synonym for all that is false and unprofessional! How often have you stolen patients from other physicians? So frequently, that consultations with you are dangerous, for it is well known that you will endeavor so to ingratiate yourself with the patient by your pretensions and vauntings that the family physician is cast into the shade and the case goes into your hands—that is, it used to go into your hands when your brother physicians called you in consultation. They have learned to avoid you as an honest man avoids a thief.

A "fraud!" Do you remember some of the many fraudulent and unnecessary operations you have performed upon helpless children for manifestly incurable diseases, and for which you received



grossly exorbitant fees? Have you forgotten poor little Harry Norman, whom you cruelly mutilated and then had the unblushing impudence to report the case as cured, when your operation, as I showed to the American Neurological Association from the testimony of the father and the exhibition of the patient, had not only been useless, but had aggravated the disease from which the child suffered? Can you not bring to your mind, in some of its less obfuscated moments, if such there be, the case of the son of the Brooklyn clergyman, whom you heartlessly cut with your knife when the little fellow was suffering from an organic disease of the spinal cord absolutely incurable? Have you forgotten the suit for malpractice which a poor and indignant father brought against you for injuries which, in your ignorance of anatomy and surgery, you inflicted upon his son? It is true you managed to throw sufficient doubt about the matter as to warrant a jury in acquitting you, but one of the most distinguished surgeons of this or any other country testified that you had opened the hip joint and had made the boy a hopeless cripple for life.

Why, your whole life has been one of fraud! Think of the way in which your unfortunate creditors suffered from your bankruptcy when you were forced into court on supplementary proceedings, and when you swore that you had no property and no income and that your wife received the proceeds of your practice and allowed you a weekly stipend for your board and clothes.

Think of the fact that the books that have appeared under your name were composed by men whom you hired for the purpose, and that you are incapable of writing good English, not only on medical subjects, but on any subject whatever.

You say in the interview to which I refer, that you echo the opinion expressed in regard to me by one of your Philadelphia confreres. Immediately on seeing the alleged statement, I wrote to Dr. Mears asking if he had made any such assertion as he was reported to have made. In answer I received the following letter:

“ 1429 WALNUT STREET,

“ PHILADELPHIA, August 6th, 1889.

“ DEAR SIR:

“ I am just in receipt of your letter of the 2d instant, enclosing a slip cut from the Philadelphia *Times*, and you ask whether this is authentic or not. It is not authentic. I deem it just to you, as to myself, to state that immediately on my attention being called to the statement referred to, I called on the editor of the *Times* and requested him to make a proper correction.

“ I enclose herewith a slip cut from the *Times* of the next morning, the 3d instant.

“ I need not assure you that I greatly regret the publication to which you refer.

“ Very respectfully,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ I. EWING MEARS.

“ Dr. W. A. HAMMOND,

“ Washington, D. C.”

The following is the extract from the Philadelphia *Times* to which Dr. Mears refers :

“Injustice was done to both Dr. Mears and to Dr. Hammond by a misconception of Dr. Mears’ statement relative to Dr. Brown-Sequard’s theory of the elixir of life. Dr. Mears was reported as saying that ‘Dr. Hammond, as is known in his profession, is a fraud,’ when what he said was : ‘If Dr. Hammond advocated the Brown-Sequard theory he advocated a scientific fraud.’

“The misconception of Dr. Mears’ statement, as reported, made him appear as offering a direct offense to Dr. Hammond, for whom he cherishes great respect, as does the medical profession, and the correction is made as a matter of justice to both parties.”

It is scarcely necessary to say anything more on this point. Dr. Mears is a gentleman ; you are not.

You have always been noted for unscrupulousness and malignancy, but as you grow older these traits become more pronounced in you. Doubtless, this fact is in great part due to the circumstance that your practice has almost entirely vanished. Abler and better men, such as Shaffer, Gibney, Roberts, Phelps, and others, whom you have systematically affected to contemn and underrate, have come to the front and have cast you into the background. Your mind is too small to tolerate an honorable rivalry.

I told you once, as you will probably recollect, that there was too much glass in your house for you to venture to throw stones, and that if you did not keep a decent tongue in your head, so far as I was concerned, it would be bad for you. I think you will admit that my warning was timely, and that I have fulfilled my promise.

WILLIAM A. HAMMOND.

1
The first of these
is, and is, the

New York Herald
Sunday, Aug. 25, 89.

VIRULENT EFFECTS OF THE ELIXIR.

