

WZ  
100  
S6535R  
1867



Surgeon General's Office

LIBRARY

Section, *Medicine*

No. *3057*

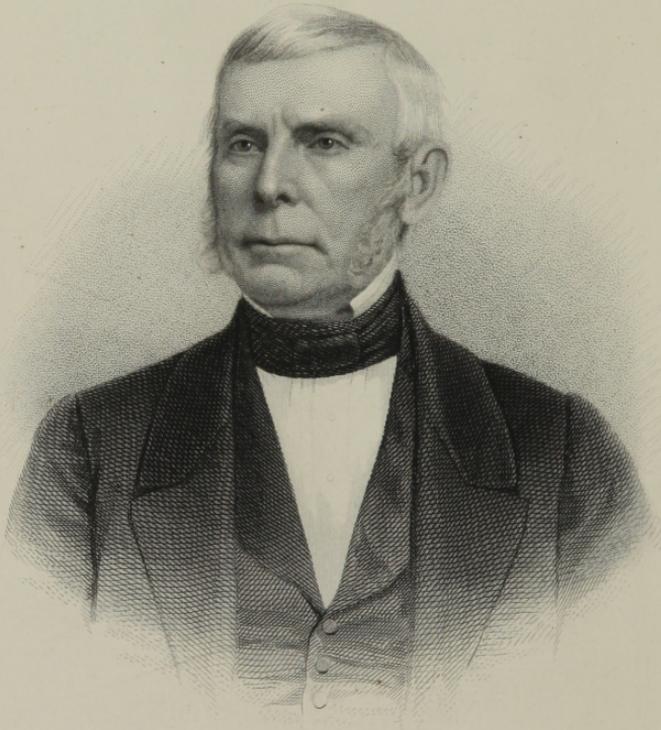












Eng<sup>d</sup> by A. H. Ritchie

Joseph M. Smith.





# EULOGIUM

UPON

THE LIFE, PROFESSIONAL LABORS AND  
PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

JOSEPH MATHER SMITH, M. D.,

LATE PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PHYSIC, AND OF MATERIA MEDICA AND  
CLINICAL MEDICINE, IN THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS, NEW YORK; PHYSI-  
CIAN TO THE N. Y. HOSPITAL; PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF HYGIENE OF THE  
CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK; PRESIDENT OF THE  
N. Y. ACADEMY OF MEDICINE, ETC., ETC.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE,

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEB. 6, 1867.

BY

WILLIAM C. ROBERTS, M. D.

"History may be formed from permanent monuments and records, but lives can only be  
written from personal knowledge, which is every day growing less and less, and in a short  
time is lost for ever."—DR. JOHNSON.

Printed for Private Distribution.

NEW YORK:  
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH,  
770 BROADWAY.  
1867.



WZ

100

S6535 R

1867

## In Memoriam.

---

THESE to life's cherished, honored guide,  
Translated to a heavenly crown;  
Whose sun, while yet 'twas day, went down,  
Ere fell the shades of eventide!

In worth of heart and wealth of brain,  
In all that noble was and pure,—  
All that is destined to endure,—  
When shall we see his like again?

Long lingers in the western sky  
The vanished orb's resplendent hue.  
In gleaming memories, ever new,  
That life survives: it cannot die.

This tribute of most sacred love  
We lay upon his honored bier;  
If we could do it, not a tear  
Would weep him from his home above.

'Tis better far to be with HIM,  
Whose work gave zest to life while here;  
Oh, grudge him not the wider sphere,  
The Brotherhood with Seraphim.

J. R. MACDUFF, D.D.



# EULOGIUM.

---

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW MEMBERS  
OF THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE :

IN every age and country to which our knowledge of antiquity extends, reverence and honor, according to their several customs, have been paid to the remains and memory of the distinguished dead. Funeral rites have been celebrated, eulogies pronounced, monuments and statues erected, and titles and pensions conferred, to evince and perpetuate the national gratitude. This has chiefly been the case, however, with the memories of heroes and statesmen : while those who, by steady devotion to the cultivation of science and art, have increased the longevity and happiness of mankind, have been treated with less ostentation of respect, and less munificence of remuneration. The merits of a Newton, a Franklin, and a Jenner, are, unhappily, less generally recognized and acknowledged, than those of a Napoleon, a Marlborough, a Nelson, or a Wellington. Yet it cannot be doubted that he who, by some wise adaptation of science to a practical end, has increased the comfort, or saved the lives and mitigated the sufferings of millions, deserves better of his fellow-men and of posterity, than he whose policy has

led to desolating wars, or who has slain his hecatombs of victims in the field.

The Romans carried their dead of rank to the Forum, and there pronounced their eulogium. This custom has been borrowed from the ancients by the learned societies of Europe, and it is usual with them to utter funeral panegyrics, commemorative of his merits, either at the place of sepulture of the distinguished deceased associate, or at some period afterwards in the halls of the Academy.

Such posthumous fame has ever been deemed, by great minds, an ample recompense for devotion to science, even in the midst of poverty and privation; and a sufficient incentive to ceaseless energy in the cause of suffering humanity. Hope of the remembrance and applause of posterity, has sufficiently consoled many great discoverers, heroes, patriots and martyrs, amid neglect and injustice, defeat and disappointment, and the physical sufferings of the cell, the torture, or the stake. So small a meed, at least, should not be denied them.

The Royal Academy of Medicine in Paris confides this duty, which is never neglected, to its perpetual secretary, an office successively filled by the distinguished Ant. Louis, Vicq d'Azyr, the eloquent and industrious Pariset, and now held by M. Dubois, d'Amiens. To the zeal of the latter, we owe the "*Recueil des Éloges*," pronounced by these learned and eloquent men upon the lives and services of their contemporaries, published in two beautiful volumes: enduring monuments of merit, and valuable contributions to the history of medical science and literature.

Our own Academy, also, has wisely adopted this custom ; but, with greater propriety, commits to the judgment of its presiding officer, the selection of a fellow-associate who from long acquaintance and congeniality of pursuit with the deceased, shall be qualified to do justice to his merits.

This sacred duty in reference to the late Dr. Joseph M. Smith, has been confided to me. I could have wished that it had been entrusted to abler hands ; but I have not refused its performance. I have known him well for many years, and have been often in pleasant professional and social relation with him. It is now thirty-five years since his name was affixed to my diploma, and I am proud to have been his pupil and his friend, and to believe that our regard for each other was mutual. I am indebted to him for many acts of kindness and courtesy ; and I take pleasure, therefore, however imperfectly I may do so, in recalling his many and varied excellences to those who knew him, and of imparting to those who did not, a true estimate of the personal and professional qualities which gave him prominence among us. My zeal must atone for deficiencies which I rely upon your indulgence to excuse. I have come to praise him, and I think I can do so without undue adulation, in all sincerity, and without fear of contradiction.

Death is always a solemn thing ; that of an old friend particularly, even when circumstances have extenuated the poignancy of bereavement. It is sad to look upon the composed form, the pallid and sunken features, the closed eyes, the compressed lips and folded hands of an old acquaintance, and think that the face

shall no longer beam with intelligence, that the hand shall never again return our cordial clasp, that the lips which have greeted us so kindly, and whence we have so often derived lessons of profit and interest, are now silent forever, and that in the places which once knew him, and where we so much delighted to see him, he shall nevermore be known. The flowers with which it is now customary to strew the coffin, are emblems of man's transitory nature. Like him they bud, blossom, bloom and decay.

It is in this spirit of subdued but solemn grief, and affectionate reverence, that we may be supposed to surround the bier of our late beloved associate, and offer our humble tribute to his worth. The President of the Academy,\* in his model eulogy of the late illustrious Mott, justly said that "the death of a representative man marks an era in the history of the science in which he acted a conspicuous part; and that it becomes those who have been associated with him, to commemorate his death by passing in review the important events of his life, and by bringing into relief the distinguished acts by which he identified his name with that of the profession which he adorned." I can think of no one after Rush, Miller, Bailey, Hosack, and Beck, to whom the title of a representative of American Practical Medicine more justly belongs, than to the late Dr. J. M. Smith; and I am justified, therefore, I think, in asking of my fellow-associates in this Academy, to accompany me in a succinct consideration of his claim to this distinction, and of the acts and labors whereby he attained to professional eminence, and so greatly advanced the interests of Medical Science.

\* Dr. Alfred C. Post.

In reference to his pedigree, and the antecedents of his professional life, I shall be brief. He was born March 14, 1789, at New Rochelle, Westchester Co., State of New York. His father was a distinguished physician of that place, and his mother, a daughter of Dr. Samuel Mather, belonging to a New England family of distinction and prominence in medicine and divinity, some of whom were among the founders of Harvard University. He may thus be said to have inherited the taste for the study of the science which he so successfully cultivated.

He was originally intended for mercantile pursuits ; but, happily, finding them uncongenial to him, renounced them, and entered on the study of medicine in the office of his father, in 1808. Licensed to practice in May, 1811, by the Medical Society of Westchester county, of which Society his father was then President, he settled in this city as a practitioner, and was for several years associated with Dr. Wm. Baldwin.

In 1815, he graduated at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of this city ; the subject of his inaugural thesis being "Phlegmasia Dolens." He seems early to have exhibited his fondness for literature, for he soon associated himself with Mott, Dupuy, Bliss and others, in the formation of the New York Medical and Physical Society, and under his supervision the first volume of their Transactions was issued in 1817.

To this volume he contributed two papers, one of which, on the "Efficacy of Emetics in Spasmodic Diseases," with an "Enquiry into the Final Cause of Sympathetic Vomiting," at the time attracted much

attention, and is still considered to be ingenious and original. This was the dawn of those mental powers which expanded into a full and refulgent day.

The year 1824, (he was then thirty-five,) may be considered as the turn in the tide of his fortunes. In this year appeared his "Elements of the Etiology and Philosophy of Epidemics," a work so learned and logical, as to have attracted everywhere the most profound attention, and stamped its author as a man of no ordinary thought and ability: which was pronounced at the time to be "fifty years in advance of the Medical Literature on its subject:" which gave, of itself alone, a triumphant answer to Sidney Smith's sarcastic question, "Who reads an American book?" It is deeply to be regretted that one edition of it only has appeared, that it is now much less known than it deserves to be, and that its author did not, as I believe he hoped and intended, revise it and issue a new and improved edition. I do not know, however, that on the subject of which it treats, it has, even now, either parallel or compeer.

The book is with filial reverence dedicated to his Father. In it he has attempted, he says, to arrange the causes of febrile and epidemic diseases in systematic order, and to deduce from an examination of the nature of the *modus operandi* of these causes, the laws which govern their rise, prevalence and decline; and also the manner in which they severally modify and supersede each other. In investigating the nature and causes of febrile diseases, the subject of contagion is considered of primary importance. Upon the subject of yellow fever, plague, dysentery, typhus

and other fevers, Dr. Smith never was, and we believe never became a contagionist. Whatever may be thought of the correctness of his views, there can be no doubt of the talent with which they are defended. It is my purpose only to record and analyse, not to criticise them. He maintained them with consistence and ability throughout life. He considers that the conviction is generally arrived at, that yellow fever is never communicated by a specific contagion, but is uniformly produced by a miasmatic poison, generated by materials entirely distinct from the human body. In like manner, reasoning from analogy, we are led to the belief, that plague and the bilious fevers of this country are never to be suspected of being communicated by contagion. Typhus, being believed to be propagated by means of vitiated human effluvia, the idea of specific contagion is equally rejected.

“During the period,” says Dr. Smith, “that fevers were generally believed to be personally communicable, the terms ‘*contagion*’ and ‘*infection*’ were considered as synonymous,” and ambiguously or indifferently employed: which is true even at the present time, as the writings of Copeland, Williams and others will testify.

In 1796, Dr. R. Bailey, of New York, made the important etiological proposition, that *contagion* be restricted to morbid animal poisons, as those of small-pox, measles, &c., and that the term *infection* be limited to the pestiferous effluvia arising from the excretions of the sick, and other species of filth: thus making infection a poison, and cause of disease. Dr. Smith does not believe that diseases which arise from noxious exha-

lations can be subsequently propagated by specific contagions, which idea, he says, violates an established rule of philosophizing. He denies to them any zymotic property, *sui generis*. He thinks that when many patients ill with yellow fever, or plague, are crowded into small and ill ventilated apartments, and cleanliness is neglected, the disease which results will be typhus. Persons in good health, when long confined in close apartments, will produce a miasm of the same qualities as that which frequently surrounds the bodies of those laboring under fever. There is, in fact, no material difference between them, and the idea of specific contagion readily suggests itself as plausible. This idea of "ochletic miasm," as Gregory calls it, though denounced by some able men, has nevertheless many supporters at the present day. It is one which Dr. Smith, I believe, never abandoned, and constitutes one of the many *questiones vexatæ* relative to the causes of fever, which deserves to be carefully studied, and if possible, determined.

