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ARTICLE I.

A MEDICAL HISTORY

OF THE COUNTY OF FRANKLIN, IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

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[Read at the Annual Meeting, May 25, 1842.]

GENTLEMEN,

I ought, perhaps, to apologize for appearing before you at this time, for the first time since I was elected a Fellow of this Society in the year 1817, a period of twenty-five years, or a quarter of a century; I certainly ought to feel myself peculiarly honored in the choice you have made of me for your speaker on this anniversary, after this apparent neglect.

Although it has never been convenient for me to attend your annual meetings, I trust I have not been wanting in activity and zeal, in the promotion of the grand and philanthropic objects of this highly useful and respectable Society. I trust I have been behind but few of the members of this Institution in my at-

tempts to advance the great objects of it. As a counsellor and censor, which offices I have held through your politeness for many successive years, I have endeavored to discharge my duties with fidelity and zeal, and as a member of various committees upon which you have appointed me, I have also labored to subserve the interests of the Society. In my offices of a public teacher of Medicine in the States of Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and New Hampshire, I have held up the Society as a pattern for imitation, and have always spoken of it as decidedly the best model of a Medical Society of any in the Union. This opinion I have also expressed to many distinguished medical gentlemen in various parts of our country and abroad. I have also used my best endeavors to induce most of our respectable medical men in various parts of the State to unite themselves with us. I trust I have not been an inactive observer of the momentous concerns of our Association.

You have already been presented with a history of the Society in the interesting and instructive address of Dr. Alden, and from various other sources. I shall not, therefore, enter into the statistics of it. I cannot, however, refrain from mentioning a few facts, showing the state of the Society, from the period of its establishment in 1781 to the year 1817, when I became a Fellow, and from that period to the commencement of the year 1842.

Before the year 1817 there had been admitted two hundred and ninety-nine Fellows, twenty-six of whom removed from the State, and thirty-five honorary mem-

bers, making in all three hundred and forty-four. Of the fellows, sixty-nine have died, and fifteen honorary members who have died previous to that time, making in all eighty-four, which, deducted from three hundred and forty-four, leaves two hundred and sixty. Thirty-eight, who were admitted previous to the year 1817, have resigned, and the twenty-six who have removed, leaves the number now residing in the State, who were elected before that time, one hundred and ninety-six.

The whole number of Fellows who have been admitted into the Society since its organization, to the last anniversary in 1841, including ninety-eight honorary members, is twelve hundred and twenty-eight. Three hundred and forty-six, including thirty-nine honorary members, have died. Forty-seven have resigned, and one hundred and twenty-seven have removed from the State, making in all five hundred and ten, which, deducted from twelve hundred and twenty-eight, leaves seven hundred and eighteen regular members now living in Massachusetts. According to Hayward's Massachusetts Gazetteer, published in 1835, the whole number of physicians in the State that year was seven hundred and eighty. His list was somewhat imperfect, and I think the enumeration too small. From some observation on this subject, I think there may be about one thousand at this time in the State, besides empirics. This would leave but two hundred and eighty-two, who do not belong to the Society. This certainly shows a very flattering state of our Association.

Of those who have died, one was 100 years of age; thirty-one were over 80; fifty between 70 and 80; thirty-eight between 60 and 70; thirty-two between 40 and 50; thirty-two between 30 and 40; and six between 20 and 30.

Among the retired members is Dr. Oliver Partridge, of Stockbridge, now living, near the age of 91, and in tolerably vigorous health. He still, occasionally, practises our profession. I received a letter of consultation from him on a medical case a short time ago. He united himself with this Society in the year 1785, and resigned in 1803. Such instances of longevity are rare, and worthy of record. Others may be found of a similar nature.

I might dwell with pleasure upon this interesting topic, but another theme must now engage our attention. I have selected a slight medical history of the county of Franklin, in this State, as the subject of the ensuing discourse. It may appear trivial to some; but, in the language of the late eccentric, but learned Dr. Mitchell, of New York, "Chorographical accounts of particular regions and districts are valuable portions of knowledge. They are the parts which by addition make up the whole. The modern term of statistics has been applied to this subject, meaning thereby a description of a place in its actual condition, or just as it is." I may add such as it has heretofore been. The ocean consists of drops, and minute portions of any thing constitute the grand whole. If every physician in our country would give a medical history of the town in which he resides, we should have a much

more perfect and interesting professional account than we now possess.

The county of Franklin, you are aware, lies near the north-western border of the State. Its dimensions are small, as it contains but twenty-six towns, not far from six miles square upon an average. By the late census, it contained not far from thirty thousand inhabitants. With the exception of a few intervals on the banks of our rivers, the surface of the country is rough, and some of the spurs of Hoosac mountain are here, probably, from ten to fourteen hundred feet high. On the banks of Connecticut and Deerfield rivers, which run a considerable distance in the county, and particularly in the valleys of these rivers, and some of their tributary streams, the soil is principally alluvial. The rest of the county is mountainous, and the soil chiefly of a granitic character.

Connecticut river passes directly through the centre of the county, and in all its sinuosities and windings it washes its banks for about twenty-five miles on each side of it. On the banks of Deerfield river, also, at Deerfield, is an extensive alluvial tract of several thousand acres, which was formerly the bed of a lake. There are, also, several other alluvions on the banks of the smaller streams. The whole of the alluvion in the county of Franklin, however, does not, probably, exceed one thirtieth-part of the area of the soil within her borders. Yet, these alluvial tracts are vastly more densely populated, than the more elevated portions of the county. The rest of the county is on elevated hills and mountains. The diseases of the

hills and of the valleys are somewhat different in their character. Hence, the reason of the above apparently minute description.

Climate has an immense influence upon the character of diseases. In the climate of this county we have all the varieties which are found in the northern and southern sections of the Union. The thermometer, according to journals which have been kept in various parts of the United States, in Canada, and in this county, shows that we have as high and as low degrees of heat and cold as are to be found in Florida, or Nova Scotia, though by no means of so long continuance. I have seen a good thermometer stand in Deerfield, in the shade, as high as 96° above zero, and as low as 25° below that point. These degrees, however, are not commonly indicated by the mercury. It is not very common in any season for the mercury to rise much above 90° above zero, or to sink much below 25° below that point. The tables (which I append in a note) will show the mean degrees of heat and cold in Deerfield for one year. (See Note A.) Deerfield lies in nearly a central position in the county, but as the notes were taken in the valley, they may indicate too great a degree of cold, as it has been shown that valleys are colder than mountainous regions,—though the excess of winds on the mountains often makes those elevations appear to be colder than the thermometer actually indicates. Deerfield is in latitude $42^{\circ} 32'$; longitude $72^{\circ} 41'$ west from Greenwich.