Dr. William A. Hammond Administers Abuse to Dr. Lewis A. Sayre in Allopathic Doses.

NEUROLOGICAL VENOM VERSUS ORTHOPEDIC ANIMOSITY.

Subcuticular Applications of "Fraud" and "Liar," with Equal Parts of "Malpractice" and "Deception" in a Saturated Solution of Professional Jealousy and Personal Spite.

"WHO SHALL DECIDE WHEN DOCTORS DISAGREE?"

—Pope.

In this Case the Documents Are in Evidence and They Are "Mighty Interestin' Reading," if Not Edifying.

That peculiar condition of things so vaguely expressed by the phrase "when doctors disagree" seems to have been reached in the controversy over the Brown-Séguard elixir of life. By no means the least interesting incident in the sensational experiments and experiences with the elixir is the violent attack made by Dr. William A. Hammond, of Washington, on Dr. Lewis A. Sayre, of this city.

A circular is being mailed at Washington containing an open letter addressed to Dr. Sayre, over the name of Dr. Hammond, which is a perfect torrent of Billingsgate. It is sent in unsealed envelopes to the members of the medical profession and others. How the medical fraternity will receive it remains to be seen. Both men have world wide reputations. That makes the attack all the more notable. The ethics of the profession seem to have been somewhat strained.

THE PROVOCATION.

The circular is dated Washington, D. C., August 19, 1889, and runs in this way:—

"A few days since you asserted to a newspaper reporter that I am making \$1,000 a week out of the so-called Dr. Brown-Séguard 'elixir of life.' You did this without the least evidence in support of the statement, and with that moral recklessness which is so prominent a feature of your character. It originated entirely in your own debased and dishonorable mind. You know how you would act under similar circumstances, and you affected to believe that I would be equally as low as you are. You knew at the time that you were uttering a wilful, malignant and deliberate lie. I have not made, nor do I expect to make, directly or indirectly, as much as one cent from the so-called 'elixir.'

"You undertook to denounce the experiments I am making as though you knew something about them. Every physician acquainted with your scientific status is aware that your knowledge of physiology and pathology is small enough to disgrace an embryo medical student, and that you are utterly incapable of giving an intelligent opinion upon any subject requiring grave thought and deliberation.

"You are also pleased to express your opinion of me in such ungentlemanly and unprofessional language that were it worth the while I should bring you to the bar of a court of justice or inflict such personal chastisement upon you as your malignancy and falsehood so well deserve. It is thoroughly known, however, that abuse from you is no slander. The filthiness of your speech, even in ordinary conversation, is such that ladies, to my knowledge, have left your presence in disgust, and have refused to hold further professional communication with you, while your habitual brutality of manner and cruelty have become bywords to the profession and the public of New York. As to horsewhipping you, I am afraid that not even that satisfaction is left to me. You are so broken down mentally and physically by your vicious course of life that the public, whose good opinion I believe I possess, might regard me as taking an undue advantage of your infirmities.

PAYING HIS RESPECTS.

"I a 'fraud,' pronounced so by Lewis A. Sayre, whose name is a synonyme for all that is false and unprofessional! How often have you stolen patients from other physicians? So frequently that consultations with you are dangerous, for it is well known that you will endeavor to so ingratiate yourself with the patient by your pretensions and vauntings that the family physician is cast into the shade and the case goes into your hands—that is, it used to go into your hands when your brother physicians called you in consultation. They have learned to avoid you as an honest man avoids a thief.

"A 'fraud!' Do you remember some of the many fraudulent and unnecessary operations you have performed upon helpless children for manifestly incurable diseases, and for which you received grossly exorbitant fees?

MALPRACTICE CHARGED.

"Have you forgotten poor little Harry Norman, whom you cruelly mutilated and then had the unblushing impudence to report the case as cured, when your operation, as I showed to the American Neurological Association from the testimony of the father and the exhibition of the patient, had not only been useless, but had aggravated the disease from which the child suffered?

"Can you not bring to your mind in some of its less obfuscated moments, if such there be, the case of the son of the Brooklyn clergyman whom you heartlessly cut with your knife when the little fellow was suffering from an organic disease of the spinal cord absolutely incurable? Have you forgotten the suit for malpractice which a poor and indignant father brought against you for injuries which, in your ignorance of anatomy and surgery, you inflicted upon his son? Is it true you managed to throw sufficient doubt about the matter as to warrant a jury in acquitting you, but one of the most distinguished surgeons of this or any other country testified that you had opened the hip joint and made the boy a hopeless cripple for life.