The three general causes of disease, each distinct and peculiar, are, 1st. Contagion ; 2d. Infection, and 3d. Meteoration, each of which I shall explain according to Dr. Smith. These three divisions constitute three natural orders, each reducible into genera and species.

Contagion, according to Dr. Smith, is a poison generated by morbid animal secretion, possessing the power of inducing a like morbid action in healthy bodies, whereby it is reproduced and indefinitely multiplied ; and always originating in the living animal body. It is communicated exclusively by contact, and both by contact and the atmosphere.

It is in reference to Infection, however, that Dr. Smith, in the work before us, exhibits most strikingly his scholarship and his originality. This, according to him, is a febrific agent produced by the decomposition of animal and vegetable substances, existing in the state of a gas, or miasm, in filthy houses, ships, jails, hospitals and cities, and also in marshes and fenny and low districts of country. He establishes several generic divisions of Infection, under some one of which are to be found the various forms of febrile disease to which the morbid poison gives origin, adopting the terms employed to designate them by the late Dr. Ed. Miller, of this city, with such abbreviations as render them better adapted to general use. These are, 1st. *Koino-Miasma*, from the Greek "*koinos*," common, which comprehends the effluvia exhaled from the public filth of cities and the soil of marshes, &c., which, when aided by warmth and moisture, and diffused by the common atmosphere over a wide area, produce that general prevalence of disease which is called "*Epidemic*." In this genus are arranged the miasms which induce plague, yellow fever, remittent and intermitent fever.

2d. *Idio-Miasma*, from "*idios*," personal, which is produced from the matter of perspiration and the other excretions of the human body, accumulated in small and unventilated places, and acted upon by heat. This is the source of genuine Typhus, jail, hospital and ship fevers, becoming innocuous when diffused in the atmosphere a few feet beyond the apartments where it is engendered ; hence they are seldom epidemic.

So far, the classification and nomenclature is that of Miller ; which, however, does not provide for that combination of the two miasmatic poisons which produce compound fevers. Dr. Smith, therefore, makes a 3d genus, the *Idio-Koino-Miasma*, in which the human or *idio-miasm*, combines with the exhalations of *Koino-Miasma* ; a very striking instance of the result of which is the memorable Banker Street fever of 1820, which by some observers was denominated unequivocally yellow fever ; by others, with equal confidence, typhus, and which the Bulam fever of the African coast probably resembles. It was, however, Dr. Smith thinks, neither genuine typhus, nor bilious remittent, nor yellow fever, but a distinct and compound fever. This compound miasm is frequently engendered on board of ships, of which Pringle furnishes us striking illustrations, and was the probable cause of the plague of Athens, recorded by Thucydides. Dysentery, which has not yet been alluded to as a product of Infection, is to be looked upon as a disease vicarious of several forms of fever ; in cities and rural districts, arising from *Koino-Miasma* ; in hospitals, camps and ill-ventilated chambers of the sick, from *Idio-Miasma*, or more commonly from *Idio-Koino-Miasma*, the epidemic predisposition to the disease appearing to depend upon the secret influences of the general atmosphere.

Still further to distinguish the different properties of the infectious poisons, Dr. Smith divides them into two species, prefixing to one the Greek ordinal numeral *protos*, to denote the mild, and to the other, the intensive participle *per*, to denote the malignant. The species of

the genus *Koino-Miasma* are, 1st. *Proto-Koino-Miasma* ; 2d. *Per-Koino-Miasma*. The first consists of those exhalations of the soil vaguely denominated *Marsh-miasmata*, &c., which produce intermittent and remittent fevers, and much valuable information is afforded as to the causes and manner of their engenderment, and the effects of the poison upon the human system. *Per-Koino-Miasma*, embracing the poisons of yellow fever and plague, is the more virulent and pestilential, and oftenest epidemic. It is exhaled from masses of public filth, and soils containing putrescent matter, under high ranges of temperature and certain epidemic influences of the general atmosphere. The non-contagiousness of yellow fever is asserted, and ably argued, and much valuable information relating to that interesting disease, and its prevalence amongst ourselves in 1819 and 1822, is afforded. It is both imported and of local origin. The lucid, logical and philosophical ratiocination, by which Dr. Smith's conclusions are arrived at, is, of course, too long to be reproduced here, and must be studied to be duly appreciated.

*Protidio Miasma* is the ordinary source of genuine Typhus fever, a disease of frequent occurrence in the cities of the United States, although comparatively rare in the interior. The typhoid state of remittent fever, and the typhoid appearances sometimes observed in atmospheric and contagious diseases, has, in part, a similar origin. Typhus, thus originating, is comparatively mild, answering to Cullen's *Typhus Mitior*. The *Peridio miasm* arises from similar causes of aggravated character, and attains the utmost malignity. It is the parent of Jail and Ship fevers, of the

former of which the Black Assizes at Oxford, in 1571, and the Old Bailey in London, in 1750, are memorable instances. It is the typhus gravior; now, happily, under a better state of sanitary science and supervision, of rare occurrence.

The 3d, or Compound genus, Idio-Koino-Miasma, has equally its species, per and protidio-koino-miasma; sources of mixed fevers, as that of Banker Street, the "poor's" plague in London in 1665, which, in the course of a few months, destroyed 68,000 persons, and of the plague at Athens. An accurate differential diagnosis in these cases of mixed infectious origin, is, to say the least, extremely difficult; while, to determine the physical and essential differences between the various kinds of miasmata and other combinations, is, in the present state of science, impossible.

Under the 3d order, "Meteoration," Dr. S. arranges all the atmospheric sources of disease, not depending upon the presence of infectious and contagious effluvia. The term seems to be of his own creation, and avoids, he says, a circumlocution, and ensures accuracy of discrimination and great facility in general research. Those qualities of the atmosphere which are manifest to the senses, are denominated *sensible*; those which are insensible, and principally operative in the production of epidemics, are distinguished by the term "Epidemic Meteoration." The peculiarities of these genera are exhibited in a full account of their nature and effects, abounding in research, and exhibiting great powers of reasoning and observation, into which my limits do not permit

me to enter, and for which I must refer my hearers to the original work. I may, however, observe, that among the epidemic diseases depending upon insensible meteoration, according to our author, Influenza, Pneumonia Typhodes, Asiatic Cholera, the noted English Sweating Sickness of 1483, Angina, etc., are to be included.

The *Philosophy* of Epidemics, which is the second part of the work before us, and which even more strongly displays the great ability of its author, is divided into sections ; which, 1st, treat of the manner in which epidemics modify and supersede each other ; 2d, of the origin of the Pyrexial contagions, in which is broached the idea, now somewhat gaining ground, that certain diseases, as small-pox, which are generally believed to arise only by morbid animal poison of specific character, may have, in certain states of the atmosphere, a spontaneous origin : curious and interesting questions in the etiology of disease, yet to be decided ; and, 3d, of the different varieties of epidemic meteoration, and of their laws and *modus operandi* ; a section exhibiting all the more important facts relating to this extensive and interesting subject.

Section 5th discusses the inquiry " Whether Epidemics occur in a determinate order ? " Section 6th, that of " how far Epidemics are connected with extraordinary seasons, famine, unwholesome food and epizooties."

This brief and imperfect attempt at analyzing the " Elements of the Etiology and Philosophy of Epidemics," will suffice to show the hearer how great and comprehensive a work was here undertaken ; but nothing

but a careful perusal of the volume itself will suffice to convince him of the extreme scientific accuracy, the plenitude of patient research and learning, and the logical acumen and philosophical spirit it displays. It is one which can never be overlooked by any one who devotes his time to the study and advancement of this very interesting and important branch of medical inquiry. And when we consider the age at which it was undertaken and accomplished, the ground which it covers, the fact that so little aid was to be obtained from the labors of preceding inquirers in the same field, and the mental characteristics which it displays, we must, I think, admit that it is a production alike creditable to its author and the country which produced him ; a work which few would have undertaken, few could equal, and fewer still surpass ; a glory of American medical literature, and a presage, never falsified, of that high eminence in its advancement and cultivation which its able author, by every succeeding production of his pen, as we shall proceed to show, was destined to attain. Nor can we wonder that, among European critics, it received the most lavish encomiums, and was the foundation of his future successful progress.

In 1826, Dr. Smith was appointed, without any solicitation of his own, to the chair of Theory and Practice of Physic in the "College of Physicians and Surgeons" in the city of New York, in the room of its former occupant, the illustrious David Hosack ; who, with his colleagues, Mott and Francis, as a consequence of a long series of dissensions, resigned their Professorships, and organized a new medical school. It

was, undoubtedly, owing to the great ability and scholarship displayed by Dr. S., in the work already quoted, and other writings, that this great honor was obtained at so early a period of his professional life. He, at first, declined to accept it, from a conscientious sense of inability to fit himself for his duties in proper time. But it was pressed upon him so earnestly that he could no longer refuse it. The prognostications of his friends were found not to be fallacious. He performed the duties of his position with zeal, fidelity and acceptability, until the year 1855. During this period he delivered four introductory discourses, which were published: viz., in the years, 1831, 1839, 1846 and 1848, to which, as vehicles of his opinions, I shall make a brief allusion.

The first of these related to the Epidemic Cholera Morbus of Europe and Asia, then extremely prevalent on those continents, and respecting which great anxiety was felt lest it should invade our own shores; as in the succeeding year it did. After a succinct description of its rise, nature and progress in Asia and Europe, he places it among Epidemics of the third category, the meteorations, believing it to depend upon certain influences of the atmosphere, the precise nature of which has hitherto eluded inquiry, and can be known only by its effects. As a natural consequence of this connection, he pronounces all measures of quarantine and expurgation to be impotent and nugatory. Time, and a personal observation of the disease, which, at this time he had never seen, somewhat modified his views upon this important and interesting question. (See *Med. Topog. and Epidemics of New York.*)

The second Introductory to which I shall now allude, is that delivered in 1846, on the "Public Duties of Medical Men," in which he plainly exhibits, in language of singular beauty, and with great truth and force of argument, the high responsibilities the physician assumes on entering on the practice of his profession; but those only of a public kind. The preliminary requisites for correctly discharging these, with credit to one's self and advantage to the community, are a knowledge of the principles of Hygiene, a close and careful study of the origin, nature, peculiarities and treatment of epidemic pestilential diseases, the effects of which upon the moral feelings of the people are interestingly illustrated by a reference to Thucydides' account of the pestilence of Athens, and Hodges' account of the plague of London; a warm and steady support of the great temperance reform; a knowledge of military hygiene and medical topography, in reference to the lives and health of soldiers in peace and war; a competent knowledge of medical jurisprudence; high proficiency in any art or science which it is professed to teach, united to a deep sense of the responsibilities of the office, and an exemplary moral deportment; a disinclination to theory, and a love of inductive truth; a readiness to renounce opinions when convinced of their falsity; a careful study of the interesting subject of insanity, as connected with asylums; a zealous promotion of the arts, sciences and literature, conducive alike to the advantage of humanity and the glory of the country: these are some of the topics eloquently pressed upon the attention of the medical

hearer, young or old, as necessary qualifications for the proper discharge of his professional duties, in the able discourse before us.

There is one passage which I must beg to be permitted to transcribe : "To those who have enriched their minds with the treasures of classical Medical Literature, and made observation and experience the basis of their reasoning and practice in Medicine, the infinitesimal therapeutical appliances of the Homœopaths, and the fictions of the Mesmerists, betray an utter disregard of sound experimental truth, and a blind or willful devotion to visionary hypotheses."

No published discourse of our departed associate more strikingly displays the philosophical character, the power of observation, the aptness of illustration which distinguish all his writings, than that upon the "Influence of Diseases on the Intellectual and Moral Powers." (1848.) The following is a brief summary of its subjects :

The mind, essentially immaterial and self-existent, is, nevertheless, manifested and influenced by the instrumentality of the brain. Its powers are of two classes—the intellectual and the moral : by the first, we perceive, attend, remember and reason. The second are the sources of our mental sensibilities and sympathies—of our desires, aversions, hopes, fears, joys and sorrows ; of the active movements of the will and the conscience ; of our mental happiness and misery. They are inseparably united. Reason, misled by false premises and erroneous interpretations of phenomena, cannot always be relied upon with confidence. Conscience intuitively distinguishes right

from wrong, and immediately announces it. When enlightened and rightly exercised, its decisions are infallible, and from them there is no appeal. Hence the superiority of man over the brute. Reason infers the existence of an almighty, wise and beneficent Creator. From the stirrings of conscience are evolved the sentiments of religion and moral responsibility.