During the latter part of spring, the whole of summer, and the early part of autumn, the climate here is delightful; and a summer residence upon our mountains might be made more salubrious and pleasant for the invalid, with affections of the lungs, than at our most celebrated watering-places, or even at the thermal springs in Virginia. I often recommend such retreats to the consumptive from our cities, and I have seen much amendment in such cases from inhaling the pure air of the Hoosac and its spurs. Frosts usually occur here about the middle of September, and continue in some parts of the county till the middle of May. They are rarely, however, severe in either of these months. Winter rarely commences with severity before the middle of December, and our snow usually leaves us about the middle of March. I have, however, known snow to fall on the last week in November, and to lie on the ground till the middle of April. Sleighs have run here in six successive months. This, however, is a rare occurrence. More frequently we do not have three months of good sleighing in the course of a year. I have known people cross Deerfield river upon the ice for six months in succession,—while, generally, we cannot cross it in this way more than two months in the year. The subjoined table will show the quantity of snow which has fallen in 19 years in Deerfield. Probably more has fallen upon our western mountains. (See Note B.)

Climate, too, has much to do, probably, in the production of medicinal plants, as well as of other

vegetable substances. If it is true, that the season is not sufficiently long for the perfection of some of our poisonous plants, as well as those whose properties are not deleterious; it is equally true, that very many valuable medicinal plants arrive at a great degree of perfection even in our variable climate. Already great discoveries have been made in the vegetable *Materia Medica* of Massachusetts. Much yet remains to be done; and the future investigator of this important department of science will be stimulated to increased exertions in this fascinating branch of knowledge, by the discoveries which he cannot fail of making in the course of his researches and inquiries. In the language of our great exemplar in the science of medicine, the late lamented Dr. Rush, "I have no doubt but there are many hundred undiscovered medicinal plants, which now exhale invaluable healing virtues in the desert air." The county of Franklin is prolific in vegetable substances employed as medicines. I hardly know a more interesting botanical field than Deerfield meadows. They are the basin which receives the deposits and the wash of Deerfield river and its tributary streams which flow from Hoosac mountain; and leave the seeds of various plants from that almost alpine region of country, to germinate in the prolific soil of our fertile alluvion. Our mountains, too, are rich in botanical productions. We have valuable *cathartics*, in the *Eupatorium perfoliatum*, *Juglans cinerea*, *Rhamnus catharticus*, and several species of *Convolvulus*. *Emetics* in *Sanguinaria Canadensis*, *Apocynum androsæmifolium* and *cannabinum*, *Lobelia*

inflata, &c., &c. Among our astringents may be mentioned the *Alnus serrulata*, the *Erigeon Canadense*, *Geranium maculatum*, *Lycopus Virginianus*, *Quercus*, of which, we have a number of species, *Spiræa tormentosa*, &c. We have no purer demulcents in the *Materia Medica* than those obtained from the *Ulmus Americana*, the *Viola ovata*, the *Osmunda regalis*, &c., &c. Some of our most valuable diuretics are the *Eupatorium pupureum*, *Galium aparine* and *asprellum*, *Gaultheria procumbens*, *Mitchella repens*, *Chimaphila umbellata*, and many others, too numerous to mention. I could occupy many hours in the detail of them, but shall merely refer to a more particular enumeration of them in a note. (Note C.)

Diseases, Epidemics, &c.—The county of Franklin was thinly inhabited for nearly three quarters of a century, after the first settlers planted themselves upon its soil. Deerfield was first settled in 1672, and was incorporated in 1682. The pioneers of the forest were so much annoyed by the Indians that they hardly obtained permanent foothold here before the commencement of the year 1700. At the time of the destruction of the town by the French and Indians, in 1703–4, there were four hundred and eighty inhabitants in this town. About one hundred and sixty of these were either killed or carried away captive to Canada. Settlements in this section of the country progressed tardily after that gloomy period. From 1682 to 1753 there were but two other towns incorporated in this county, viz., Northfield in 1715, and Sunderland in 1718, and there were but few in-

habitants in either of these places. From 1753 to 1775 but twelve other towns were incorporated in this county. I believe my grandfather, Dr. Thomas Williams, was the first regular physician who ever established himself in this county. He settled in Deerfield in the year 1739, since which time, himself, his son, Dr. William Stoddard Williams, and myself have practised the profession of medicine in this town for a period of more than one hundred years.

I am not able to give an exact chronological history of our epidemics since the year 1735. That year, I have learned from veracious accounts, the scarlet fever, which so extensively ravaged the coasts and interior towns in New England, and was so fatal as to be called "the plague among children," prevailed here to a considerable extent. It was again rife here in 1742. The winter of 1740-41 was the coldest ever known in America. A great many cattle perished from scarcity of fodder. Sickly seasons have often occurred after severe alternations of weather. I have no very accurate data upon which I can absolutely depend in relation to the dates of epidemic diseases here for a considerable period of time. As nearly as I can obtain information, the measles and canker-rash prevailed here in 1750. The dysentery prevailed here in 1751. The canker-rash was also prevalent here in 1756. The lung fever, as it was called, prevailed here in 1775. Although it is probable that many cases of this complaint occurred here almost every year, yet I shall only mention the times when it existed here with the greatest violence. The

treatment of fever now is very different from what it was seventy-five years ago. It is now a very uncommon thing to see a case of fever run from sixty to ninety days before it comes to a crisis, as it often did then. Instead of smothering patients under bed-clothes, and confining them in close apartments, excluding every particle of air, and, as much as possible, of light, as was the practice at that time, we allow them the greatest abundance of air, and give them a liberal allowance of cold water. Mercury was not then employed in such quantities as at the present time. In consequence of the improvements which have been made in the practice in fevers, they are not now, as formerly, considered to be the greatest outlets of human life. Fevers, however, on account of their causes being in a great measure removed, are not so common now, as formerly.

