Memoir of
John W. Francis - Jun.

MEMOIR

OF

JOHN W. FRANCIS, JUN.

FROM THE NEW YORK MEDICAL TIMES.

Died, in this city, of typhoid fever, on the 20th January, JOHN W. FRANCIS, jun., æt. 22.

It is the *promise*, whose fruition is cut off, which usually induces and justifies grief for the death of the young, beyond the circle of their kindred and near friends; but in the loss of John W. Francis, jun., it is rare maturity, whose departure we lament. His principles, habits of thought, and individuality of purpose, were as clearly fixed and as rationally founded, as if forty, instead of twenty-two years, comprised the period of his life. Of all professions, the medical demands this firmness, self-reliance, and harmony of character. A resolute will and a calm judgment are its primary and essential qualifications. These our young friend possessed in an eminent and, as far our observation extends, in an unprecedented degree, taking into consideration his youth. Of a vigorous physical constitution, the solidity of his mind corresponded with his remarkably strong and harmonious organization. Habituated from boyhood to the society of men older than himself, and living in the midst of an intellectual domestic circle, his tastes were early molded by familiarity with literary and scientific conversation. The distinguished

professional rank of his father, and the access thus constantly afforded him to the counsel and companionship of leading physicians, both native and foreign, a love of reading, facility in discussion, a thirst for knowledge, and reverence for genius, were among the first lessons taught him by instinct and association. In his school and college days, these singular advantages were realized in a desultory way. Besides the special studies incident to that period, he carried on an extensive and thorough course of reading in standard English literature, and became, not only acquainted, but imbued with the best authors of his vernacular tongue. He examined the most reliable critics in each department, and asked the opinions of more advanced lovers of these masters of thought and language, with an intelligent zeal that never failed to elicit sympathetic and discriminating replies. His academical training at Columbia College embraced, besides the classics, in which he was proficient, the acquisition of the modern languages, which he read with facility, and in some instances spoke with freedom and correctness. His literary equipment being thus complete, it was a disciplined and a liberally furnished, as well as a resolute mind, that he brought to the study of medicine. To this pursuit he was led by filial devotion. To share and relieve his father's professional toil, was the great motive and aim of his life; and in order to realize this cherished object, he not only attended the lectures of the University Medical School, and passed stated examinations, but assumed duties in the Hospital highly responsible and absorbing, took charge of poor patients, whom his purse often supplied, while his skillful care relieved. Thus were crowded into each day's routine, the studies of the neophyte and the cares of the practitioner, until both frame and brain were overwrought, and fatigue and exposure opened the way for the insidious disease which at once deprived an affectionate family of its idol, society of a benefactor and ornament, and many hearts of a beloved and respected friend. Are we not strictly correct, then, in declaring that it is maturity rather than promise that we mourn? To those who knew and loved him, it is needless to say that a manly, loyal, self-devoted, and richly endowed spirit has left the earth. To parents mourning such a son, man can utter but feeble consolation. To the religion he consistently professed, must they look for solace; but to the young who have adopted the same professional studies, we offer his example, with tearful admiration.

Never has it been our lot to witness more impressive obsequies. The comrades of the lamented son and the friends of the eminent father, being drawn together by a mutual sorrow, formed an assemblage, both in its char-

acter and its demeanor, such as has been seldom paralleled in this metropolis. This was a spontaneous tribute to departed excellence and rare affliction, as the time allowed was too brief for the usual funeral notice. The sad procession left the house of Dr. Francis, No. 1 Bond Street, soon after 1 o'clock, on Monday, January 22d instant, preceded by the Rev. Drs. Hawks and Neville. The pall-bearers were, Charles H. Ward, Henry T. Tuckerman, A. H. Wenzler, J. Henry, jun., Frederick G. Swan, Otis D. Swan, Dr. Errick Parmley, and W. Jephson Taylor. The physicians of the deceased, Dr. Valentine Mott, Dr. R. S. Kissam, and Dr. F. Campbell Stewart, followed the immediate family. His classmates of Columbia College, and of the University Medical School, forming a large array, occupied the side body pews in St. Thomas' Church, where the funeral *cortege* was met by the Rev. E. M. P. Wells, of Boston, who, as a guest in the family, had ministered most acceptably in the house of mourning. Nearly every member of the New York Academy of Medicine was present. We noticed several of our leading merchants, whose avocations seldom permit their absence from business at such an hour of the day; also President King, of Columbia College, Governor Fish, Rev. Dr. Bethune, Rev. Dr. Spring, Mr. W. B. Astor, Mr. Cogswell, and other distinguished laymen, with a large attendance of ladies, friends of the family.

The attention of this large and varied assemblage was devout and tearful. The service was read by Dr. Hawks and Dr. Neville. An appropriate and touching hymn was sung, after which the remains were conveyed to Greenwood Cemetery, accompanied by the nearest relations and friends. Since the funeral, the graduates and students of the two institutions with which John W. Francis, jun., was connected, have held meetings, and passed resolutions expressive of their deep sense of his rare worth and high attainments, and of heartfelt sympathy with his bereaved family. Similar tributes, though in a less public manner, have been offered to his memory by the professors under whose teachings he was instructed.