The brute knows nothing of death. The reason of man soon teaches him that his body must sooner or later decay and dissolve. The knowledge of this fact, apart from the moral powers, occasions neither pain nor uneasiness. It is they which, when the intellect is impressed with the idea, excite, in various degrees, the fearful emotions peculiar to the anticipation of the advent, or near approach of the "King of Terrors." It is in sickness and in incidents of peril, that death demands attention and claims the tribute of our fears, and not always even then. The mind, in acute diseases, is often blunted, prostrate, or deranged. In sickness, there are often anxiety, despondency and irascibility; or, on the other hand, affection and kindness are displayed. Regrets are formed, contrition is felt, and often resolves made of reform which are, after recovery, but too often unheeded.

In some cases the conscience is pure and tranquil, and the mind serene in the contemplation of the future. In some it is obtuse; there is indifference, or resignation; in some, doubt and despair. Hope, which sustains the mind under the anxieties of life, often aids in resisting the fatal assaults of disease. Under some circumstances, again, there is a fervent desire of death, and recovery is a disappointment — an unwelcome

respite. The sanative power of Hope, in curable illness, is most salutary, and should be cherished and supported.

Faith in the curative efficacy of certain agents in the treatment of disease, requiring the possession of a peculiar mental temperament, a credulous imagination or superstitious cast of mind, produces in some instances astonishing results. Hence the general belief in the vaunted nostrums of charlatans and certain popular remedies. It matters little what may be the agent employed, faith is the all-essential; the wooden tractors of Haygarth effected cures equally with the metallic tractors of Perkins. To the beneficial agencies of the diet and regimen, aided by faith, are to be ascribed the advantages which sometimes seem to follow the use of homœopathic remedies. Nor is this faith in charlatanry less observable in the higher and more cultivated classes, than among the low and illiterate.

The secondary, or functional diseases of the brain are generally mild; but they may assume an acute and idio-pathic form. Insanity is of two kinds, moral and intellectual. Slighter degrees of the former are so common that it may be safely said that no one is sane at all times. But when it shows itself in reckless extravagance of expenditure and speculation, in boisterous hilarity, in pride, or melancholy; in dislike and hostility to dear and true friends; in a propensity to suicide or murder, it becomes truly a subject of medical jurisprudence. It not unfrequently precedes intellectual insanity.

This is of three kinds: mania, characterized by great mental incoherence, or furious raving; monomania, characterized by a fixed hallucination on a single

subject, sometimes agreeable, sometimes distressing—a dread, for instance, of having committed some great crime, almost always imaginary—often leading to murder, pyromania, or suicide. Dementia is the decay of a mind which had once been healthy and well developed; idiocy, on the contrary, a congenital incapacity, owing to defective organization. The terms are far from synonymous.

Another fearful form of transitory insanity is that which arises from the abuse and effects of alcoholic stimulants—*delirium tremens*. Who that has seen the trembling wreck of humanity, wretched victim of this degrading vice, bound upon his bed in ceaseless raving, or fleeing about the room in constant fear of some imaginary enemy or danger; anon, breaking out in peals of senseless laughter, and again, shrinking with dread, sweating, panting, haggard, affrighted, and struggling in the possession of superhuman strength and energy, at length dying, exhausted by the violence of his own efforts, but will say with our author that “the Furies in tormenting Orestes could inflict no severer sufferings.”

In diseases of the chest, the mind may, perhaps, be confused and anxious, but the end is inaction, or hebetude. In dropsical effusions, great anxiety is felt, and the desire for death and dread of its sudden occurrence are often simultaneously co-existent. In phthisis, there often exists the well known delusive hope of recovery. The disease, while it exalts the imagination, conceals the final issue, and even when despondency is the prevailing feature, gleams of hope occasionally shoot through the darkness, and irradiate the pathway to

the tomb. In peritonitis and disorders of the abdomen, the mind at the very last is often unimpaired and unclouded. In chronic cases there is despondency and hypochondria ; in uterine disease, hysteria, in its curious and protean forms. In typhoid fever, we have restlessness, jactitation and muttering delirium, ending in coma. In yellow fever, the patient, pulseless at the wrist, walks, writes, converses, and dies suddenly at the very moment when his happy friends are sanguine in their hope of his recovery.

Such is a brief syllabus of a discourse which contains the materials for a volume of deepest interest upon the subject of the mental phenomena of disease and their modifications. I omitted to say, in its proper place, that in 1833, Dr. S. delivered an *Introductory on the Comparative View of the State of Medicine in the years 1733 and 1833*, which presents a graphic and interesting view of medical men and matters, science, theories, schools, eminent professors, hospitals, etc., at the first of these periods and at the latter, replete with research and amusement. The improvement in the state of things at the close of the succeeding century is most gratifying and encouraging. It is owing to the increased diffusion of medical knowledge, fame and excellence ; a substitution of practical study for theoretical speculation, and a more careful analysis of the productions of the three great kingdoms of nature. But I can afford it no longer notice. Times presses and I must proceed.

In May, 1847, Dr. Smith, as chairman, prepared the report of the Committee of Practical Medicine for the American Medical Association at Philadelphia. It

embraced, 1st, the most important improvements effected in this country in the management of individual diseases ; and 2d, the progress of epidemics. This latter portion, which constitutes the bulk of the work, is executed with the zeal with which his fondness for the subject inspired him. It treats chiefly of yellow fever and typhus ; and on this latter disease, it constitutes in itself a monograph which no student of the subject could safely neglect to consult. It prevailed as an epidemic four times during thirty-five years, from 1818 to 1847, chiefly among Irish emigrants, of whom large numbers arrived. In this report, typhus is considered rather as infectious than contagious, and as capable of being generated *de novo*. Seventeen pages of the report are occupied with an elaborate discussion on the subject of the identity of typhus and typhoid fever ; and after a full and candid investigation, Dr. S. arrives at the conclusion, which is now, however, doubted, that, "in view of the facts which have been stated, it seems to the Committee that no reasonable doubt can remain that typhus and typhoid fever are identical." I recommend the paper to the careful consideration of all who desire to arrive at a satisfactory opinion as to this disputed subject.

In the 3d vol. of the Transactions of the Am. Med. Association (1850), Dr. S., as Chairman of the Committee of Public Hygiene, submitted, as the theme of his contribution, the "Sources of Typhus Fever and the Means Suited to their Extinction." The following is a synopsis of his views on this important and interesting subject :

The human body, in health, is continually undergoing composition and decomposition, and the effete materials are ejected as noxious and dead matter. Being subject to the influence of chemical laws, they form various new compounds, among which, there is reason to believe, is *idio-miasma*—typhus poison. The quantity of these effete matters is large. Those from the lungs and skin are continually escaping; the more viscid parts adhering to the skin and clothing, the more volatile diffusing themselves in the atmosphere, or becoming attached to surrounding objects. When long retained in a confined place, they become highly noxious to those who are exposed to them. The animal matter contained in them is the most directly concerned in generating *idio-miasma*. The excretions of a single individual may suffice for this purpose; but it is chiefly when the effete matters of the body are accumulated and retained in private dwellings, that fever is generated.

All these statements, let me say in passing, are supported by analysis, computation and statistical enquiry, novel in method and of very interesting and practical character. The history of prisons abounds in examples of the origin of typhus, from human filth accumulated within them; less commonly now than formerly. The same is true of ships sailing on long voyages; crowded, ill-ventilated and filthy; the passengers exhausted with privation and sea-sickness, and deprived of due exercise and ablution. It is not, thinks Dr. S., conceivable, in a true spirit of philosophy, that under such circumstances it should be necessary to resort to the hypothesis of a specific contagion. Soldiers living

in barracks, or close tents, become excessively filthy, and rapidly generate typhus. The quantity of waste matter eliminated from the bodies of a given number of people living in a crowded city, and other hygienic data referring to ventilation, are elaborately and curiously calculated.

Typhus is, no doubt, communicable, but the transmitted principle has no analogy with the specific poison of small-pox. It cannot, then, be properly called contagious. It is, strictly, the effect of a chemical aerial poison, originating from human excrement, and correctly denominated *idio-miasma*. Nothing short of ventilation the most efficient, and of cleanliness the most thorough, can prevent the occurrence of the disease under circumstances of *encombement*, or even in the apartment of a solitary patient. The hygienic requirements in reference to such prophylaxis are laid down with fullness, upon a chemical, physiological and statistic basis, and deserve careful study.

I look upon the paper read by Dr. S. before the N. Y. Academy of Medicine, in 1857, upon "Puerperal Fever, its causes and modes of propagation," as one of the ablest of his contributions to medical science, and at home and abroad it has been received with unlimited favor. It exhibits a new phase of Dr. Smith's views on the etiology of malignant "febrile diseases," which are given with peculiar force and fullness, as if from the ripeness of his thought and experience, and he touches on the curious and interesting question of their convertibility. The poison he believes to be *idio-miasma*, originating *de novo*, under circumstances of crowding and ill-ventilation, with puerperal patients,

promiscuously with typhus, the affections being, not essentially different, but congeneric and cognate. One source is thought to be the decomposition of retained coagula, membranes and discharges.

That the poison can be conveyed to a patient from a foreign source is undoubted, but it is then not always derived from a case of puerperal fever, but from typhus fever, or erysipelas, or other sources. Idiomiasma adheres to clothing and other articles, constituting fomites. It is in this way transportable. Physicians attending such cases, thus often convey it, and lamentable consequences are upon record. Their hands, however well washed, and even their very breaths, are thus communicative.

The Miasm of Typhus fever produces puerperal fever ; of this abundant instances are given. I am dealing only with the leading facts, and have no space for details. For them I refer to the original paper. The poison sometimes produces the one, sometimes the other form of disease, for they are not similar in form, and the latter is by far the more frequent. But the pathognomonic lesions, and even the signs and symptoms of typhus, are sometimes seen in cases of puerperal fever. The Miasm of Puerperal fever produces Typhus ; and so does that of Erysipelas, which, of the two, is the most dangerous, particularly when gangrenous. Ten cases were so engendered in the practice of a single physician. The Miasm of Puerperal fever produces Erysipelas. The emanations of bodies examined after death, produce puerperal fever, etc. In the great Vienna Hospital, this was remarkably the case until certain precautions were adopted. The

mere act of assisting at an autopsy is dangerous. Puerperal fever and Erysipelas generally prevail as concomitant epidemics, under the same meteorations influence.

Guided by these views, Dr. Smith naturally arrives at the conclusion, that although diverse in form, the three diseases *are one and the same*. They even concur in the same individual. The diseases are essential, not symptomatic; the local lesions being sometimes absent, and in all, only complications. So highly susceptible are puerperal women to the influences of idio-miasma and epidemic meteoration, when prevalent, that the smallest quantity of the poison, even in a diluted state, suffices to affect them, and the poison is most deadly. Hospitals, for weeks after purification, are susceptible of communicating it, and it often happens that after removal into uninfected apartments, patients carry with them in their systems, poison, which remaining latent until after delivery, is then rapidly developed. With the following quotation I bring this analysis to a close: "If indeed there be any moral obligation resting on a medical man to his patients, paramount to every other, it is that of refraining from attending a patient in labor, if there be the slightest chance of his conveying to her the germ of a mortal disease."

The last work of Dr. Smith which I shall notice, "The Medical Topography and Epidemics of the State of New York," as a report to the American Medical Association, June, 1860, is in some respects perhaps his greatest. When I consider the age at which it was undertaken, the labor of compilation and

tabulation which it required, I can scarcely imagine that the leisure of so busy a man should have sufficed for its completion. It displays an amount of knowledge on the subject of geology, which with Dr. S. had always been a favorite study, and with which he was extremely familiar; of mineralogy, botany, and meteorology; of patient research and reading, truly astonishing. Here let me digress to say that Dr. Smith's memory was highly retentive. He kept a common-place book, in which he noted facts, etc., which struck him in his reading, and which furnished many of the anecdotes, etc., which are so freely interspersed in his discourses. He was a walking encyclopedia in all matters relating to medicine and its collateral branches, and could remember, not only the location of particular articles, which their very authors had forgotten, but the very foot-note in which, or part of the page on which, a particular passage occurred.

His knowledge of anatomy was minute, and his proficiency in chemistry such, that on either of these branches he was able to subject his students and pupils to an examination as thorough, as could most of the professors who occupy those chairs in our schools.

How insufficiently did we estimate the unassuming scholar who passed so quietly through our midst, and seated himself so modestly on our benches; and what an irreparable loss has science sustained in his demise! How often too does it happen that the real value of truly great men is little appreciated during their lives: and it is a merit of these eulogistic autopsies that they reveal and honour it.