In 1777, the small-pox prevailed in the town of Deerfield, and a pest-house, or hospital, was established in a remote part of the town. It was supposed that it originated or was taken from some of the troops of the American revolutionary army, as they were often passing through this town, and as that complaint was almost constantly prevalent among them. The dysentery also prevailed extensively here at the same time, and also at Greenfield, Shelburne and Conway. At the latter place there were 73 deaths from it that season. Conway, at that time, could not have contained more than 1000 inhabitants. Willard, in his History of Greenfield, says, "In 1777 a great sickness prevailed here (Greenfield) and at Shel-

burne ; fifty died in Greenfield, and eighty in Shelburne." The population of Greenfield at that time was, probably, about 900, and of Shelburne, about 700 ; so that it, indeed, might be called "a pestilence which walked at noonday." The canker-rash prevailed extensively in Deerfield, and in some other towns in this county, from 1792 to 1795. Intermittent fevers also prevailed in Deerfield about the year 1794, in consequence of the erection of a dam across Deerfield river at Stebbins's meadow. This complaint had prevailed extensively in this town for several previous years, but in consequence of the drying up of the marshes by cultivating the soil, no cases have originated here since the commencement of the 19th century. In 1789, '90, '91, and '92, the scarlet fever and canker-rash prevailed at Rowe. The canker-rash prevailed in Hawley in 1794, and in 1830. It also prevailed in the adjoining town of Plainfield, in 1794, and in Buckland, to a considerable extent, in 1838. The dysentery prevailed extensively in Warwick, in 1822 and 1824. Eleven died of this complaint in the former year, and sixteen in the latter.

Since the commencement of the 19th century, I have been able to procure rather more definite information in relation to the epidemics of the county,—though I am still deficient in data in relation to many of them. In 1802, the malignant epidemic dysentery prevailed at Greenfield and in Shelburne. The population of Greenfield at that time was not far from 1300. The whole number of deaths there that year was 68 ; fifty-seven died of the dysentery, and most

of these were young people. The population of Shelburne at that time was not far from 1100. Thirty-four died that year in that town. The dysentery also prevailed extensively at Springfield. The mortality was so great that season from the dysentery, in Greenfield, that the stores were generally shut, and business of almost all kinds was suspended. There were scarcely well people enough to take care of the sick. Travellers avoided the place as much as possible,—and many who passed through the town tied mufflers over their faces to prevent inhaling infectious matter. Several families removed from the town, and particularly their children. Willard says, “One hundred and one persons went away to other places in consequence of the sickness; and at one period there was not an inhabited house in the place where there was not one or more sick or dead. Five coffins were made on one Sabbath day alone! Some families lost five, some three, and some lost all their children. The first death occurred July 18th. Doctors Wells and Stone attributed the sickness to a scarcity of fruit so necessary in hot weather, to correct the bile, and to a putrid atmosphere occasioned by a great flood in June, that left stagnant water on the low lands, which by the intense heat of the weather, and being blown hither by the southerly winds, affected the air so sensibly as that its insalubrity might plainly be perceived by any one walking abroad in the evening.” On the 16th of August the wind blew up from the north-west, the rain fell copiously, the heat was mitigated, and most of the sick were recovering.

In the spring of 1803 the measles prevailed at Deerfield as an epidemic. It was followed in the summer by one of the most severe and mortal dysenteries which ever prevailed in this part of the world, in proportion to the number of inhabitants. It prevailed also in Conway and Northfield almost to as great an extent as at Deerfield, and likewise at Northampton, in the county of Hampshire, about sixteen miles south. I am not able to obtain the number of deaths in the two latter places, from it; but in Conway the whole number of deaths in 1803 was eighty-four, sixty of which were from the dysentery. Conway then contained not far from two thousand inhabitants. Why it should have prevailed in Greenfield, Shelburne and Springfield, and not in Deerfield, Conway, Northfield, and Northampton the same years is to me inexplicable. The weather in 1803 was hot and sultry, attended with a great many very severe thunder showers. It commenced at Deerfield in the month of June, much earlier in the season than that complaint usually begins, and did not terminate till after the severe frosts in November. What was very singular was, that almost every patient who was attacked with the dysentery, after having had the measles, died of that complaint. The disease in Deerfield was confined principally to the main street, then containing, probably, about three hundred and fifty inhabitants. There were but few cases in the remote parts of the town. The number of inhabitants that year in the whole of the town was, probably, not far from 1400. There were sixty-five deaths in this

town that year; and fifty-four, at least, of these were from the dysentery. As in Greenfield the year before, whole families sent their children abroad, and but few of them, who were thus sent away, were attacked with the complaint.

When we reflect that the disorder did not spread much out of the main street, and that it was confined almost to a population of not over five hundred, we come to the conclusion, that it was almost as fatal as the yellow fever in Philadelphia, in the year 1793, in proportion to the number of inhabitants. Its ravages were more fatal among infants than adults. It was not uncommon to see two and sometimes three funerals a day in one street, for several weeks in succession. It was of a very malignant and typhoid character, and seemed to yield to no remedies. I was then a youth, and, of course, was not much acquainted with the details of practice in this complaint at that time. I understood, however, that the mercurial practice was the most effectual.

In the latter part of the summer and beginning of the autumn of 1807, the *spotted fever*, as it was then called, prevailed at Deerfield and at Greenfield. It commenced in a poor family at the west part of the town of Deerfield, in an isolated situation. There were various opinions as to the origin of it. Many supposed that one of the inmates of that family brought the disease from Hartford, where he had recently been, and where it was said the complaint prevailed. He had the disease rather lightly and recovered. Others believed that it originated in the

family, which was dirty and poor. The house was old, and the floor loose. It was said that they were in the habit of raising a board in the floor, and throwing the offals and bones of their meals under it, and leaving them there to putrify. I shall not undertake to decide the question; but, certain it is, that several of the family had the complaint, and died in quick succession. Soon after, the disorder made its appearance in a neighboring family about a hundred rods off. Both these families, and all in which the fever prevailed, lived upon the side of a gently elevated mountain several hundred feet above the bed of Deerfield river, and in almost isolated situations.

To show the rapidity of the action of the complaint, I will mention the fact that my father was attending upon an obstetric case in that neighborhood, when one of the attendants, an aged lady, was taken unwell, and went home. She grew worse and sent for him, but he could not be spared. He went to her as soon as he could be released, which was in the course of an hour or two. When he arrived, the old lady was in the agonies of death, and she very soon expired. Very soon after, a little grand-daughter of the old lady was attacked in my father's arms, with the same complaint, and in a few minutes it died. While the attendants were laying out the old lady and child, the mother of the child, and daughter of the old lady, was attacked with the same complaint, and in less than twelve hours from the first attack of this fever in this family, the grandmother, the mother, and the grand-daughter lay corpses in the same room! The

complaint spread in a few families, when it was arrested, and never more made its appearance there. A few cases of it, however, occurred at the northwest part of the town, in Greenfield, and in various other parts of the county the next year, and was quite mortal. It soon subsided, and afterwards, for a few years, we had only a few scattered cases. It prevailed, however, in Worcester county, and several other parts of Massachusetts with a good deal of violence. Since then there has been but little of it in the State.