"Why, your whole life has been one of fraud! Think of the way in which your unfortunate creditors suffered from your bankruptcy, when you were forced into court on supplementary proceedings, and when you swore that you had no property and no income and that your wife received the proceeds of your practice and allowed you a weekly stipend for your board and clothes.

"Think of the fact that the books that have appeared under your name were composed by men whom you hired for the purpose, and that you are incapable of writing good English, not only on medical subjects, but on any subject whatever.

MORE VENOM.

"You have always been noted for unscrupulousness and malignancy, but as you grow older these traits become more pronounced in you. Doubtless this fact is in great part due to the circumstance that your practice has almost entirely vanished. Able and better men, such as Shaffer, Gibney, Roberts, Phelps and others, whom you have systematically affected to contempt and underrate, have come to the front and have cast you into the background. Your mind is too small to tolerate an honorable rivalry.

"I told you once, as you will probably recollect, that there was too much glass in your house for you to venture to throw stones, and that if you did not keep a decent tongue in your head so far as I was concerned it would be bad for you. I think you will admit that my warning was timely, and that I have fulfilled my promise."

DR. SAYRE LAUGHS AT THE SCREECH.

I found Dr. Sayre yesterday afternoon in his operating room in the Thirtieth street extension of his residence, No. 285 Fifth avenue. He had just been superintending an operation conducted by his son. Dr. Sayre had not seen the distribute of Dr. Hammond until I showed him a copy of it and he told me he had not even heard of it. He read it aloud and commented upon its passage by passage. The Doctor treated the whole thing in a rather jocular way and did not appear at all disturbed by the attack.

"Poor fellow!" was a frequent exclamation with him as he read on. "He has a perfect right to hold any opinion of me that he wishes," said Dr. Sayre at last. "His judgment of me does not in the slightest degree affect me, nor do I care what he thinks.

"I never made any such statement as he refers to at the start," continued Dr. Sayre. "I don't care whether he makes a cent or a million out of the elixir. The nearest I ever came to saying anything like it was that if I wanted to go into this business myself I was satisfied I could make \$1,000 a week, or \$1,000 a day for that matter, because there are so many old men who would want to be made young and would be willing to pay for it.

"I did not think it right to go ahead and make experiments with the elixir, as Hammond did, on the strength of what the newspapers said. The proper

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thing to do was to wait until a scientific investigation had been made and a report given on it. Then it was time enough for physicians to try it. They should have had the opinion of some such man as Dr. Loomis, who has just made a report.

"But Hammond jumped into the thing at the start and commenced to tell of the wonderful things he had done. He wanted to make all the capital out of it he could.

DOUBTS HAMMOND'S WORD.

"I don't think he has ever seen in any newspaper a statement representing that I said any such thing about him. I have received clippings from all over the country regarding my views, but have seen nothing of the sort and do not believe he has either.

"I ought to feel grateful to Hammond for letting me alone. If I have injured him or done anything to him why don't he take the law on me and come and give me a licking? I don't need any of his sympathy or pity. If he thinks my practice is falling off let him come and attend to it for a few days and he will find that I have all I can do.

"As for my not being called in consultation, that is all nonsense. I have had two consultations already to-day and am called for two more this afternoon. But such things as this cannot injure me, and I don't care what a man like Hammond says anyway.

"It was not I who called Hammond a fraud. Was he not so pronounced by the United States government when he was court-martialed and dismissed from the army? It is not necessary for me or anybody else to say anything about him, for he is well enough known.

"But he has made some positive misstatements and he ought to know it. I never saw such a man as Hammond. Do I know Harry Norman? Well, I should say I did. His father lived over in Greenpoint and I brought the boy over to see me. I told him what ought to be done, and he went home and got a druggist or somebody else to do what I had advised. He made a bad business of it.

DIDN'T GET A FAIR SHOW.

"Afterward I performed an operation on the boy, but before the wounds healed Hammond took him down before the Neurological Society. He did not exhibit the case properly there, as I can prove. I have letters in my possession from Mr. Norman thanking me for what I had done and saying it was all right.

"I am glad Hammond has brought up that malpractice case, for I have the documentary evidence to prove that I was in the right and was imposed upon, and in fighting the case was congratulated by some of the most eminent men in the profession and thanked for doing a great service to the profession. At the request of the late Dr. S. W. Gross, of Philadelphia, and the late Dr. Dixie Crosby I had published a history of the case, with all the evidence, court proceedings and other matters pertaining to it. Their letters, which were highly complimentary, appear in the volume, which was circulated extensively.