In the work in question, the prevailing diseases and

epidemics of the State, receive a careful notice. The cause of yellow-fever is admitted to be transportable, though its contagion is denied; quarantine is deemed necessary to prevent its introduction. Epidemic cholera is pronounced to depend chiefly on a peculiar epidemic meteoration, and partly on a contagious principle; fresh evidence is furnished of the spontaneous, *de novo* origin of small-pox; and erysipelas and cer. sp. meningitis are interestingly alluded to. In this work Dr. S. gave especial attention to his favorite science Meteorology, and invented and proposed several novel terms. Such countries or localities as have the same average annual quantity of rain, he denominates *isohyetal*, those having an excessive quantity, *hyperhyetal*, and those having a moderate or small quantity, *hypohyetal*. These terms have met with the approbation of his most distinguished contemporaries in the science, and are now generally adopted.

This meagre retrospect of our esteemed associate's extensive labors and leading inferences and opinions, will suffice to exhibit his deep devotion, indefatigable industry, great learning and research, and elegant scholarship, and will tend, I hope, to make him better known and appreciated. They embrace a wide part of the domain of medical science, and furnish material for much important thought on a multitude of topics.

Few men in any country can show such a record: at once a valuable boon to the science, and a glory to the history of American Medical Literature. There are yet many minor contributions of his pen—reviews, papers, etc., which I have not time even to enumerate.

The most important event in the life of our deceased

friend was undoubtedly, as I have said, his appointment, in 1826, to the Chair of Theory and Practice of Medicine in the College of Physicians and Surgeons in this city, vacant by the resignation of the late Dr. David Hosack. That he should have been selected, at the early age of thirty-seven, to succeed that distinguished physician and eloquent teacher, without solicitation on his own part, can only be attributed to the very high opinion entertained by the Regents of the University, of his worth and ability.

In 1853-4, he combined with those of his own chair the duties of that of the *Materia Medica*, during the long and fatal illness of his illustrious colleague, Dr. Beck.

In 1855, he was established in this Chair, and continued in it until his decease. His connection with the College thus lasted for almost forty years, and satisfied the most sanguine expectations of those by whom he had been appointed. Punctual to the moment, he was, to use a quotation which he had found in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, in one of Scott's letters to Moore, and which he had inscribed on the inside of the cover of his portfolio, "Slave to an hour, and vassal to a bell." He delivered to his pupils, with pleasing emphasis, a course of lectures kept fully up to the level of the science, and containing all the elements of thorough instruction : which, for fullness and practical utility, could not be surpassed. This, and not display, was the object of his ambition. He will ever be considered as one of the brightest ornaments and most devoted friends of the College. His colleagues, and thousands of pupils, will revere his memory and de-

plore his loss ; while the seeds which he sowed have germinated in every clime, and produced a rich harvest of fruit, to the benefit of suffering humanity and the advancement and dignity of medical science.

In 1829, he was appointed by the Common Council of the city of New York, Consulting Surgeon to the Bellevue Hospital. This honor, however, he declined, having no taste for Surgery.

In the same year, he was appointed attending physician to the New York Hospital, and continued in his post to the last : discharging, until disabled by sheer physical exhaustion, only a very short time before his death, with characteristic and conscientious fidelity, the duties of his office. Kind to the patients, careful in diagnosis, skillful in treatment, courteous to all about him, and imparting freely to the surrounding students the rich stores of his learning and experience, never had any similar institution a more devoted servant.\*

During the epidemic of cholera in 1849, Dr. Smith served as one of the Medical Council to the Sanitary Committee of the Board of Health. His associates were Dr. Samuel W. Moore, a most modest, upright, and gentlemanly man, of great practical experience and sagacity, and Dr. J. B. Beck, whose classical attainments, literary labors, great learning, clearness of perception and surprising energy of character, have conferred immortality upon his name. No fitter association could have been made for practical purposes.

That their work was well and wisely done, cannot

\* In 1853, a portrait of him, beautifully painted by Baker, was presented by a number of his private pupils, to the New York Hospital, and is suspended in the Governor's Room.

be doubted. They established hospitals ; commenced and accomplished such a purification of the city as it had probably never had before ; gave suitable public advice ; refused the sanction of their names to homœopathy, or any other irregular mode of practice ; appointed physicians to attend at the Police Station Houses. to prescribe and supply medicine and advice ; assigned physicians to districts of the city, for sanitary inspection, and domiciliary visitation, and attendance on the sick ; removed and suppressed nuisances ; and urged the establishment of a thoroughly organized medical police, at whose head should be an active and experienced medical man ; now, through the zealous agency of the Citizens' Association, happily effected. That the epidemic of 1849 was less extensive and fatal than the preceding ones, is certainly due, under the good Providence of God, to their able and energetic proceedings.

In 1864, he was appointed President of the Council of Hygiene of the Citizens' Association of New York ; a fitting and complimentary recognition of his great knowledge of, and devotion to the subject. He performed his duties with his accustomed zeal and fidelity. and gave heartily to the cause, the inestimable benefits of his great learning and experience.

In 1854, he filled, with his accustomed urbanity and punctuality, the chair of President of the New York Academy of Medicine, of which, as well as the American Medical Association, he was one of the early promoters. In 1850, he delivered the fourth anniversary oration before the Academy, choosing for his theme the somewhat novel, though still appropriate.

subject, for a mixed audience, of "The Peculiar Mental Phenomena of the Soldier in Active Service." It is a charming production, in his usual classical style, and filled with a quick succession of historical, military and personal anecdote, which none but reading such as his could have supplied.

The same remarks apply to the address delivered on the occasion of the Inauguration of the new South building of the New York Hospital, in April, 1855. The sketch of the history of this now venerable Institution; the practical suggestions as to its warming, ventilation and cleanliness; the graceful compliment paid to the skill, learning and services of its attending officers, surgical and medical, deceased or contemporary, and to its venerable and philanthropic Governors, past and present, crowning their days with acts of charity and benevolence not to be forgotten, are perfect of their kind.

In May, 1831, he married Miss Henrietta M. Beare, daughter of Capt. Henry M. Beare, British Navy, who, with three sons and two daughters, survives him.

Having thus exhibited to you, Fellow-members, our late lamented associate in his literary capacity; as a teacher, as a hospital physician, and in connection with the great subject of sanitary reform, it remains for me briefly to allude to him as a physician, a man and a Christian, in all of which relations his record is unimpeachable. Rarely has it been permitted to any individual to possess a character so irreproachable.

As a physician, Dr. Smith was patient in the examination of every organ and symptom; and as his knowledge and experience of disease was great, so

his diagnosis was accurate, and his resources abundant. To the patient, he was kind, conciliatory and encouraging. In his relation to the medical attendant he was courteous ; listening with patience to the history of the case ; gently hesitating dissent, and delicately suggesting changes in, or modes of treatment ; seeming less to teach than to be taught.

Towards his professional brethren he was the soul of medical punctilio ; punctual to the moment, and sedulously protecting the interests of the attending physician. I have never heard Dr. Smith accused of even the slightest violation of strict medical ethics or propriety, and I am convinced that he would have shrunk from any such with disdain. It is not then to be wondered at that he was much called in consultation with his brethren. This, indeed, since he entered upon the duties of his professorship, has been his chief business. Private practice he abandoned, except in the cases of a few of his older and more intimate friends. Midwifery he declined *in toto*, (although in earlier life he had practised it much and successfully,) because of its demands upon his time of an evening.

His private pupils, of whom he educated about 200, (devoting to their thorough examination, three evenings in each week,) sought for no other assistance ; and in few cases of illness among his cotemporaries, or in their families, or of public interest, was he not consulted.

Envious of none, he cheerfully accorded to all, in conversation and in his published writings, their due share of merit, and candidly acknowledged the sources of his information. He indulged in neither sarcasm nor

satire ; hated scandal and instantly repressed it ; and was reticent and apologetic of the faults and follies of others, as far as his sense of honor could permit, to a remarkable degree. Thus, as he made no enemies, he had no detractors ; and of him it might be said, as his late distinguished colleague, Dr. Gilman, said of Dr. Beck, "The rule was absolute, that those who knew him best, loved him best."

He was a gentleman of the old school. His habits and ideas had taken a bias and impression in early life, from his association with the descendants of the old Huguenot families in Westchester county. Grave, without formality ; dignified, yet not haughty ; affable and unassuming ; willing to assist all ; dispensing freely, and without parade, to all who asked, the rich stores of his varied erudition, he was an agreeable and instructive companion, a kind and generous friend.

You all remember how eagerly we welcomed his presence in this Academy, and how ably he participated in its discussions. He was a quiet, pleasant, not a rapid, speaker, earnest without assumption of eloquence and fluent without redundance or repetition. His oral discourses partook of the logical character of his mind, and might have been printed as they fell from his lips. His synopses from memory of some of his reports, not read before the American Medical Association and other societies, are spoken of as wonderfully accurate and able. Seriousness of thought and system of action were his great characteristics ; non-committalism his only fault, if such, in one so learned and candid, it were.

The style of his written discourses is classical and

elegant, exhibiting, without labored attempts at fine writing, depth and beauty of thought and expression, wealth of erudition, abundance and felicity of illustration and accuracy of logic and syntax.

That amid the multitudinous duties of his busy life, he was able to accomplish so much, is owing to the steadiness with which he persevered in his task. He went but little into festive society, and wasted no time in idle amusement. His working hours were from 8 P. M. to 12, often to 1 A. M. Neither the conversation going on in the adjoining parlors, nor the frequent interruptions to which he was subjected, broke the concatenation of his thoughts, nor suspended the progress of his labor. He took it up continuously, whence he had laid it down.

He was wholly abstinent during his entire life, except on very rare occasions, from alcoholic drinks, wine or ale, and for many years abandoned the use of tobacco. He was remarkably abstemious in his diet. Regular and methodical in all his habits ; of singularly placid temper ; never irritable, nor morose amid the many minor annoyances of life, or, at least, having sufficient self-control to repress and conceal any manifestations of ill-humor or dissatisfaction ; always hopeful, and looking on the bright side of every difficulty, our departed friend attained, without evident bodily or mental impairment, to an age almost patriarchal, seeming, as was said of Fontenelle, "to gain rather than lose anything by the weight of years."

He was of medium size and stature, erect and dignified. His face was thoughtful, his mouth and lips compressed, indicating firmness and decision. In

this feature, and generally, he much resembled the late Henry Clay, for whom he was often mistaken. His smile was peculiarly pleasing. Black was his only wear. His dress was neat without ornamentation. His gait was measured and elastic.

Not generally jocose, although readily amused by pleasantry in others, he was nevertheless possessed of considerable humor. He related anecdotes, composed prose and poetical enigmas, and among his family and familiar friends was facetious and genial. It was said by one, who knew and loved him well, that "Nature had begun by making him a wit, but had ended in making him a philosopher."

In morals he was exemplary. His mind was chaste. No profanity or idle speaking defiled his lips. He was scrupulously truthful, benevolent and just in all his dealings. At his death he was found to have carried out the maxim of St. Paul. He owed no man anything. In politics he took no prominent part, but was intensely loyal and patriotic, and never, in its least auspicious moment, did he despair of the Republic. He exemplified in the daily practice of his life, the doctrines of the Gospel in which he believed. He was regular in his attendance upon public worship, and conscientious in his observance of the Sabbath. The sorrow and respect of his surviving partner, and the love and devotion of his children and household, bear sufficient testimony to his worth as a husband and father.

Dr. Smith's character as a Christian will be best exhibited to you in the following extracts from the funeral discourse over his remains, delivered by his

pastor, the Rev. Dr. W. Adams, in his church on Madison Square, April 24th, 1866, in the presence of a large concourse of sorrowing friends and brethren.

“There lies a man who has left no enemy ; who never had an enemy, because he was himself the friend of all. His was as kind and true a heart as ever throbbed in a human bosom.

“But he has gone to the grave in the ripeness of his years. The life of our venerable friend was rounded and finished to the last degree of completeness. He has sustained important relations to society, and having served his generation, by the will of God has fallen asleep. The head of a family, in which he was regarded with unalloyed reverence and love—the centre of a large circle of friends, who looked up to him with the respect and affection which are due to a father, it is a still higher eulogy that as a citizen, a philanthropist, a physician, a teacher, his death must be regarded as a public bereavement.

“Dr. Smith was the son of a physician. ‘*Atavis edite regibus.*’ Hor. Descended from an ancestry eminent in the medical profession, he cherished for that profession himself an attachment bordering on enthusiasm. Those addicted to the same pursuits are more competent than myself to pronounce upon his professional qualities, and analyze the method of study and practice to which he was indebted for his high and extended reputation.

“With no pretension to any right of criticism upon his professional abilities, the *morale* of his professional life was seen and known of the whole community.

To none was it more patent than myself. No one can speak of it more intelligently than his own pastor. I had held that relation to Dr. Smith for more than thirty years. I should say that, in his profession, he was distinguished for great honesty, faithfulness and conscientiousness. Duty was his polar star. So strong was his purpose to do all that duty enjoined, that even after disease had taken hold of him, he adhered resolutely to his 'journal course of life,' and staggered through his official engagements, dismissing his class at the end of the course, in the spring, with a paternal blessing.