Early in the winter of 1814, a malignant epidemic commenced in this county, and prevailed in most of the towns in it, and in fact throughout the country. The common name for it was lung-fever, war-fever, &c. The technical name for it was pneumonia typhoides, but perhaps it was erroneously so called, as many of the patients had no affection of the lungs at all. The fever originated in the army on the western frontier in the year 1812 or '13, and, on that account, it was by many called the war-fever. This complaint was confined almost exclusively to old people; and it is a fact worth noticing, so far as my observation extended, not a person over 60 years of age, ever recovered from an attack of it. It was extremely mortal, and the symptoms rapidly ran on to typhus, and speedily terminated the life of the sufferer. Twenty-eight people died in the town of Deerfield, in the short space of two months. As the weather grew mild, the complaint in some measure subsided. A few scattering cases occurred in 1815.

In 1831 and '32, the scarlet fever was very prevalent in Greenfield, Deerfield, and various other parts of the county; and it will be seen by observations which I have made a short time since, that it has prevailed in scattered cases throughout the county both before and since. In some towns it has even prevailed as an epidemic. In the above-mentioned years, and in some others, it assumed a very malignant character. It was confined very generally to children. In 1831 there were fifty deaths in Deerfield, principally from this complaint.

In 1831, the typhus fever, according to Dr. Dorrance, prevailed extensively in Sunderland. This town, lying on the east bank of the Connecticut river, then contained about seven hundred inhabitants. The town had been unusually healthy up to this period, when, in the early part of winter, the scarlet fever and hooping cough prevailed extensively there. Soon after, typhus fever commenced, and up to November, sixty cases occurred in that neighborhood. Six weeks after, the same fever again commenced and spread rapidly, until "one hundred, principally in the village of fifty houses and perhaps three hundred inhabitants, were the subjects of it. Of three hundred cases, nine proved fatal." Fevers of a typhoid character have prevailed sporadically, and in some cases almost as epidemics, in various parts of the county at different times, and what is very astonishing, within a few years they have been more prevalent upon our elevated mountains than in the valleys.

The dysentery prevailed in several towns in this county in the year 1841. The season had been unusually dry a long while before, and the first cases which occurred came on about the first of August. It seemed to follow the courses of streams, and was most severe in the towns of Deerfield and Greenfield. There were nearly one hundred cases in each of these towns, and these were confined almost exclusively to the town streets, so called, in both these places. There were but few deaths, and it is supposed by the physicians who attended the complaint, that the astringent method of treating it had much efficacy in arresting the ravages of death from it. After the first evacuations, it was not uncommon to administer from 20 to 60 grains of the sugar of lead in a day, and from 5 to 10 grains of opium, with decidedly beneficial effects.

These are the principal epidemics which have prevailed in the county to any great extent, so far as I can ascertain. Undoubtedly some have been overlooked, for the want of more precise information. The most prevalent complaints in the county are pneumonic affections, which often terminate in consumption; fevers, principally of the typhoid character, especially upon our mountains, and particularly in the cold months. Croup is a common complaint among infants, especially in the valleys. Bowel complaints, such as diarrhœa, dysentery, cholera morbus, &c. prevail in summer. I cannot enter into a detail of our complaints, but must refer to the subjoined bills of mortality, for many towns in the county, for particulars. I have taken great pains to procure these

bills for some time past, but I have not been able to procure as complete returns as I could wish. I have written to several physicians, clergymen, and other gentlemen in the county, for returns of deaths in the several towns in which they reside, for the purpose of giving the average mortality of the county. In several instances I have received documents of great value from them on this subject, and I feel myself under peculiar obligations to them, for forwarding to me the statements of the deaths in their several towns, with their remarks. I am aware that the details from each town are attended with great, and, in many instances, with protracted labor. I hope they will accept my grateful thanks for their kind services. I have personally visited many of the towns, and examined the town or parish registers, and copied these bills at length for this purpose. I have spared no pains to give full returns for the county, but still they are imperfect, as I have not been able to procure a list of more than 15 towns. (See Note D.) The task of procuring the facts for the tables has not been the greatest. That of arranging them, and particularly that of drawing the average mortality of each town, to adapt it to the county, has been attended with more labor, than those who have never pursued such investigations, can readily imagine. After all, the result for the county may not, possibly, be true to a fraction.

I have adopted a process somewhat like the following in the tables of mortality of the towns from which I have received data. I have procured the amount of the deaths in all these towns, and then divided the sums

by the number of towns. For instance I take the town of Deerfield for forty-nine years, and divide the number of deaths into decennial periods. The deaths in these forty-nine years were 950, which average 19 and 38 hundredths a year. The population, from 1787 to 1797, the first decennial period, was about 1330. The deaths in this period were 116, or, on an average, 11 6-tenths a year. Population in 1800, 1537. Deaths between 1797 and 1807, 205, or 20 and 5-tenths a year. Population in 1810, 1570. Deaths between 1807 and 1817, 225, or 22 and 5-tenths a year. Population in 1820, about 1892. Deaths between 1817 and 1827, 169, or 16 and 9-tenths a year. Population in 1830, 2003. Deaths from 1827 to 1836 (nine years), 231, or 25 and 6-tenths a year. For the first ten years, there was one death in one hundred and fourteen inhabitants. For the second ten, one in seventy-five. For the third ten, one in seventy. For the fourth ten, one in one hundred and ten. For the fifth, one in seventy-eight. Average for the forty-nine years, one in 86 inhabitants. In this way I make the average mortality for all the towns which I have heard from in the county to be about one in 80 inhabitants. The lowest mortality in any town, as shown by the tables, was about one in ninety-two, and the highest about one in sixty. This was, however, less than a decennial period. Had it been extended to four or five such periods, there can be no doubt that the result would have been more favorable. That is considered to be a healthy country where the average mortality is one

in sixty. According to this, Franklin county much more than averages the healthy standard.

From all the towns heard from in this county, eleven have died over 100 years of age. One of these lived to the age of 117, and one to that of 106. In nine towns, in forty-four years, twenty-one have died between the ages of 95 and 100. Sixty-six between 90 and 100, and in the same number of towns for the same period, three hundred and thirty-six were between 80 and 90 years of age.