"The facts are briefly these:—While examining a patient in my private office on April 2, 1868, my assistant brought in a poor woman with a girl—not a boy as Hammond says—about seven years old. Dr. Gross and Dr. Nettel, of this city, happened to be there, and saw the case and the operation. The child had an immense abscess on the outside of the hip. The joint was not opened, but I opened the abscess and took out a pint of pus.

"What I did was indorsed by those present, among whom, I think, was also Dr. Sims. I never received a cent for the operation and did not see the child afterward. Her father, John F. Walsh, was induced to bring a suit against me for \$20,000 damages by one Edwin James, Queen's Counsel, who had been turned out of England.

"They afterward wanted to settle for \$250, and I could have got out of the case for that any time. But I did not propose to stand that sort of business, and after repeated efforts finally got the case to trial. I petitioned for a personal inspection of the child to find out what injury, if any, had been inflicted. That was resisted, but I persisted and Judge Jones rendered an opinion sustaining me.

BENEFIT TO THE PROFESSION.

"This point was of incalculable benefit to the medical profession and gave great protection against injustice to its members. I felt compensated by this for the personal annoyance and expense to which I had been put. Drs. William H. Van Buren, Frank H. Hamilton and Ernest Krakowizer were the surgical experts appointed by the Court who made the examination of the child. Their report showed that the claim made against me was unfounded, and the verdict was in my favor, with costs. That is all there is to the case.

"The surgeon to whom Hammond refers was the late Dr. Willard Parker. I do not care to say anything against his name, but it was shown that he was deceived, and some unfavorable criticism was made against him for his attitude toward me in the matter.

"Concerning my financial affairs, all I have to say is that I do not owe a dollar in the world to-day. While I was sick I was a fool to go into Wall street, and lost a large amount of money. No act of dishonor was ever claimed against me, even by those to whom I owed the most. Everything was satisfactorily settled up."

"My books are in the language I use. Dr. Carpenter took stenographic reports of my lectures just as I talked, and they were published. I don't pretend to be a classical scholar, but what I say seems to be generally understood."

HIS COMPLIMENTS TO HAMMOND.
"As for Hammond, it would be better for him to keep quiet. His methods are too well known to be commented upon by me. Some years ago a gentleman was sent here from the South with a letter to Hammond to be treated for nervousness. He looked in the man's eye and said he saw a bone in his brain which needed to be removed. The patient was assured that if the operation was performed he would be all right again. He consented to have it done."

"Hammond pretended to do it and gave the man a small piece of bone which he said had been taken out. The man's head was fixed up and he was jubilant and said he had never felt better in his life."

"Wall street rang with praises of Hammond, for the man was well known. He was a relative of Mr. Woodward, the partner of Mr. C. C. Baldwin, and the case naturally attracted attention. Before the war he had been rich and I think was a judge. But he could not become reconciled to the changes the war brought about and to see his liberated slaves judges in the Supreme Court. He became melancholy and his mind was disturbed. However, he went home after Hammond got through with him and believed himself cured. But three weeks after that he grew worse than before, and was put in an asylum and died in a short while."

"Then the doctors who doubted Hammond insisted on having a post-mortem examination made. It was found that there had never been any incision made in the skull at all. Merely a few scratches had been made on the skin and no bone had been taken out at all."

ONLY CHICKEN BONE.
"The piece of bone which Hammond had told the man had been removed from the brain was found and it turned out to be a piece of chicken bone."

"The dead man's friends were very indignant against Hammond. He had made what they thought was an exorbitant charge for the operation. I don't remember how much it was, but think it was at least \$1,000 or \$1,500. They came to see me about it to get my opinion. I told them that operations had been performed in cases of epilepsy similar to what Hammond had claimed to have done, and that it was a delicate thing to do. So long as they had made a lot of money in speculations in cotton I did not see why they ought to complain about paying the money."

PART OF THE DELUSION.
"Hammond's excuse after the exposure was that he had to charge a big fee in order to keep up the delusion. He admitted that the story of the extraction of the bone was all fiction. His explanation was that he knew his patient was suffering from melancholia, and as he was of an argumentative turn of mind it would be necessary to make some practical demonstration of cause and effect, for the treatment was wholly mental."