"Concerning the moral character of Dr. Smith, Scripture furnishes us with the best description: 'Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile.' In simplicity, in godly sincerity, and not by fleshly wisdom, he had his 'conversation in the world.' So truthful was he, that he was cautious in the use of words, inclined to reserve rather than loquacity, lest he might mistake. I do not believe that his most intimate friends ever heard a word of detraction from his lips.

"As to his religious convictions and character, remembering well his own exactness and caution in the use of words, I can pronounce the belief, without qualification, that he was a most sincere and devout Christian. To his own regret and mine, he was not a communicant in the Christian church. Those who knew his idiosyncrasies understood why he was not. Not because of any wavering as to his belief in the Christian religion, but because of that habit of mind to which I have already referred; and this, coupled

with a degree of modesty, and a sense of unworthiness, which at length reached a point which was well nigh morbid, a mode of self-judgment which prevented a public confession, for fear that he might do that to which he was not entitled.\*

“The subject of making a public confession of his faith was one of frequent conversation and correspondence between us. Well convinced that it would be for his own advantage, as well as his usefulness, I reminded him, on one occasion, of a remark made by Dr. John Mason Good, near the close of his life: ‘I have endeavored to live in accordance with duty, but how far below my privileges!’ Dr. Smith was greatly impressed with the remark, and repeated it with great emphasis of manner. Considering his conspicuous position as a physician, his influence as a public man, and especially his peculiar habit of mind, I was very desirous, as he knew, that his connection with the Christian church should be completed by his own act; and without infringing upon the delicacy and sanctity of private conversations, it is proper to add that, at last, it was the occasion of serious regret on the part of our venerable friend, that he had not been known as a Christian communicant.

\* I have been reminded, in this connection, of a paragraph in Burnet’s *Life of Hale*, Wordsworth’s *Ecl. Biog.*, Keble’s *Christian Year*, page 68:

“From the first time that the impressions of religion settled deeply on his mind, he used great caution to conceal it; not only in obedience to the rule given by our Saviour, of fasting, praying and giving alms in secret, but from a particular distrust he had of himself; for he said, he was afraid he should, at some time or other, do some enormous thing, which, if he were looked on as a very religious man, might cast a reproach on the profession of it, and give great advantages to impious men to blaspheme the name of God.”

“But I have never doubted the sincerity of his faith. ‘You know,’ said he to me, with great fervor, a few days before his decease, ‘if I should not be able to go to the Lord’s table, WHO is my trust.’

“He was a most devout reader of the Holy Bible. No pressure of engagements prevented him from reading his daily portion of the Divine Word. The New Testament he had read in course, fifty-three times. The copy of the Bible, which he had used so long and faithfully, containing his own marks and annotations, is a touching testimony of his habitual communion with God in His Word. Three years before his death, a new copy of the Bible was given him, in place of the well-worn volume which had been his companion so long ; and this he had read throughout four times, when he was called away to the beatific vision of God himself.”

The first indications of failure of health in our distinguished friend, occurred in the early part of November, 1865. After considerable fatigue, and a lack of his usual recreation, the functions of his stomach became deranged, and he grew feeble and emaciated. He commenced to perform his regular duties in the college in October, but was obliged to intermit, for the first time in forty years, the delivery of twelve lectures. He resumed and completed his course, but with difficulty ; in all weathers, and in spite of all remonstrance, urged on by a conscientious sense of duty. His colleague, Dr. A. Clark, was his medical attendant throughout his illness, with whom

was associated Dr. Thomas M. Markoe, during the last few days.

The exertion overcame him, and he sank afterwards gradually, and with illusory appearances of amendment, until the 22d of April, 1866, when exhausted nature succumbed, he being then in the 78th year of his age. The spirit returned to its God, and entered upon the bliss of immortality. His mental faculties remained unimpaired until the occurrence of Hemiplegia of the left side, upon the 19th, while he was sitting up in bed taking nourishment. He continued conscious for twenty-four hours, recognizing the several members of his family, and indicating that he responded to the prayer offered at his bedside by his pastor—his last words being a blessing on his devoted son. He then sank into a gentle coma, unaccompanied by stertor, and scarcely a bronchial rattle occurred to mark the moment of expiration. Such was his Euthanasia. Not, perhaps, wholly despairing of some temporary amendment, he was nevertheless prepared for the fatal issue, and said to a friend in conversation, that “all was well with him.” He was sad, but patient and resigned. He felt that his temporal labors were finished. He had fought a good fight, and died in his harness, ripe in age and in honor.

His life had been a quiet and a happy one, unembittered by any great sorrow or adversity, passed in the possession of unimpaired intellect, good health, reputation, competence, domestic and social enjoyment, and was protracted almost to the allotted age, without labor or sorrow. Much as we miss him, we sorrow not as those without hope. We could have

wished him no better end. A good and faithful servant in this life, we cannot doubt that he has entered into the joy of his Lord.\*

But, Fellow-academicians, shall *we* derive no moral from this story of his life? Has he not shown us how a physician *should* live, and how a Christian *could* die? Shall *we* not emulate his bright example?

We have seen that, to the last, he continued to labor in the cause of medical science. *We, also*, owe a duty to God, to our profession and to humanity, which we should endeavor to fulfill. Life is short. We must work while it is day. For many of us the night cometh when no man can work. We must be up and doing. Then shall we reap, as he did, the fruits of our exertions—the eulogy of contemporaries and the applause of posterity.

To the Junior members of the Profession who hear me, I say, earnestly, make him your model. He is enshrined in our hearts. No marble tablet is needed to perpetuate his fame. His life and labors are his

\* The following memoranda, found after his death among his private papers, show how devoutly, in the silence and privacy of his closet, he communed with his own heart and with his Maker:

March 14th, 1860. I am this day seventy-one years of age. "O Lord, so teach *me* to number *my* days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom." "Lord make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am."

March 14th, 1862. I am this day seventy-three years of age. May I more and more constantly, as the days and years of my life pass away, meditate on the truth that, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God" (1 John v. 1). O God, may I believe that Jesus is the Christ, and may I be born of Thee! "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Him will I trust."

March, 1866. I am this month seventy-seven years of age. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

befitting monument. Pursue and end, as he did, the journey of life on which you are now entering, and all the joys and honors of the present, all the bliss unspeakable of the life to come, will be yours.

And now, Fellow-associates,—

“Peace to the good man’s memory ; let it grow  
Greener with years, and flourish in the lapse of ages.”



THE  
PUBLIC ASPECTS OF THE LIFE AND LABORS

OF

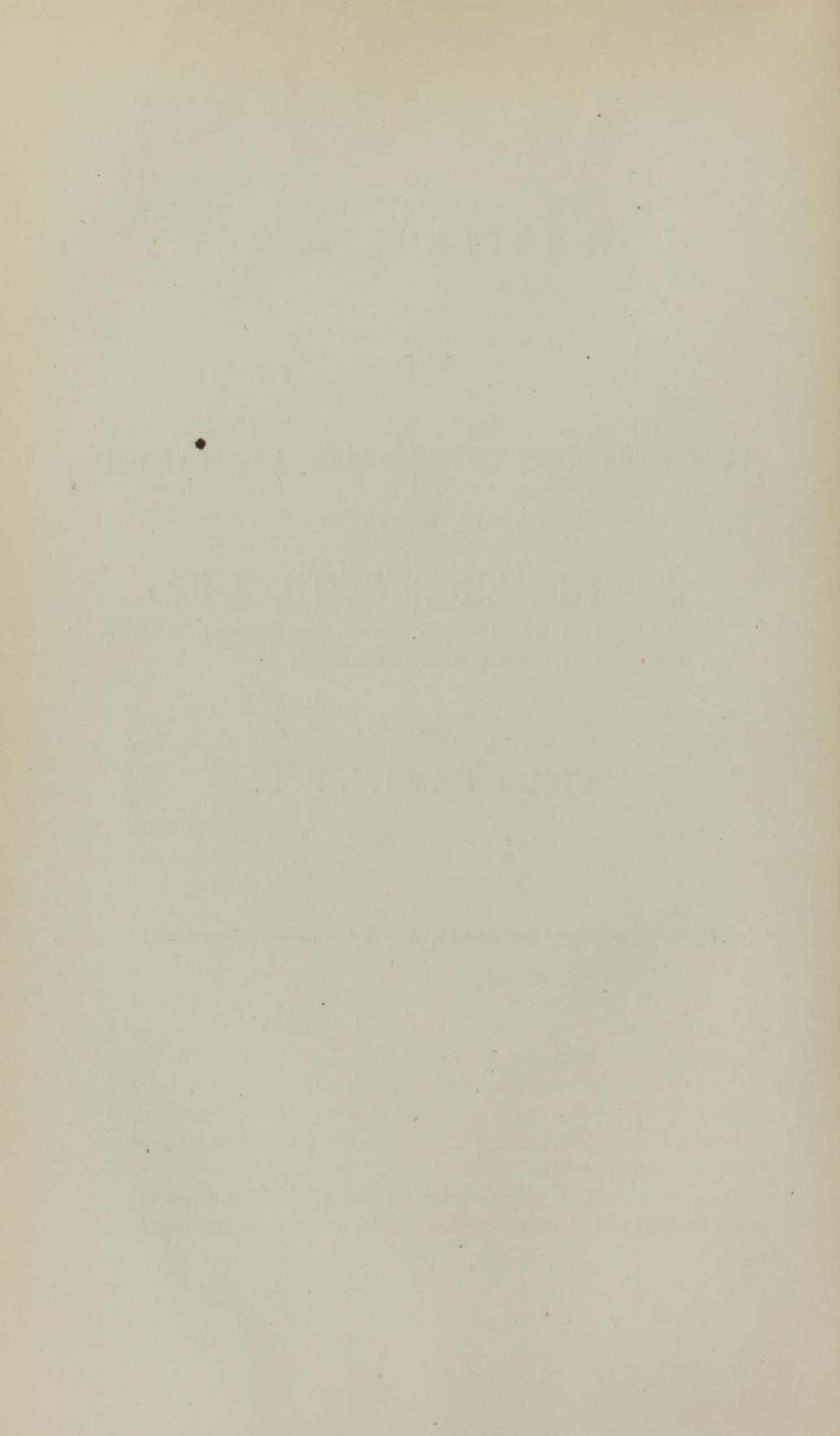
JOSEPH MATHER SMITH, M. D.,

Late Professor in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia College; Physician to the New York  
Hospital; President of the Council of Hygiene; President of the  
New York Academy of Medicine, etc.

BY

ELISHA HARRIS, M. D.

*[From the Transactions of the New York State Medical Society, February, 1867.]*



# THE PUBLIC LABORS,

ETC.

---

DR. JOSEPH MATHER SMITH, of New York, after fifty years of active medical labors, died the 22d day of April, 1866, at the ripe age of seventy-seven years. His life was full of usefulness ; his personal and professional character deeply impressed and permanently benefited his medical brethren, and blessed the community in which he was long and justly regarded as one of the rarest and most perfect exemplars of the great virtues which should adorn a physician's life. He loved and honored his vocation. He died in peace, and his memory is honored by all who knew him in life.

More than forty years a successful and universally respected teacher in the oldest medical college in the State, and for half a century a contributor to medical literature, his brethren, and the many thousands of his former pupils who survive him, will often recall the rich practical lessons given by him in his carefully studied and logical prelections. The comprehensive philosophy in the subjects and method of his thoughts, the classical diction of his lectures, and the broad, clear and exceedingly practical views he had of medical knowledge, combined to make Professor Smith the useful and influential teacher he was. No physician in all the country will recall to mind the professional and personal influences which characterized this great teacher's life, without deriving moral advantage to himself and his profession. This consideration has induced me to group together in a brief statement the leading facts in Doctor Smith's labors and writings, which show what share he had in the public service of Medicine and Hygiene.

To present in this place a biographical sketch would be entirely foreign to the object in view. The memoir of this excel-

lent man is being prepared by competent hands, under direction of the Academy of Medicine. We would, however, mark well the estimable moral qualities of this great and good man. His was a life well filled with the personal virtues, the domestic felicity and the generous sentiments which adorn and ennoble a Christian physician. Hence all acts of his which serve to illustrate his views regarding the public duties of medical men were in harmony with his inner life, and were strengthened by those virtues which, to the end of his days, gained for him the unalloyed esteem and the deserved confidence of his professional brethren and the people among whom he dwelt. His unfeigned loyalty to *truth*, and to *sound philosophy in all things*, was rooted in a richly endowed moral and intellectual nature. His various writings and his public lectures received the indelible seal of the deep convictions of the mind that produced them.