It has been questioned by some whether pulmonary consumption is actually on the increase in the county, or not. In some towns it will be perceived by reference to the tables, that it is increasing among us, while in some, perhaps, it is not. In the town of Deerfield, for instance, with an average population for 55 years of about 1500, there have been 144 deaths from it; while in Conway, an adjoining town, for about the same period and about the same number of inhabitants, there have been but seventy-six deaths from it. Some of my correspondents in the western part of the county say it is certainly on the increase with them. Dr. Gould, of Rowe, says, there were in that town ten deaths from it in one year. This, however, was a very uncommon and in fact a solitary instance. In the town of Greenfield, I understand, with a much larger population, there were a few years ago, two years without a single death from this direful complaint. This is as singular as the fact in relation to Rowe. As nearly as I can estimate, about one-sixth of the deaths in this county are from consumption.

Physicians.—There are about forty-four practising physicians in this county, who have been regularly educated; besides three or four, who rather decline engaging in the active pursuits of the profession. Allowing the population of the county to be thirty thousand, this would give, if equally distributed, one physician to seven hundred inhabitants. This is about the proportion for the State. Allowing there to be one thousand physicians in the State, and seven hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, this would give one physician to seven hundred and fifty inhabitants.

Of the physicians in this county, at least, twenty-five, and perhaps more, have received the degree of Doctor of Medicine from some of our most respectable colleges. We have medical graduates here from Philadelphia, New York, Boston, the Berkshire Medical Institution, Hanover, and Woodstock. We have several old and respectable physicians, who regularly studied their profession, when it was not very common to attend medical lectures, who have never received a diploma from any medical college, but who are still as well, if not better, qualified than many others with their diplomas of the Doctorate; physicians who have successfully and honorably practised the healing art for more than thirty years, and whom I take unbounded pleasure in greeting as professional brethren, and to whom I often look for counsel and advice.

Thirty-three of our physicians have been admitted into the Massachusetts Medical Society, but the exact number who have accepted the appointment, I am

not able to state. It cannot, however, be denied that there has been a prejudice against the Society by many of our physicians, from the belief that the members in the more central parts of the State enjoy greater privileges than those more remotely situated. They object to the by-law preventing consultations with respectable members who do not belong to the Society. They think it as reputable to consult with a respectable physician, who has been regularly educated in his profession, and perhaps has his diploma from an accredited medical college, as with a Fellow of our Society, and they can hardly consent to the distinction. I have always endeavored to satisfy them of the futility of many of their objections, and I think the emendations of the constitution proposed by the committee who were appointed for the purpose of modifying the by-laws of the Society, at Worcester in 1839, and which were adopted by the Society, will, when the subject is well understood, give universal satisfaction; and I trust the day is not far distant, when every respectable practitioner in Franklin county, and even in the State, will become associated with us.

The formation of district Societies, and the system of delegation, appear to be giving general satisfaction to our professional brethren. This ought to be a subject of rejoicing to us, for we have in the county physicians who would do honor to any part of our State or country, and we always have had professional brethren of whom Massachusetts might justly be proud. I speak from observation, when I say we

have many as well educated physicians as are to be found in any part of the States, and those too who devote as much time and attention to the healing art as many others. Many of them have medical libraries of standard merit, of from fifty, and I presume I put it at the lowest estimate, to six or seven hundred volumes. In addition to the standard elementary works, which are to be found on the shelves of all our brethren, many of us have taken, and are taking the most approved medical periodicals in the world, whereby we are striving to keep pace with the great and important improvements of the day. We can show in our libraries the European Medical and Physical Journal, Johnson's Medico-Chirurgical Review, the London Medical Gazette, the Lancet, the American Medical Journal, the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, the New York Medical Journal, the Western Journal of the Medical and Physical Sciences, Dunglison's Medical Intelligencer, Bell's Medical Journal, Coxe's Medical Museum, B. S. Barton's Medical and Physical Journal, the Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine, Tweedie's Library of Practical Medicine, Bigelow's and Barton's Medical Botany, the Monthly Journal of Medicine, Silliman's Journal, Bourgerey's and Jacob's Anatomical Plates, now publishing in Paris, and many others which time will not permit me to enumerate.

Among our deceased medical brethren, the county of Franklin has sustained individuals, who would have done honor to any of our scientific emporiums. I presume I shall be pardoned for mentioning the

names of some whom we have ever delighted to honor. A mere enumeration of names, in some instances, will be all that I shall be able to give. I regret that I could not enter more minutely into their histories for want of more definite information. I hope I shall not be considered invidious, for selecting those only concerning whom I have been able to procure facts in relation to their history. For obvious reasons, I have omitted to mention the names of distinguished individuals among the living. They will soon enough be enrolled among the dead, when their surviving friends, I trust, will do ample justice to their memories.

Among the dead I have already spoken of Dr. Thomas Williams, the earliest regular physician who ever established himself in the limits of the county of Franklin, which then made a part of the county of Hampshire, and of Dr. William S. Williams, in the fourth volume of the Transactions of this Society. I now take pleasure in mentioning the names of Dr. Samuel Prentiss, Dr. John Stone, Dr. Pardon Haynes, Dr. William Hamilton, Dr. Joseph Allen, Dr. Eli Wing, Dr. Samuel Church, and the venerable and learned Dr. Wells. I intend to give a slight notice of these, and shall briefly enumerate the names of a few others, who were reputable members of the profession in this county, and who continued to practise physic as a business during the most or the whole of their lives. With much pleasure, also, I recur to the names of Dr. Mattoon, of Northfield, Dr. Pomeroy, of Warwick, Dr. Ebenezer Barnard, and Dr. Elihu Ashley,

of Deerfield, Dr. Ebenezer Childs, of Shelburne, Dr. Stephen Bates, of Charlemont, Dr. Porter, of Wendell, Dr. Moses Hayden, and Dr. Samuel Ware, of Conway, Dr. Ross, of Coleraine, Dr. Harwood, of Whately, and Dr. Brooks, of Orange. I regret that time will not allow me to enter more fully into details upon this subject, and that the paucity of my information will allow me to give but meagre accounts.

Dr. Samuel Prentiss, of Northfield.—I am indebted to the Hon. Samuel Prentiss, of Montpelier, Vermont, Senator in the United States Congress, and son to the subject of this notice, for the principal part of the facts which I now present to you. He regrets exceedingly that the death of his mother, at the age of eighty-four, which happened two days before his arrival at Montpelier from Washington, has prevented him from giving the precise information which he could have wished.