"Hammond claimed that he had written to the man's doctor after his return home telling all about the chicken bone. This was not believed, for the doctor declared he had never received any such letter or known the circumstances at all until after the deception was discovered."

In conclusion, Dr. Sayre said:—"I don't intend to get into any controversy with Hammond. Neither do I intend to take any notice of his circulars beyond this statement for publication in the HERALD. The more he circulates the circular the worse it will be for him, but I don't know after all as you can injure a man like him."

As I was leaving Dr. Sayre remarked:—"I don't know how they feel about this in Washington, but if the Medical Society there has any honor I should think it would turn Hammond out."

The circular is creating a great stir in medical circles in this city.

N. Y. Herald

Aug. 26. 89

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HAMMOND'S SECOND DOSE FOR SAYRE.

RECIPE:—

Fl. Ex. Rancor, }
Tinct. Malice, } Equal Parts.
Aqua Impura, }

MISCE, Sig.:—To Be Taken as Often as Necessary.

VIOLENT RECRIMINATION

All His Former Statements Reiterated with Emphasis and Some New Terms of Abuse Added—Once They Were Friends and Brother Professors.

HERALD BUREAU,
CORNER FIFTEENTH AND G STREETS, N. W.,
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 25, 1889.

Dr. Hammond uttered an exclamation of contempt when I called his attention this afternoon to the criticisms of Dr. Lewis A. Sayre in to-day's HERALD.

"The most that Dr. Sayre says," he remarked, "is simply abuse, to which it is impossible to reply without uttering other abuse, which I do not care to do. The only charge that he makes is in regard to an operation which he alleges I pretended to perform upon a gentleman from the South. The operation was performed and consisted in removing a piece of decayed bone from the ear; a part of that bone is now in my possession. The gentleman had paralysis of the face and the paralysis disappeared after the removal of the bone."

"He was insane at the time he came under my charge. He afterward died in a lunatic asylum, and no post-mortem examination of him was ever made. I never claimed that I had written to the man's physician that I practised a deception upon the patient."

ONCE MORE THE LIE DIRECT.

"That is all one of Dr. Sayre's falsehoods, for I practised no deception, neither did I charge him \$1,000, nor \$1,500, nor anything like either of these sums. No such man as Dr. Sayre describes was ever operated upon by me. The gentleman that I operated on was a friend of Mr. Richard T. Wilson, and came to me through Mr. Wilson."

"As to the case of little Harry Norman, I cannot do better than call attention to an extract from my book on 'Diseases of the Nervous System,' where, on page 379 of the seventh edition, you will find a statement of the case, with a woodcut of the boy. The statement is made there that a delicate and unusual operation was performed on the boy by a surgeon. That surgeon was Dr. Sayre, and it is not the only case in which he has performed that operation unjustifiably."

"Dr. Sayre says that his operation upon the young girl was of incalculable benefit to the medical profession. If the medical profession can only be benefited by laying open the hip joints of young children, the sooner the medical profession is not benefited the better. Every one knows that Sayre's practice is falling off and has fallen off."

"He says he never made any such remark as that I was a fraud and was making \$1,000 a week. He did make it, and you will find it published in the San Francisco Examiner of August 3, as follows:—

THE CASE OF HELL.

"As for Hammond, he knows better, but as there is a cool \$1,000 a week in it for him he will never tell. Hammond is a fraud. He knows that by adopting this sensational scheme to cheat nature all the old men in the country will come to him to be made young and he will charge them accordingly. He has taken a large contract, but what does he care?"

"He put this in a paper where he probably thought I would never see it. He never would have dared to utter such language if I had been in New York."

"Since the publication of my letter, which I have taken pains to send to hundreds of physicians all through the country, I have received numerous replies, all of which congratulate me on having exposed Dr. Lewis A. Sayre's bad qualities."

ONCE FRIENDS, NOW—SHLOOD!

"Dr. Sayre and I were at one time very good friends. We were brother professors in the same medical college, and nobody was higher in his laudations of me than Sayre was. He changed his opinion simply because I resigned from the Bellevue Hospital Medical College and went to the University of New York as professor. Then Sayre became an enemy. Then, too, I have had occasion—as in the case of Harry Norman—to expose his shortcomings."

"The sooner Dr. Sayre stops controversy with me the better it will be for him. As to ethics, to which he alludes in the closing paragraph of his interview, the less he says about that the better. If it is ethics for one medical man to abuse another to a newspaper reporter and tell lies about him, it is not the sort of ethics that I have been accustomed to. Dr. Sayre should be disciplined for his outrageous abuse of me to which I have referred."