The public duties of medical men, as understood and illustrated by Prof. Smith, are such as every physician, even in the humblest rural neighborhood, may successfully put in practice. To the perfect fulfilment of this class of the physician's duties, he taught, and, in his own life silently illustrated the fact, that neither official distinction nor unusual fortune is requisite, but, simply, a clear conception of, and a hearty devotion to, the great purpose of a medical life. In a memorable discourse upon this theme in the year 1846, he spoke as follows :

“The duties of the physician may properly be divided into public and private. The latter relate to immediate attendance on the sick and the alleviation of individual suffering. . . . . The former are, for the most part, of a different kind ;—they concern the general health and happiness of the community at large. . . . .

“Of the many subjects an acquaintance with which is indispensable in him who undertakes to aid in the deliberations of legislative bodies respecting the public health, there are none more important than the causes of disease, and the means of obviating and counteracting their effects. To enable one to speak with decision and authority on such subjects, it is necessary to be conversant with the varieties of climate and soil, the situ-

ation and topographies of countries, the occupations, diet, and habits and manners of the people. . . . .

“Among the subjects on which his opinion may be required, are the qualities of the waters used in diet and for other purposes; the properties and effects of certain articles of food; and the best mode of preserving the health and lives of persons employed in certain manufacturing and other occupations. His opinion may also be demanded with regard to the location, plan, economical arrangement, and dietaries of hospitals, alms-houses, prisons and seminaries of learning. To be enabled to advise on these various subjects, it is necessary to have a knowledge of the principles of hygiene, and to be informed with regard to the effects of the various systems of management pursued in the manufacturing, humane, criminal, and literary institutions of different countries.

“But it is in relation to matters connected with the origin, diffusion, and prophylactics of pestilential diseases, that the physician is required to discharge duties of a higher and more responsible character.

“Few cities in maritime situations, and, indeed, few of any magnitude in the interior of countries, are exempt from the occasional ravages of pestilential epidemics. The frightful aspect of these diseases, and the fury with which they frequently commence and pursue their career of desolation, have, from the earliest ages, given them the first rank in the list of human calamities.

“In such seasons, when the popular mind is alarmed and turned from its ordinary occupations, the responsibilities of the physician occasion anxieties of extreme intensity; for, on him then devolves, not merely the duty of announcing the appearance of the disease, but of watching and reporting its progressive extension, and of studying its origin, nature, peculiarities of treatment.”\*

These words conveyed to his pupils in the University the ennobling views of medical life which Prof. Smith everywhere inculcated. To us, who knew the spirit of his own well ordered

\* A Discourse on the Public Duties of Medical Men : New York, 1846.

professional life, this language correctly sets forth the principles and purposes that inspired his labors. Though to his serenely domestic and studious habits, as well as to his modest and unassuming nature, official distinctions were always distasteful, and were only occasionally accepted by him, he was ever ready to aid and advise any of his brethren who chanced to be placed in positions of official responsibility ; while, as a citizen, he was daily watchful of the public welfare, and studious in regard to all preventable causes of disease and human suffering. It is this aspect of his labors that will forever hallow the writings and the reminiscences of our great teacher. To preserve in the published archives of the State Medical Society, and to keep in our minds a brief record of this class of his labors, and this instructive feature of his useful life, is the purpose of this sketch.

In the year 1821 the *Medical Repository*, published in New York, contained a masterly review of Sir Gilbert Blane's treatise on *Medical Logic*, together with an abstract of evidence upon the subject of *contagion* in Yellow Fever. Though there had previously been published three or four most instructive papers from the pen of young Dr. Smith, one of which, on the "*Efficacy of Emetics in Spasmodic Diseases, and an Inquiry into the Final Cause of Sympathetic Vomiting*," had attracted deserved attention, in this review of Sir Gilbert Blane's *Medical Logic* was illustrated, by Dr. Smith, the critical acumen and lucid reasoning which became his acknowledged characteristic in future life.

In 1824 Dr. Smith published his admirable treatise on the "ELEMENTS OF THE ETIOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF EPIDEMICS." That unpretending volume will probably long outlive any other medical treatise published in America during that decennium. It received at the time the critical and very favorable notice of such scholars as Sir James Johnston ; and that it has influenced and enlarged the medical philosophy of our times, every member of our profession who is familiar with the history of medical literature and professional opinion the past forty years, will testify. It is not our purpose in this place to review any of the

questions discussed in that treatise, but simply to recall here its masterly inquiry regarding the etiology of fevers and the laws of epidemics and infections. It was, at the time of its publication, and it remains to this day, a strikingly original, lucid and philosophical analysis of evidence, and a masterly deduction and enunciation of principles in the etiology of fevers and the philosophy of epidemics. In the words of Sir James Johnston, in his editorial notice of it in the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, in 1825, it was regarded by the ripest medical scholars "as ingenious and philosophical, characterized not only by great talent and force of argument, but also by candor and good faith, and talent doing honor to American Medicine."

While adverting to the treatise here mentioned, we should do injustice to the memory of Prof. Smith if we failed to state that his special attachment to the hypothesis of essential *identity* of the two great types of continued fever (the "typhus" and the "typhoid") was not a blind preference for his own well studied classification, though his adherence to it was unshaken by the massive evidence of Louis and Bretonneau, and withstood the logical reasonings of Jackson, Gerhard, Clymer, Jenner, Bartlett and Wood. His hypotheses seemed to cover the facts and rational necessities upon which their deductions from the records of endemic typhoid or enteric fever were based. The *idio-koino* miasm certainly was not a myth in the sewers and cloacal filth of Paris, where neglected *cabnets d'aisance*, and putrid exhalations, infect the air of the gay city. The excremental filth and crowd poisoning in the domiciles constituted the *idio* miasm, and its putrifactive products, when combined with the putrilage of sewers and streets, render it the source of a true *idio-koino* miasm, according to his own classical phraseology. But the proofs upon the separate question of absolute distinctness of origin and pathological characteristics of the true *typhus* and the pure *typhoid* depended upon cumulative evidence on the one hand, and upon the results of rigidly logical analysis of distinct epidemics and individual histories of typhoid fever, on the other hand. In the literature of pyretology it required the lucid expositions of Budd and Murcheson to modify the expression of

Prof. Smith's etiological doctrines; and we are warranted in stating that had life and strength been spared another year or two, he would have presented to the profession his deductions upon the new evidence concerning the distinct etiological history of the typhoid or pythogenic fever. His conclusions upon this subject, as expressed in conversation, were of the most practical and important character, such only as could be reached by a logical analysis of the facts in the etiology and history of fevers. In one of the latest conversations with him on this subject, in January, 1866, he remarked to the writer that he saw great hygienic advantages, and no philosophical difficulties, in adopting the conclusions that have been reached by Murcheson and Budd. It was his habit to *study and classify diseases by their essential causes*, when practicable, as an aid to correct general knowledge of disease and its hygienic treatment. His treatise on etiology and epidemics, of which we now speak, happily illustrates this, and although the language of that treatise is very exact and classical, it does not savor of dogmatism, but, rather, it invites to practical researches.

Four years of official service (from 1820 to 1824) as an attending physician to the State Prison in Greenwich street, and the heroic service and the great practical study and hygienic conquest in which he engaged with that model of medical officers, Dr. ISAAC WOOD, in the Typhus pestilence that ravaged the city prison and Bellevue Almshouse in the year 1825, had trained Dr. Smith in the most severely practical school of hygienic and medical experience concerning the etiology, prevention and control of epidemic fevers. Three epidemics of yellow fever, repeated outbreaks of typhus in the city, and, especially, the remarkable epidemic known as the "Bancker street Fever"—in 1820—occurred subsequent to Dr. Smith's graduation, and before the publication of the treatise here mentioned. It was natural that he should have undertaken such a duty as an author, and it was proper that his views should be at once bold, philosophical and strong. Had his contributions to medical literature ceased with that thin but weighty volume, posthumous fame would still have been his lot. But his labors did not then cease. His

illustrious career was very significantly inaugurated by that rich contribution to medical literature and philosophy. Yet he seems not to have sought fame. His chosen function was that of the faithful teacher and practitioner of medicine. Almost immediately after the publication of that admirable treatise he was elected to the faculty of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, where he continued to labor until removed by death.

In the summer of 1831 the Asiatic Cholera was announced on the confines of Europe. Prof. Smith had already gleaned, from foreign journals and reports, such knowledge of it as was then attainable. He found ample reason to conclude it would very soon reach America; and, before it had made incursions westward beyond the boundaries of Poland and Hungary, he set about the duty of aiding the medical profession in preparing to meet that terrible foe. Accordingly, on the 9th of November, 1831, he delivered a discourse on the "*Epidemic Cholera Morbus of Europe and Asia*," which was forthwith published and widely circulated by the Board of Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons. He reviewed the records of the pestilence in India, and traced its progress and epidemic characteristics down to its arrival in Russia. The leading object of that discourse was to discover the nature and value of protective measures against the epidemic. The experience and value of quarantines are examined, the question of personal contagiousness of cholera is put and answered, and a practical conclusion reached: it was in the following words: "The broad Atlantic is a mighty barrier, but not impassable to the moving power of epidemic meteoration. Should the destroying angel light upon our shores, our safety, under Providence, will depend upon *the avoidance of every occasion that may favor his deadly attack.*"

In that concluding paragraph of the first warning against the new pestilence is evinced the faith in prophylaxis which then, and to the end of his days, made him a practical and wise medical philanthropist. Not the polypharmacy of Dioscorides and Galen was invoked by him against Cholera, but *the merciful prevision of Hygieia*.\* Here was predicted the conclusion which

\* In the concluding sentence of that discourse we find the following pre

the learned MAGENDIE early in 1832 announced to the sanitary authorities of Paris, in the laconic words, "*Cholera begins where other maladies end—in death!*"

Though Prof. Smith was at that early period able to prove, by logical evidence, that cholera was not *personally* contagious, in any such sense as small-pox and typhus are, and though, until a few years before his death, he believed and taught that the great epidemics of that pestilence depended exclusively upon a *pandemic meteoration* and the general *localizing* conditions of epidemics, no sound medical scholar ever accepted more readily the evidence on which is based the present doctrine and hygienic practice concerning the infective property of the excremental discharges of the sick with cholera. He both welcomed and aided the adoption of this practical advance in the knowledge of the etiology and the sanitary care of the pestilence that, until the adoption of this new and rational view, had repeatedly swept with unrestrained fatality over all countries.

Early in the summer of 1849, when cholera had gained firm foothold in New York, Prof. Smith was selected as a medical counsellor, with Drs. John B. Beck and Samuel W. Moore, for the city, by the spontaneous choice of the Sanitary Committee of the municipal government. So urgent and so noble was the duty that he and his two associates entered upon their labors without stipulation or remark concerning compensation. The most deadly pestilence was already at its fatal work, and threatened to decimate the population. Prof. Smith met with his associates and the Municipal Committee one hundred days in succession, and in all that labor he triumphantly maintained the great principles of hygiene and the honor of the medical profession. The profound respect with which Prof. Smith's personal and professional opinions and counsel were regarded by the Committee, imparted a kind of magisterial authority to all he said or wrote concerning sanitary measures during the epidemic.

diction foreshadowing subsequent experience:— . . . "Our hopes of exemption from the epidemic cholera must rest on the distance at which we are separated from the present field of its prevalence. It may reach us, however, from Russia, by way of Canada."

The year following the epidemic Dr. Smith presented to the American Medical Association a Report on *Hygiene*, which embodied a vast amount of important information relating to self-originated disease. It was designed to arouse the attention of medical men to the essential and avoidable causes of fevers and domestic infections.

At the meeting of the American Medical Association, in New Haven in the year 1860, Professor Smith presented a report upon the *Medical Topography and Epidemics of the State of New York*. In that masterly treatise the author revealed at once the scope and purpose of his hygienic studies. Scarcely any similar production in the English language is so replete with the fruit of patient and comprehensive study of the fundamental principles of Etiology and practical Hygiene. In the plan and in the execution of that work were illustrated,—in the classical idiom and scientific exactness of medicine in our day,—what Hippocrates, in the age of Pericles, had eloquently taught in the study of *Airs, Waters, Places and the Constitution*. In every page of that Report, the fact is apparent that its learned author sought to lay the foundation for practical studies of the causes, phenomena, and sanitary restraint of epidemics, so broadly that all who might hereafter succeed him, should build thereon securely, and with the greatest practical advantage to mankind.