Dr. Prentiss was born in Stonington, New London county, Connecticut, in the year 1759. He was son of Col. Samuel Prentiss, who was first a Major and then a Colonel in the American revolutionary army. He received a good academical education, and studied the profession of medicine with Dr. Philip Turner, of Norwich, Connecticut, one of the very best American surgeons of the age in which he lived. He entered the army of the Revolution while quite young, and acted for a time as military waiter to his father, but soon after this he returned to civil life. After studying his profession, he once more engaged in the public

service, in the capacity of assistant-surgeon in the army, where he acquired a great deal of practical knowledge in the profession. After the close of the war, he married a daughter of Captain Holmes, of Stonington, Connecticut, and soon removed to Worcester, in Massachusetts, where he resided several years. Not far from the breaking out of Shays' rebellion, he removed to Northfield, then in the old county of Hampshire, and during the insurrection was zealous and active on the side of the government. His practice, as a surgeon, while at Northfield, was very extensive; and for many years he was the principal operator in this part of the country. His ride extended throughout the western counties of Massachusetts, and far into the States of Vermont and New Hampshire. In fact, he was almost the only operating surgeon in this section of the country for more than twenty years, which sufficiently attests the estimation in which his professional services were held by his medical brethren and the public. I regret that I am not able to give the number, or even an abstract, of his capital operations. If he ever kept such an abstract or enumeration, I have never been able to find it. His capital operations must have been numerous, for the profession was not then crowded with operators as it is at present,—when we have two or three, and perhaps more, professed surgeons in almost every county.

He was admitted a Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society in the year 1810, when he resided at Bernardston. He continued his fellowship till the

time of his death, which occurred at his residence in Northfield in 1818, at the age of fifty-nine. Out of a numerous family four sons survive him. Samuel has twice been elected into the Senate in Congress by the Legislature of Vermont. John H. resides at Cooperstown, New York, and has twice been elected into the House of Representatives in Congress from that State. William, the youngest of the family, resides at Milwaukie, in Wisconsin, and has been a member and President of the Legislative Council of the territory,—showing that Dr. Prentiss has not been unmindful of the education of his children.

Dr. John Stone was born at Rutland, Worcester county, in the year 1763. He received a good academic education, and commenced the study of medicine with the celebrated Dr. John Frink, of Rutland, a distinguished member of the Massachusetts Medical Society. After the close of his pupilage, he commenced practice at Greenfield in this county, where he soon obtained an extensive business. An attack of Hæmoptysis induced him to relinquish the practice at Greenfield, and to establish himself in the city of New York, about the year 1805, where he remained about two years, and became an active member of the New York Medical Society, and did considerable business. His health at this time was reinstated, and he was induced, once more, to return to Greenfield, where he remained till 1819, when he sold his place and privileges to Dr. Seth Washburn, who died in the year 1825. He then removed to

Providence, Rhode Island, where he remained a year or two, and then took up his abode at Springfield, where he engaged in extensive and lucrative business, which continued till near the time of his death in 1838, at the age of seventy years.

He joined the Massachusetts Medical Society in 1803, and continued an active member of it from that time till his death, a period of thirty years. For many years he was a Counsellor in the Society, in which office he discharged his duties with fidelity and zeal. At the recommendation of his professional brethren, who knew his worth, the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred upon him in the year 1824, by the authority of Williams College, then in connection with the Berkshire Medical Institution. He educated a number of pupils in the profession, among the rest Dr. Alpheus F. Stone, of Greenfield, a distinguished Fellow and Counsellor in this Society; and an only son, who, afterwards entered the army as an officer, and died at the South. His library was large and respectable, and he kept pace in his purchase of books, with the great and important improvements of the age. His business was extensive as a consulting physician, and he enjoyed the confidence of his professional brethren by whom he was surrounded.

In his manners, Dr. Stone was a perfect pattern of a gentleman; and no one could approach him, however humble his sphere and condition, without receiving a share of his urbanity and particular attention. A neighboring physician once observed of him, that "that polite how do you do?" of his, took away his

business. This expresses all I could wish to say of him in this respect. In his person, he was tall and erect, and he was proverbially one of the neatest and most fashionable men in his dress in the county. He always rode and drove good horses, and he was the most graceful horseman in this section of the country. He was always ready at the call of any one, and there are but few physicians living, who could or did do a greater amount of business in a given time. His faculties continued bright till the close of life, and he was able to transact business till within a short time previous to his death. He died universally lamented.

Dr. Pardon Haynes.—Dr. Humphrey Gould has kindly favored me with data from which the following sketch is drawn :

The birth-place of Dr. Haynes, late of Rowe, was New London, Connecticut, where he was born on the 2d of February, 1762. He moved from that place with his father to Hoosac, at the age of fifteen years. He served for a short period in the army of the Revolution. He studied the profession of medicine with an older brother. He commenced practice in the town of Hebron, New York ; but the manners and customs of the people there were so uncongenial to him, that he was induced to change his residence for a home in New England. An intimate friend of his directed him to Rowe, assuring him that that place stood in great need of him. He visited the place and concluded to remain. His business soon became quite extensive.

Dr. Haynes practised his profession in Rowe, and the adjacent towns, for the space of forty-five years, with well-deserved reputation and with great success. He accumulated, perhaps, as great a property by his practice, as any man in the county. His constitution was unusually firm. He had an indomitable spirit of perseverance, and he faltered at no labor, however severe. In the early part of his practice he suffered great hardships, and he was often exposed to imminent danger. Dr. Gould says, "He was frequently obliged to go by marked trees in his visits to the sick, often at the peril of his life. On one occasion, riding in the latter part of the night over a new cut path in the winter season, his horse fell with him, the place being sideling, his horse was brought up against a tree, and fell upon him, and he was utterly unable to extricate himself from his dangerous situation, remaining thus exposed for a while; fortunately, a man came along and relieved him. I have often heard the people of Reedsborough tell of being in the woods with him, and thus exposed through a long winter's night, till the light of day showed them on their way."

Little do the physicians of the city know of the hardships and privations of our physicians on our western mountains, during our long, dreary, and inclement winters. Frequently, their only mode of conveyance is on foot, on Indian rackets and snowshoes,—and all this often for the paltry sum of one shilling a mile, even at which some of their employers find fault. Small as is this sum, many of the physicians there make an independent fortune by it.

Strange as this assertion may seem, it is nevertheless true. It is done by the most rigid habits of economy, and self-denial of many of the luxuries of life.