N. Y. Herald

Aug. 27. 89

B

SAYRE'S SCALPEL USED ON HAMMOND.

Falsity, Unprofessional Conduct and Notoriety Grabbing Said To Be a Few of His Traits.

"THE WORST SUBJECT I EVER TOUCHED."

Some Particulars Pointed Out to Show that Dr. Hammond Purposely Distorted Dr. Sayre's Cases.

Not since the days of the late President Garfield's illness, when questions of medical ethics and methods so agitated the profession, has there been anything like the sensation that was caused by the violent attack made by Dr. William A. Hammond on Dr. Lewis A. Sayre.

The interest is not confined to medical circles, for the public generally is concerned on account of the world wide reputation of the two men. The HERALD was relied upon for all information concerning this extraordinary affair, because it had first and exclusively given the story of the attack and the recoil.

"I feel half ashamed of myself for having taken any notice of Hammond's abuse of me," said Dr. Sayre yesterday. "Nobody can afford to take any notice of a man of that stamp. The trouble with him is that he is losing his business, as he has already lost his self-respect. He is one of those men who must have notoriety and can't have honorable reputations."

KEY FOR THE SEWER ONLY.

"Then the Doctor added in a true apologetic tone:—"I regret, though, that I should have contributed in any way toward Hammond's making himself any more notorious. I was simply astounded when the HERALD called my attention to his circular. As I said then, it was the first I knew about the existence

of the circular. No doubt I was a little dazzled at the man's check, and expressed my mind without stopping to think how unwise it was to mix myself up in such a mess.

"Shortly after your call I received a typewritten copy with Hammond's signature attached. If I had seen it before I should have dismissed the whole matter by disposing of it in the sewer, where it properly belonged and to which I consigned my copy.

"No, there is nothing I desire to take back or amend. Hammond has deliberately maligned me and lied about me. What I especially object to is his reference publicly to the cases of private persons. It is a breach of medical honor.

THE NORMAN CASE.

"I see from the HERALD that he is still harping on the case of Harry Norman. He has so distorted the facts that I can see no objection in explaining the circumstances. It was clearly a clinical case. The boy had been handed around at different clinics before he came to me. The father of the child had taken him to Hammond and he had telegraphed to Dr. Weir Mitchell to come over from Philadelphia and make an examination with him. They had the boy at Hammond's house one Sunday and decided they could do nothing for him. It was thought best to have a photograph of the boy taken and sent to confreres in Europe in order to get opinions as to what was best to be done. It was a curious case of nervousness.

"Photographer O'Neill remarked when he saw the boy that that was just the sort of case that Dr. Sayre treated, for he had taken a number of pictures of such sufferers. The boy's parents brought him to me and I carried him over to my clinic at Bellevue Hospital and lectured on him. I told the father if he would bring the child to me at the hospital on the following Wednesday, which was operating day, I would do what I could to relieve him. But Mr. Norman wrote me that he could not do so, because he was called to Philadelphia. It seems that his wife had been interested in one of my pamphlets treating of such cases, and could not wait for me. She got someone else to operate on the boy. There was a bad mess of it, and the child was suffering when finally I consented to perform the operation.

"That was early in the summer. In October, I think, at a meeting of the Academy of Medicine I referred to the treatment of such cases, when Hammond surprised me by saying that the method had been shown to be wrong in the case of the Norman boy. He told about his being exhibited before the American Neurological Society and reported that the boy had been greatly injured. That was the first I had heard of it.

"Dr. Carpenter, the stenographer who reported the proceedings before the Neurological Society, informed me that he had been present at the meeting where Hammond brought the boy and said that a fair chance had not been given for examination. I wrote to the boy's father for information, and you can see for yourself how Hammond has twisted the facts."

WHAT THE FATHER SAID.

Dr. Sayre handed me a letter out of a number relating to the case which he has preserved. It is signed by A. J. Norman, the boy's father, and this is the most important part of it:—

"I feel as though I was showing ingratitude in not seeing you in person and bringing the boy. I shall try to do so next Sunday. I am pleased, in reply to yours of the 23d, to inform you that our boy is in a splendid condition mentally and physically and is gaining in intelligence and strength so rapidly that he has caught up to the average, and if he continues to improve as rapidly will very soon surpass the most forward children of his age."