Unlike many other reports on the medical topography and epidemics of particular States, Professor Smith's assumed the qualities of philosophical research in regard to the facts upon which must be based all exact etiological and hygienic principles, and all sound sanitary practice. The geographical configuration, the geology, hydrography and natural drainage, and the agricultural or public improvement of the surface throughout the State are accurately described; the flora, the fauna, and the meteorological phenomena are considered, and the humidity and rain-fall of each district and altitude are recorded, and an *hyetal* or rain chart, with *isohyetal* lines ingeniously constructed; the physical characteristics of the various classes of the population are stated, and the physical and social agencies that bear sway among them and are impressed upon the

inhabitants, are carefully considered. Then he opens the discussion of the epidemics of the State, concisely recites what is known of the contagious pestilences and of the pandemic plagues that hitherto have visited this commonwealth, *warns against the infectious attribute of Asiatic Cholera*, and at once urges the adoption of a comprehensive and practical system of Vital Registration, that shall give full effect to the excellent scheme of Medical and Surgical Statistics which Dr. Brinsmade, of Troy, introduced to the State Medical Society, and which Dr. J. C. Orton, of Binghamton, has zealously promoted.

Throughout that Report the practical applications of such knowledge are kept steadily in view. Mankind, and all the great interests of the State, were to be benefited by means of exact hygienic knowledge; and hence, the leading object of his Report was to aid the profession, and to benefit the State in this respect.\* It will ever remain a monument to his excellent memory as a philosophical physician and a philanthropist. In it, as in several of his published medical discourses and in his daily intercourse with men, Dr. Smith displays a masterly ability to ascend from dry, elementary details, to those comprehensive and philosophical views that pertain to medicine and hygiene in the realm of social science and political economy.

While the Report we have just described was passing through the press, our country's great calamity of civil war darkened the political horizon. Professor Smith's patriotism was unswerving, and full of faith in the principles upon which the national cause is founded. In every practicable way he encouraged his fellow-citizens, and particularly his medical brethren, to uphold the Government. And in regard to all the great practical questions in Military Hygiene which engaged the attention of the United States Sanitary Commission, the writer always found Professor Smith's views and suggestions to be broad, clear and

\* In every chapter of the Report here mentioned, are found evidences of very laborious researches and important statistical inquiries; and in his Introductory note the author takes occasion delicately to give due credit to the filial duty of his son, Dr. GOUVERNEUR M. SMITH, who had rendered important aid in several chapters.

practical. As a public teacher of sanitary science he watched the work and plans of the Commission with all the solicitude and interest which his devoted faith in hygiene, and in that great trial of it, could impart.

At this advanced period of his life, Professor Smith might justly have claimed a furlough from active labors. He had passed, with full powers of body and mind, the golden three-score years and ten. But it was plainly his purpose to work on with accustomed diligence to the end of his days. His intellectual powers were undiminished. His bodily health seemed to be perfect. For several years previous to the war, he gave much attention to the efforts that were being put forth in the New York Academy of Medicine and in the Sanitary Association, to awaken and cultivate an intelligent interest in hygiene. His counsel and aid in those efforts were freely sought and promptly imparted; and, immediately after the New York Citizens' Association was organized, he cordially joined in the work of its *Council of Hygiene*, became President of that Council, and gave great attention and aid to it. In the labors of the Council he exhibited an interest that animated every member of that body. His ripe knowledge of sanitary science, and his large experience in dealing with the causes of disease, rendered his constant advice invaluable.

Providence had appointed that Professor Smith's services as President of the Council of Hygiene should be the last and crowning labor of his lifetime. The public is already so well informed regarding the results of that great undertaking that it is unnecessary in this place to recount any details concerning it except so far as they illustrate the public character of this devoted physician's labors.

As we have before mentioned, this acknowledged master in Sanitary Science had for years lent the aid of his personal counsels and presence in the systematic efforts which were in progress to secure the public recognition of hygiene as an essential branch of the municipal and State polity. He had, at various times, as well as in the midst of pestilence and before the visitation of epidemics, very boldly expressed his views regarding the

culpable neglect of public hygiene. To secure an intelligent public appreciation of the sanitary wants of the city it seemed necessary to provide a basis of exact and recent information founded upon evidence from actual observation by expert Sanitary Inspectors. It was likewise necessary to proceed to systematic and well organized efforts to command the respectful attention of the public and to obtain its action thereon. Professor Smith advised and aided in the organization of the plans for the attainment of these objects; and it is the writer's privilege, as the executive officer of that work to bear testimony to the studious attention and the unceasing interest and helpfulness with which the honored subject of this memoir, as President of that body, regarded our Sanitary Survey of the city. He urged the importance of exact statistical and medical inquiries into the sanitary condition of all the fever-nests and cholera-fields of the city; he encouraged persistent efforts; he held up the philanthropic, the social, and the moral aspects of practical hygiene, as well as its medical and scientific bearings, on which he always dwelt with enthusiasm; he encouraged and honored the Sanitary Inspectors, and never failed to be with them at their weekly meetings,\* and when the Council requested the writer to prepare a final report upon the sanitary wants of the city, Professor Smith gave his counsel and aid in the spirit of paternal faithfulness. He often said that "such *foundations* must be laid before the superstructure of public hygiene, and an intelligent popular

\* The concluding act in Professor Smith's life of devotion to public hygiene was that of his attendance and presiding at a meeting of the Council of Hygiene. It was characteristic of his public life, that in all his official or professional associations with other men his punctuality and his invariable consciousness of the obligations and duties imposed by any personal, or officially implied engagement, made his practice of this virtue a perfect example for his brethren. His reply to a friend who urged him to occasionally intermit his labors in the professorial chair at the medical college, and in the protracted and busy sessions of the Council of Hygiene during his last winter's work, well illustrates the view he took of such duties. He said: "These associations with our fellow laborers in responsibilities are so much like the various and nicely adjusted wheels of a watch that no one of them can abruptly stop without impairing the entire machinery. Every wheel must move with its fellows."

faith in it could be rendered permanent." The recollection of that last public labor of Professor Smith can never fade from the memory of the men who were associated with him in it. As a work for the public welfare it was one of the most important and far reaching of any that had been undertaken by himself or by any medical men in his lifetime. He lived to see one of its most legitimate objects attained, namely, the successful organization of a Sanitary Government in the five counties constituting the Metropolitan Sanitary District of New York. For two full years scarcely a day excepting the Sabbath, had passed without his devoting some thought to the work and purposes that laid the popular foundations for this beneficent reform. We do not detract from the meed of honor and public gratitude that is justly due to such true friends of sanitary reform as Drs. Willard Parker, Alexander H. Stevens, John H. Griscom, Isaac Wood, Stephen Smith, Isaac E. Taylor, James R. Wood, Anderson, Post, Bulkley, Heuschel, Prof. Draper, and others, when we state that to Professor Smith is due the highest honor for his part in that beneficent work of rendering hygiene more exact in its methods and more perfectly understood in its public applications.

There was in Professor Smith's labors such systematic and logical arrangement of all his thoughts and methods relating to medical truths and public duties, such philosophical breadth and comprehensiveness in his inquiries, and such wise and charitable interpretation of doubts and unsolved questions, that he seemed one of the truest disciples of Lord Bacon.\* Such intellectual qualities pre-eminently fitted him to be President of the Council of Hygiene.

\* Medical pupils and associates of Professor Smith's can never forget the deliberative, methodical, exhaustive, and severely logical study and analysis that always characterized the Professor's clinical duties and his hospital service. At the bedside of the patient, however complicated and obscure the case, or however unknown the patient's history, the great teacher's logical acumen, and scrupulous love of medical truth and its *certainties* in the departments of Hygiene, impressed us with his magisterial character as a diagnostician. But in the broad fields of sanitary inquiry the same great qualities of mind were exhibited still more effectually; he seemed to bring out and exemplify all the propositions laid down by Lord Bacon in

Though it does not become the writer to speak further of this last public work in which the honored subject of this Memoir was engaged, he would be guilty of injustice to such a record not to bear testimony to the fact that from no other man did that work receive more essential aid than from him, and that the kind of assistance he rendered was such as few other men could have given, for his was a master's counsel.

On the morning of April 22, 1866, in the 78th year of his age, this good and great physician rested from his earthly labors. Not a faculty of his mind was dimmed, nor were the genial and expansive sentiments of his soul in the least diminished with his increasing years. Memory, reason, highly cultivated intellectual tastes and social refinement, a clear judgment, and habits of severely logical analysis and incisive criticism in everything relating to literature and science, continued in full activity until those last momentous hours when his summons came

. . . . . "to join  
The innumerable caravan which moves  
To that mysterious realm where each shall take  
His chambers in the silent house of death."

He went calmly and with deeply religious faith in the promises and goodness of God,

. . . . . "sustained and soothed  
By an unflinching trust, . . . . .  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

His life had been filled with useful deeds and ennobling studies. The tenderest endearments of domestic affection, and the gratitude of the thousands who had received the benefits of his professional skill, were sincerely accorded to him, the profound respect and an almost filial attachment of the entire medical profession in the Metropolitan District made life and its associations pleasant to him. He passed from among us with his mind the *Essays upon the Advancement of Learning*, and in his *Historia Vitæ et Mortis*, both of which great works by the father of inductive philosophy, he had manifestly studied with peculiar care in his early professional life.

serenely fixed in the sublime faith of Christianity. The Bible had for many years been his daily counsellor, and its divine precepts had guided his useful and happy life. His fireside was a sanctuary of the domestic virtues and of the warmly reciprocated affections of his own exalted nature.

This brief tribute to the good Physician, the wise Teacher, and the learned Hygiest, has presented only the public aspects of his medical life. There were other more commonly appreciated labors of his which in his life-time established for him a lasting fame. Those labors and the qualities that gave them distinction were the fruit of that well-trained mind and heart that made him an acknowledged master and teacher of the principles of medicine and hygiene, and they all conspired to give him the superior rank he held during the last forty years of his life.

In his knowledge of the intimate pathology of diseases he was painstaking and accurate :

In his study and uses of Etiology and Hygiene he was profound and unceasingly progressive :

In the diagnosis of diseases his severe logic and systematic methods of investigation imparted remarkable accuracy to his conclusions ; for, however obscure or complicated the medical evidence, his Baconian habits of comprehensive inquiry and analysis soon ascertained the full value of each symptom and fact, and wherever the evidence was obscure or defective he would adopt the method of reasoning *par exclusion* with marvellous skill :

In therapeutics he excelled in the employment of hygienic and the physiological agencies of cure, and at the same time he invoked every resource of medical chemistry ; as a family physician he was the truest of hygiests, and the most faithful and revered of counsellors. He was an acknowledged model of ethical and manly rectitude. In manners, in self-control and culture, in gentlemanly graces, and in the purity and dignity of his person and of his intercourse with men, in the tones of his

voice, in his diction and in his scrupulous selection of language with which to embody his thoughts, he was the most perfect of men. In the spirit and the acts of his long life he exemplified the exalted attributes which Hippocrates has ascribed to the true physician,—

*Ἴατρος γὰρ φίλοσοφος, ἰσόθεος.*

Forty years a public teacher in medicine ; forty-six years constantly concerned in the active charities of the profession in public hospitals ; for more than thirty years a consulting physician whose practical advice and diagnostic aid were widely sought by his brethren, and, to the end of his days, a progressive and noble exemplar of the great qualities that exalt our profession, the beneficent influence of his life still lives. His memory is embalmed in our hearts, and will not be forgotten by the generations that follow us.

The chief contributions to medical literature made by Doctor Smith are mentioned by their titles and dates in the following list. (Chronologically arranged.)

“Case of Fracture of the Pelvis. Autopsy by Dr. V. Mott.” *New York Medical Magazine*. N. Y., 1815 ; page 346.

“Efficacy of Emetics in Spasmodic Diseases, with an Inquiry into the Final Cause of Sympathetic Vomiting.” *Transactions of the Physico-Médical Society of New York*. Vol. I. ; 1817 ; page 131-150. Also in *N. Y. Med. and Phys. Jour.* Vol. VI ; 1827 ; page 53-66.

“Case of Poisoning by Opium successfully treated by Flagellation.” *Transactions of the Physico-Medical Society of New York*. Vol. I. ; 1817 ; page 289.

“A Case of Dyspepsia, attended with an accumulation and long retention in the intestinal canal of various substances taken for the relief of the disease.” *Medical Repository*, N. Y. ; 1821 ; New Series, Vol. VI., p. 230.

Review of Sir Gilbert Blane’s “*Elements of Medical Logic, illustrated by practical Proofs and Examples, including a Statement of the evidence respecting the Contagious Nature of the Yellow Fever.*” *Medical Repository*, N. Y. ; 1821 ; New Series, Vol. VI., p. 312 340.