Dr. Haynes never permitted any obstacle to prevent his visiting his patients at the appointed hour, if it was in his power to do it. He was often obliged to cross Deerfield river, which rises in Hoosac mountain, at the hazard of his life. Dr. Gould observes, "He would often swim his horse when the ice would beat the skin from his limbs. On such occasions, his motto was, 'live or die, I will go through.' He was no surgeon,—but a good and able physician,—but, fortunately, distinguished as a practitioner of midwifery, in which department few excelled him. He was extremely regular in his habits. He rose in the morning at 3 o'clock, generally, in the active period of his life; devoted the stillness of the morning to reading; and, usually, long before light, was upon his horse performing his daily round of business. He was ready at every one's call, rich or poor. He was a faithful friend, a kind parent, indulgent to a fault. His memory is still held in grateful remembrance by many who have received the benefit of his healing art. It was his inveterate practice, which grew upon him in consequence of the vast amount of business he was obliged to do while upon his horse, to turn his head neither to the right hand nor left, let him meet whom he might, unless particularly accosted. He commanded the company in Rowe, when an office in the militia was honorable, and conferred distinction upon him who filled it. He was commissioned by John

Hancock and Samuel Adams. On one occasion, his company was particularly distinguished by the venerable General Mattoon, as the first and best disciplined upon the field, at a regimental muster. Dr. Haynes died December 29, 1833, aged seventy-one years. His sickness was short; his mind unclouded. He died in the full faith of a Christian hope of a blessed immortality. He was a sincere believer in the Unitarian views of gospel truth.

Dr. William Hamilton, of Conway.—I take great pleasure in inviting the attention of this Society to the merits of this enterprising physician, who was cut off in the midst of his usefulness at an early age. Few men in our country exhibited a greater promise of future usefulness. He was rising into eminence, not in that rapid manner which is evinced by many young physicians, who are lauded to the skies in the first two or three years of their professional career, and afterwards as rapidly sink in public estimation. Such fame is almost always ephemeral. I consider it unfortunate for any young physician to enter at once, at the commencement of his professional life, into a large run of business. It does not give him sufficient time to investigate the important cases which may fall under his notice, and it often leads him into a loose and careless method of practice. He has not time to avail himself of the experience of the wisest men in the profession, through the medium of their writings; and he often substitutes his own experience for theirs. I have hardly ever known such a physician ultimately to suc-

ceed, as a useful and talented practitioner. When I hear a young man boasting of having charged one hundred and fifty, or two hundred dollars a month, I immediately distrust him, and think he is doing it for effect. A modest, unassuming young man will not praise himself in this way, but will leave it for others to do it, if he deserves it. Dr. Hamilton rose upon his own merits, and was slowly, but surely, obtaining the confidence of the public where he practised, and the applause of his professional brethren.

He was son of Captain Robert Hamilton, a meritorious officer in the war of the Revolution. His mother is still living, and in vigorous health, at the age of 95 or 96 years. He was born in Conway, in the year 1772. In early life, I understand, he had a lameness of one of his legs, and that, in consequence, he devoted his attention to books. After preparing himself for the study of medicine, he entered the office of the elder Dr. Cutler, of Amherst, who was a Fellow of this Society. He remained there awhile, and then completed his medical pupilage in the office of Dr. William Kittredge, who then resided in Conway. He then commenced the practice of his profession in his native town, where he continued in the discharge of his professional duties, to the universal satisfaction of his employers, till the time of his death, which happened in the year 1810, at the age of thirty-eight years.

He was always fond of study, and he was a reading and reflecting man. He educated several medical students, and most of them proved to be highly respectable practitioners. In civil life he enjoyed the

confidence of his townsmen in an eminent degree, and in the brawls and discords which sometimes occur among neighbors, he was often called upon to heal the disturbances of the mind, as well as of the body. On one memorable occasion, in the height of political excitement, during the embargo, about the year 1808, when the public mind was almost ripe for civil war, by his influence and exertion he, probably, saved the effusion of much blood, in a contest which must inevitably have ensued between some of his fellow-citizens, and those of a neighboring town. This is not the place to enter into a detail of that event. Suffice it to say, that were it not for his exertions a riot must have followed, many lives have been lost, and the miseries which would have ensued must have been incalculable. His memory will ever be dear to his fellow-townsmen, and to those who were acquainted with him.

Dr. Joseph Allen.—Dr. Allen was born on Long Island, in the year 1764. At the age of two years he came to Hardwick in this State, where he lived till he was old enough to study medicine. Of his early education I know nothing. He studied the profession of medicine with Dr. William Kittredge, then residing in Conway. Dr. Kittredge was considered by the public to be a great bonesetter and surgeon. Dr. Allen commenced practice in Coleraine in this county, where he continued one year, when he moved to Buckland, where he had a great run of business till the time of his death, which occurred in the year 1823, at

the age of fifty-nine. He joined the Massachusetts Medical Society in 1812, and resigned in 1818. He made considerable property by the practice of his profession, and he was well thought of by his professional brethren. I believe he performed some capital operations in surgery, and he was thought by many to be a superior bonesetter.

Dr. Eli S. Wing, of Leyden.—I am indebted to the politeness of Dr. W. A. Wilkins, of Leyden, for the facts upon which the notice of this individual is based. Dr. Wing was born in the town of Harwich, near Cape Cod, in the year 1758. It is reported of him that in early life he was much attached to books, and that he had a great aversion to manual labor. In consequence of this, his father, who was in comfortable circumstances as to property, never gave him a dollar of his estate. By his own industry he obtained a good education, and for many years he was employed as a school-teacher. I cannot ascertain how well qualified he was for the study of medicine; but at about the age of thirty years he commenced the study of the profession with the late Dr. Samuel Ware, of Conway, with whom he continued during his pupilage. He carried with him his early attachment to books through his whole life,—and devoted all his leisure hours to the reading of medical and miscellaneous works. His medical library contained most of the standard works of his time and was very respectable. During some of the last years of his life he devoted much of his time and attention to the

study of the French language, in which he made considerable proficiency. His medical standing was quite up to, if not above, mediocrity for the time. He was admitted a Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society in the year 1816, and continued in it till the year 1823, when he died at the age of sixty-five years.

Dr. Samuel Church, of Sunderland.—Dr. Church was born at Amherst, in the county of Hampshire, about the year 1756. He graduated at Harvard University in 1778, and studied the profession of medicine with Dr. Colman, of Amherst, a man of a good deal of celebrity in those days. Soon after this he commenced the practice of his profession in Sunderland, where he resided much esteemed to the time of his death, which occurred in the year 1826, about the age of seventy. He was admitted a Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society in 1816, and he resigned in the year 1823.