"In answer to your questions:—First, the date of the meeting of the society was about the middle of the first week in June; second, his clothing was not removed and no examination was made; third, the parts were not fairly healed."

"You see how Hammond persists in misrepresenting me," commented Dr. Sayre. "That is simply because he did not agree with my theory, which has been widely adopted and commented upon. I could refer you to numerous instances where I have received compliments of the highest order for my work in this line."

DR. SAYRE'S FIGHT IN THE COURTS.

I called Dr. Sayre's attention to the following statement made by Dr. Hammond to a representative of the HERALD in Washington:—

"Dr. Sayre says that his operation upon the young girl was of 'incalculable benefit to the medical profession.' If the medical profession can only be benefited by laying open the hip joints of young children the sooner the medical profession is not benefited the better."

"Well," remarked Dr. Sayre, "that is only another exhibition of the way he distorts things. The operation itself was not referred to as of 'incalculable benefit' to the profession, but my action was."

The Doctor called my attention to a series of resolutions adopted by the State Medical Society in reference to the case mentioned. Among other things it recites that, "by vigorously forcing this scandalous suit to a trial he secured a judicial decision which established a legal principle of great value to the whole medical profession, and which has been justly characterized as one of the greatest advances in jurisprudence during half a century, and will do much to prevent malicious attacks upon medical men." Thanks were tendered to "Dr. Sayre, whose successful efforts to protect his honor and interests merit a distinct recognition."

Dr. Sayre jocosely suggested that the attack made on him by Dr. Hammond may be explained on the theory that the Brown-Séquard elixir may have gone to the brain of his antagonist.

N. Y. Herald

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HERALD BUREAU,
CORNER FIFTEENTH AND G STREETS, N. W.,
WASHINGTON, AUGUST 27, 1889.

Dr. Hammond Wants Dr. Sayre to Sue
Him for Libel.

DR. HAMMOND OFFERS TO STAND A SUIT FOR
LIBEL BY DR. SAYRE.

Dr. Hammond made a vigorous reply to-night to the last attack made upon him by Dr. Sayre.

"Yes," said the Doctor, "I read it, and the only statement I desire to make in reply is in regard to the case of little Harry Norman, about which Dr. Sayre is so interested. This little boy about four years old was brought to my clinic at the University Medical College in January, 1876. He was apparently in good health, was well grown for his age and had not been subject to any exhausting disease.

"As he sat upon a chair he exhibited no indication of paralysis, spasm or inco-ordination. He moved both legs well and with normal force and could use either hand in the ordinary way. But it was impossible for him to assume the erect posture, and when he attempted to do so he stood in a peculiar one-sided stooping position, the left arm strongly flexed against the side of the chest, while the right was thrown out behind him. He could not maintain himself on his feet without support.

"In walking he was able to direct his steps with a certain amount of precision, but yet not to a normal extent. He appeared also to have difficulty in arresting his movements, and was accordingly apt to come up violently against obstacles which were in his way. His gait was between a run and a walk, and he often fell. In bringing the case before the class I expressed the provisional opinion that it was one of chorea paralytica, but further examination and the inefficacy of all treatment soon caused me to change this view.

DR. SAYRE'S OPERATION.

"In May he came under the charge of a 'surgeon,' Dr. Sayre, who circumsised him under the impression that the case was one of reflex inco-ordination. It is scarcely necessary to say that the operation was unsuccessful. When he appeared before the association in June there had been a gradual advance in the intensity of his symptoms. Yet, notwithstanding the marked inco-ordination, there was no paralysis, no derangement of sensibility, no bladder disturbance, no spasm, no deviation of electric excitability of the muscle and none of the peculiar symptoms indicative of sclerosis of any part of the cord. After this there was a short intermission in his symptoms, and his father thought he was recovering. He writes me to that effect September 7, no medicine having been taken.

"But soon afterward he again relapsed, and his condition gradually became worse. When I last saw him, about a year ago, there were strabismus and a total inability to stand. When he tried to do so he bent over so his head touched the floor, and there he remained, apparently endeavoring to stand on his head. When he wanted to go anywhere in the room he lay down on the floor and rolled toward it, turning over toward the left always. About this time Dr. P. Jewell, of Chicago, saw the patient. Continued examination and study of this very interesting case led me to the opinion that it is one of sclerosis and atrophy of the cerebellum. The father of the boy wrote me a year after the operation was performed and said he was in a worse condition than ever.

HE WANTS TO BE SUED.