- “Elements of the Etiology and Philosophy of Epidemics.” New York, 1824. Pages 223, 8vo.
- “Biographical Memoir of Cornelius E. De Puy, M.D.” New York Medical and Physical Journal ; 1825 ; Vol. IV., pages 266-277.
- Review of a “Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Physic,” by George Gregory, M.D.” N. Y. Medical and Physical Journal ; 1827 ; Vol. VI., pp. 261-277.
- Review of Bichat’s “Pathological Anatomy.” Phil., 1827 ; 8vo, pp. 232 ; and of Martinet’s “Manual of Pathology.” Phil., 1827 ; pp. 301. New York Medical and Physical Journal ; 1828 ; No. 26, pp. 255-273.
- “Epidemic Cholera Morbus of Europe and Asia.” A discourse delivered as an Introductory lecture at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New York, November 9th, 1831. Published by and at the request of the Trustees of the College.
- “A Comparative View of the State of Medicine in the Years 1773 and 1833.” Introductory Lecture, College of Physicians and Surgeons, N. Y. New York Quarterly Journal of Medicine and Surgery, October, 1839 ; pp. 245-266.
- Review of Louis’ “Anatomical, Pathological and Therapeutical Researches on the Yellow Fever of Gibraltar of 1828.” Boston, 1839 ; 8vo, pp. 374. N. Y. Journal of Medicine and Surgery ; Vol. II. ; 1840 ; pp. 436-447.
- “Public Duties of Medical Men.” A discourse de-

livered as an Introductory Lecture at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New York, Nov. 2, 1846. Published by request of the students of the College.

- “Influence of Diseases on the Intellectual and Moral Powers.” A discourse delivered as an Introductory Lecture at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New York, October 30th, 1848. Published by request of the students of the College.
- “Report on Practical Medicine” submitted to the American Medical Association, May, 1848. Transactions Am. Medical Association, Vol. I., pp. 101–133.
- “Report on Public Hygiene” submitted to the Am. Medical Association, May, 1850. Transactions Am. Medical Association, Vol. III., pp. 223–246.
- “Illustrations of Mental Phenomena in Military Life.” An Anniversary Discourse delivered before the N. Y. Academy of Medicine, Nov. 13, 1850. Published by order of the Academy.
- “An Address delivered on the occasion of the Inauguration of the New South Building of the New York Hospital,” April 18, 1855.
- “Puerperal Fever ; its Causes and Modes of Propagation.” Prepared by request of the N. Y. Academy of Medicine and read before that body April 4, 1857. Published in the N. Y. Journal of Medicine, September 1, 1857 ; pp. 153–179.
- “Sketch of the Professional Life and Character of

his Father, Dr. Matson Smith, of New Rochelle, Westchester County, N. Y."

"Medical Topography and Epidemics of the State of New York." A report submitted to the Am. Medical Association, June, 1860. Transactions of the Am. Medical Association, Vol. XIII. ; 1860 ; pages 82-269.

"Therapeutics of Albuminuria." Prepared by request of the N. Y. Academy of Medicine, and read before that body Nov. 5, 1862. Bulletin of the N. Y. Academy of Medicine, Vol. II., pp. 40-51 ; 1863.

Besides these published writings, Dr. Smith had accumulated many volumes of manuscripts—his lectures on the Theory and Practice of Physic, on Hygiene, on Materia Medica and Clinical Medicine, delivered in the College of Physicians and Surgeons ; also, notes of cases occurring in private and consultation practice, and in the New York Hospital, to illustrate his lectures on Clinical Medicine, and several monographs. Among the latter may be mentioned an elaborate "Essay on the Identity of Typhus and Typhoid Fevers," read at a public meeting of the Fellows of the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons, Jan. 7, 1846 ; an erudite treatise on Yellow Fever, presented to the N. Y. Academy of Medicine, June, 1859 ; and a dissertation on Cholera, of which no public use had been made.

E. H.

APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

---

From the numerous private and public testimonials of respect to the memory of DR. SMITH, the following from Medical bodies are appended :

### COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS.

At a meeting of the Trustees of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in the city of New York, held May 8th inst., the recent decease of PROFESSOR JOSEPH M. SMITH of the Faculty, having been brought to the notice of the Board, the following resolutions were adopted.

*Whereas*, In the dispensation of an all-wise Providence, JOSEPH M. SMITH, M. D., late a member of the Faculty of this College, was removed by death on the 22d April, ultimo :

Therefore, *Resolved* that this Board, while they deeply deplore the loss of a Professor of such distinguished excellence and ability, cannot forbear expressing their gratitude to God that, in His mercy, the College was permitted to enjoy for so many years his valuable and uninterrupted services.

*Resolved*, That the uniform ability and fidelity with which for nearly forty years, Dr. Smith performed the functions of Professor, first of Theory and Practice of Physic and Clinical Medicine, and subsequently of Materia Medica and Clinical Medicine, have contributed in an eminent degree to the steadily advancing reputation and prosperity of the College.

*Resolved*, That not only the professional eminence attained and so long enjoyed by Dr. Smith commanded our respect and confidence, as it did that of the Medical profession and community at large, but his amiable and dignified manners and christian excellence of character won our affection and personal attachment.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be entered on the Minutes and communicated by the Registrar to the family of the deceased, with the assurance of our heart-felt sympathy.

NEW YORK, *May* 15, 1866.

GURDON BUCK, *Registrar*.

## APPENDIX.

### NEW YORK HOSPITAL.

At a meeting of the Board of Governors held this day it was

*Resolved*, unanimously, that the Board of Governors of the Society of the New York Hospital are deeply sensible of the great loss sustained by this Institution, in the death of Dr. JOSEPH MATHER SMITH, one of the attending physicians for above thirty-seven years, during which long period he devoted faithfully and conscientiously to the service, that eminent medical skill and sound judgment which placed him in the highest rank of his profession; and exhibited in all his relations with those connected with its government or care, those amiable and excellent qualities which endeared him to all who knew him.

*Resolved*, That the Governors sympathize with the affliction of his family in their bereavement; and that a copy of these Resolutions be transmitted to his widow and family.

Extract from the Minutes,

June 5, 1866.

D. COLDEN MURRAY, *Secretary*.

---

### AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

At the seventeenth Annual Session held in Baltimore, May 1866, the following resolutions were offered by Dr. Alfred C. Post of New York, and unanimously adopted.

*Resolved*, That the Association has heard with sincere regret of the death of its late distinguished member, JOSEPH M. SMITH, M. D. of New York.

*Resolved*, That we cherish his memory as that of a learned and skillful cultivator of medical science, an able and successful teacher and writer, an upright and honorable man, and a patriotic and public-spirited citizen.

*Resolved*, That the Secretary communicate to the family of the deceased, an expression of our sympathy with them in their bereavement.

June 22, 1866.

WM. B. ATKINSON, *Permanent Secretary*.

## NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE.

At a special meeting of the New York Academy of Medicine held April 24th, 1866, the following Resolutions were offered by Dr. E. Delafield, and unanimously adopted by the Academy.

*Resolved*, That the Academy has received the announcement of the death of Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH, formerly President, and for many years one of the most active and distinguished members of their Association, with the deepest concern.

*Resolved*, That although after a life passed in the exercise of his professional duties, in a manner always honorable to himself and acceptable to those to whom he ministered, the loss to his family and friends must still be severe and their grief heart-felt, they have just ground for consolation in the reflection that the well-spent life of their departed friend was only terminated at a period not very often reached by our race.

*Resolved*, That apart from the high professional reputation always enjoyed by Dr. Smith, both as a Practitioner of Medicine, and as one of the ablest teachers of his day; his excellent private character; his many Christian virtues; his uniform courtesy and honorable intercourse with his fellows have endeared him to the entire profession of the city, as well as to a large circle of private friends.

*Resolved*, That while the Academy deeply sympathize with his family in their bereavement, they, with all his other friends, feel confident that when time has softened the sadness of parting, the memory of his life will be an enduring source of comfort and pleasure to those from whom he has been taken away.

*Resolved*, That the members of this Academy will attend the funeral of the deceased, and that the usual badge of mourning be worn on the occasion.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these Resolutions be presented to the family of our late member, signed by the officers of the Academy.

JAMES ANDERSON, M.D. *President.*

W. M. CHAMBERLAIN, *Recording Secretary.*

## COUNCIL OF HYGIENE, CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION.

The Council of Hygiene met pursuant to call May 31st, 1866. Professor Parker in the chair, and Dr. E. Harris, Secretary, pro tem. Present, Drs. Parker, Doremus, Bulkley, Anderson, Taylor, Wood, Post, Draper, and Harris.

The following action was taken upon the decease of Professor JOSEPH M. SMITH, late President of the Council of Hygiene.

*Resolved*, That the Council has received with deep regret the intelligence of the decease of our Associate and President, Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH, one of the earliest members of our Board, and who has presided over us since our organization.

*Resolved*, That while the profession mourns the loss of one of its brightest ornaments, both as a man and as a physician, we would gratefully put on record the acknowledgment of our great and lasting indebtedness to him for his valuable contributions to sanitary science, and his numerous and constant labors in behalf of the cause in which he was engaged.

*Resolved*, That at the same time we tender to the family of the deceased our condolence on this occasion, we would rejoice with them that their loss has been his gain, and that he was spared so long to enjoy the love and confidence of his brethren.

ELISHA HARRIS, M. D.,  
*Secretary pro tem.*

WILLARD PARKER, M. D.,  
*Vice-President, Chairman.*

*Rooms of Council of Hygiene and Public Health, June 7, 1866.*

---

 NEW YORK MEDICAL JOURNAL ASSOCIATION.

Dr. O. White having been appointed a committee to draft resolutions expressive of the feelings of the Board of Trustees at the loss of their associate, Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH, by death, submitted the following:

As one of the chairs around this board has been rendered tenantless by the death of our associate, whom we all so loved and respected, Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH; and as we feel that in the death of this venerable man, one of the most distinguished mem-

bers of our profession has left us forever, it seems to your Committee both decorous and proper; that this Board should give expression to its grief at the loss it has sustained, and to its respect for the memory of the deceased, therefore,

*Resolved*, That in the death of Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH, one of the Board of Trustees of this Institution, we have been called on to part with a wise counsellor, a most courteous gentleman, a public-spirited and patriotic citizen, an accomplished physician, and a lovely Christian character.

*Resolved*, That in common with our professional brethren, we shall ever venerate his memory as a man without a vice, and cease not to remember, with pride and gratification, that to our profession belonged one of his gentleness and amiability, his wisdom and modesty, his learning and conscientiousness.

*Resolved*, That without having left a blot upon his escutcheon during a long life, our accomplished friend and associate has gone down to the grave ripe in years and reputation, and with the sincere love and respect of all who knew him.

*Resolved*, That in our sympathy with his family at the irreparable loss they have sustained in the death of their venerated head, we would fain direct them for consolation to the retrospect of his spotless life, and to his confiding reliance on a merciful Saviour for a blissful immortality.

*Resolved*, That this expression of the heartfelt respect of the Board, for the memory of their distinguished associate, be entered at length in the record of their proceedings.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the family of the deceased.

F. A. BURRALL, M. D., *Secretary*.

NEW YORK, May 30, 1866.

---

#### MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK.

At a meeting of the Society, held May 7, 1866, the following preamble and resolutions, reported by a committee of which Dr. William Detmold was chairman, were unanimously adopted :

*Whereas*, Death has removed from among us our beloved and revered colleague, Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH; therefore,

*Resolved*, That while we bow in devout submission to this dispensation of Providence, we deeply mourn the loss of one to whom many of us have looked as a beloved preceptor, most of us as a tried and safe counsellor in difficulties, and all of us as a bright example of a distinguished and good Christian physician.

*Resolved*, That while we tender to the bereaved family the assurance of our respectful and sincere sympathy, we may be permitted, for their comfort and consolation, to point to the long and well-spent life of the departed, the like of which is vouchsafed to few men; for he has died ripe in years and rich in the love of his fellow-men.

*Resolved*, That we will ever cherish the memory of Dr. JOSEPH M. SMITH.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family of the deceased.

ELLSWORTH ELIOT, M. D., *Recording Secretary*.

June 5, 1866.

---

#### NORTHERN DISPENSARY RESOLUTIONS.

Passed by the Board of Trustees of the Northern Dispensary of the city of New York at their stated meeting held May 4, 1866, in reference to the death of Professor JOSEPH M. SMITH.

*Whereas*, An All-Wise God has removed Professor JOSEPH M. SMITH from his sphere of usefulness at a ripe and mature age, therefore,

*Resolved*, That the Board of Trustees of the Northern Dispensary, deeply deplore his death, realizing that the Institution of which he had long been an active consulting physician, has lost one of its most useful and beneficent friends, whose knowledge and experience were ever at their disposal, and whose purity of life and affability of manners were "epistles to be read of all men."

*Resolved*, That the Board of Trustees condole with the family

in their bereavement of husband and father, trusting that their loss is his gain.

*Resolved*, That this preamble and resolutions be entered on the minutes of the Board, and a copy forwarded to the afflicted family.

J. HARSEN RHOADES, *Secretary*.