"The editorial in to-day's HERALD pleased me very much. I will accept its conditions absolutely. If what I said in my letter to Sayre is not true I am willing to be ostracised by all decent men and all decent women. If it is true then I want Dr. Sayre to cease practising medicine and go out of decent society. I stand ready to make good every assertion contained in my letter, which the HERALD printed on Sunday. If Dr. Sayre will bring a suit against me for libel I will go to New York and accept service, and have the trial take place there and not here. I shall be delighted if he will pursue such a course."

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Dr. Hammond and Dr. Sayre.

The controversy which has broken out between Dr. William A. Hammond and Dr. Lewis A. Sayre is an unfortunate thing. It tends to lessen the faith of laymen in physicians to see two men so widely known engaged in a campaign of personal abuse that would disgrace an ordinary barroom.

If what Dr. Hammond says is true Dr. Sayre is not only unfit to practise medicine but is out of place among gentlemen.

On the other hand, if Dr. Hammond has spoken falsely he ought to be ostracised by decent men and women.

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Aug. 28. 89

Two Doctors Make Some Very Curious
Revelations.

The sharp controversy between Dr. Hammond as complainant and Dr. Sayre as defendant is not at all edifying.

This wordy battle has so far been waged in the language and with the passion of a slugging match. It would have been better to conduct it in the tongue in which prescriptions are written.

The medical profession is not honored by such exhibitions of ill temper. On the contrary, it is degraded, for a great proportion of readers will turn away with mingled disgust and distrust.

Popular distrust of physicians is a public misfortune. But if we believe half that these two gentlemen say of each other how can the community retain its confidence?

It is said that men tell the truth when they are mad. In the present instance indignation seems to have acted as an uncontrolled aperient and professional secrets are divulged in volcanic succession.

If the people should generalize from this controversy they would conclude that members of the medical profession lack the elements of harmony and fraternity. They appear to be possessed by a frenzied jealousy of each other. Pride in the skill or genius of a brother practitioner is seldom seen, and the competition for patients is so hot that the success of one rouses the fury of the others.

We should judge also from what Dr. Hammond and Dr. Sayre say that medical science is by no means an exact science, that physicians are apt to play the game of blind man's buff with diseases whose cause is not immediately apparent, and that experiment, with all the risks which the word implies, is to be found everywhere in the physician's practice.

If learned doctors who have had an experience of many years behind them admit this, is it strange that many families exhibit a tremulous distrust when a father or child is seriously ill?

The fatal admission of these gentlemen is that the doctor, like the detective, acts on clues. Sometimes he is fortunate, gets hold of the right clew and performs a miraculous cure. At other times he is unfortunate, misses the clew and jumbles about until the vitality of his patient is exhausted. The difference between the physician and the detective, then, is that in the one case the criminal who is hunted escapes safely to Canada, while in the other the victim finds his way to the grave.

But we take a more hopeful view of the matter than either Hammond or Sayre. Medical science may not be perfect, but it

is progressive. Its achievements are wonderful. Compared with the science of a century ago it has introduced a sort of millennium. Doctors do not know the whole, and sometimes they make frightful blunders, but the appliances of the profession in mechanical surgery, for example, excite the profoundest gratitude. The tortures of other days are unknown; the means of rapid cure are multiplied; skill and knowledge have phenomenally increased and specialists have come to be looked upon as miracle workers.

A large proportion of the public, however, will be seriously affected by the charges of Hammond and Sayre. The whole profession must suffer in consequence. A feeling gains ground that medicine is in many instances a risky resource, and people will thoughtlessly rush into novelties.

Indeed the mind curer and the Christian scientist are already competitors not to be despised. If the stories told of Dr. Hammond are true, these new comers have a wide and legitimate field in which to work. If the doctor thinks it well to disabuse a patient's mind by pretending to remove a piece of bone from his skull, and actually cures him by making him believe that a delicate operation has been performed, why should he execrate the man or woman as a charlatan who accomplishes the same result, but without the operation? If the one case is professional, why should the other be denounced as unprofessional?

The simple truth is that doctors are themselves responsible for both mind cure and Christian science, and if what Hammond says of Sayre and what Sayre says of Hammond is to be accepted these mind and faith physicians, who eschew medicine and make people well by persuading them that they are well, have a very important mission and should be encouraged.

We are sorry for this controversy, not merely because it is undignified, but because it does a serious injury to one of the noblest professions that ever drafted genius and skill into the service of humanity.