Dr. Church was a judicious, but rather a timid practitioner of medicine. His judgment in relation to diseases was discriminating and very correct; but he never administered his remedies with so bold and unsparing a hand as many of his professional brethren. He, nevertheless, enjoyed their confidence to a great extent, and he was on terms of great intimacy with such men as the venerable Dr. Wells, of Montague, Dr. Hunt, of Northampton, Dr. William S. Williams, of Deerfield, and many others. In his manners he was affable and polite, but modest and retiring. In

size he was about the middling height and proportions. He was very plain in his dress, as well as in his manners. He never sought business, but was always ready to attend his calls whenever they were made. He was considered to be a very good and correct writer, but he never published many of the productions of his pen. I understand he kept some manuscript volumes of medical notes, but I have also been informed that they were probably lost with an only son, who perished on board the ill-fated Lexington, in Long Island Sound, in January, 1840. He was a poet of no mean abilities.

Dr. Church had always great vivacity and humor, which he retained to the day of his death. I attended him during his last sickness, and shall never forget his cheerfulness and good spirits; although laboring under a severe complaint, which he bore with Christian fortitude.

Dr. Church held the office of justice of the peace for many years, and was considered a most upright and able magistrate. In a few of the last years of his life, he did much more business in his legal than in his medical capacity; though most of his old patrons continued to employ him, as a physician, as long as he lived.

Dr. Henry Wells, of Montague.—I cannot do better, at the conclusion of this discourse, than to give a brief notice of this most respectable physician. I regret that I have it not in my power to give a more particular account of this truly great and eminent phy-

sician. I am indebted to Dr. Bachelder, of Royalston, a former pupil of Dr. Wells, and Vice President of this Society, and to Dr. Richard Wells, late of Canandaigua, a son of Dr. Wells, for many of the facts mentioned in this memoir.

Dr. Wells was born in the city of New York, in the year 1742. He entered Princeton College at the age of ten years, and graduated at the age of fourteen. He studied medicine four years with the celebrated Dr. Hull, of Connecticut, the inventor of Hull's Physic. He afterwards studied medicine three years in the city of New York. I have been informed, but I will not vouch for the correctness of it, that he studied divinity, for a short period, after this. He afterwards kept an apothecary's store in the city of New York. His father, I understand, was a tory during the revolutionary war, and his property was confiscated. Dr. Wells removed to Brattleborough in Vermont,—about the time, or just before the war,—where he resided several years. As this was a rough country for his practice, he removed to Montague in this county, where he supposed his business would be less laborious. He was often called to patients at Albany, Hanover, N. H., and various parts of Connecticut, Vermont, and Massachusetts; and he had the confidence of all his professional brethren throughout the country. He was much extolled by Dr. Nathan Smith, Dr. Twitchell, and many other of our respectable physicians. He united himself with the Massachusetts Medical Society in the year 1785, and continued his fellowship till his death

in 1814, a period of twenty-nine years. During a considerable portion of this time he held the office of Counsellor in the Society. He received the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine from Dartmouth College, in the year 1806.

His habits and manners were conformable to what were called the old school of gentlemen, and he has been very appropriately called a "nobleman of nature." His dress was in Quaker-like simplicity, and much in its form and color like theirs. He either wore the velvet or buckskin small-clothes or breeches, the long jacket with flapped pockets over the thighs, and the broad brimmed, low-crowned hat, as long as he lived. He was broad-chested, and a little inclined to corpulency. I never saw him when I was not reminded of the portrait of the venerable Dr. Franklin, to whose general appearance there must have been a great similarity. A miniature portrait which I have seen of the Rev. Dr. Smith, of Princeton, New Jersey, so nearly resembles him, that his family have pronounced the likeness correct. Notwithstanding his peculiarity of dress, and general appearance, his address rather excited familiarity than awe. Many of his patients almost worshipped him, and his presence has often smoothed their passage to the tomb. I am sorry that I have it not in my power to give more particular instances of the beneficial influences which his presence inspired in many incurable, as well as curable, complaints. A stranger, laboring under a mortal complaint, was induced to send for him, hoping that he might do something towards alleviating his

distress, though he had no expectation that he could cure him. The doctor spent several hours with the patient, and when he left him he was able to sit up, and write a letter to his family physician, stating, that the presence of Dr. Wells, his urbanity, cheerfulness, attention, and good sense, as evinced in his conversation, had so completely enraptured him, and enchained his attention, that he had almost forgotten his complaint. He was so much pleased with him, he observed, that he would rather have given a fortune than not to have seen him.

One of his patients in Montague, while he lived in Brattleboro', remarked, that his presence was like that of an angel. After his removal to Montague, she observed, that she saw him so frequently that his visits had lost some of their charms. This verifies the assertion, that "far fetched and dear bought," is the most esteemed; and that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," an observation which is many times true in the life of a country physician. Even the most illiterate pretender will often obtain the ascendancy over modest, humble worth, however learned and worthy the possessor may be. Even Dr. Wells was destined to know and to feel the truth of the remark in his declining years. Gratitude for services rendered by an eminent physician is often as transient as the dew of the morning. The elder members of the profession which I now address, can, doubtless, remember many instances where they have been highly extolled by their patients in one sickness, whilst in a succeeding one they have been superseded by charlatans, or unfledged pretenders, thus reversing

the sentiment of "vox populi, vox Dei," into that of "vox populi, vox Diaboli." It is not so, however, with the opinions of our professional brethren. When a physician has once obtained the well-earned confidence of his brother practitioners, he always retains it; and this reputation is of vastly greater importance than the bauble reputation gained by wealth. The patronage and applause bestowed upon Dr. Wells by his professional brethren remained through a long life; and after death was transmitted to his descendants, and follows as a rich legacy which can never be lost.

Dr. Wells was always facetious and cheerful with his patients, when their circumstances would allow of it, thus inspiring them with great confidence of their recovery. Many cases might be mentioned illustrative of the truth of this remark, but I have only time to mention the following: He was sent for by a patient who was considered to be dangerously sick. He spent the evening at his bedside, and, on his retiring to rest, before he blew out his candle, a messenger entered his room with a boot-jack in his hand, which he informed the doctor the patient had sent in to him for the purpose of enabling him to pull off his buckskin breeches. The doctor sent back word to him that he need be under no fear of dying for the present. The effect was most salutary upon the sick man.

Owing to an accident, which I shall presently mention, we have no details of his practice on record. He was supposed to be successful in some cases in the cure of hydrophobia. He once mentioned to me that he knew a case of hydrophobia occur six years

after the bite of a mad dog. I think the remedy on which he principally depended, was a preparation of mercury. Happy would it be for physicians, as well as patients, were we able to place any dependence upon this article for the cure of this terrific complaint. An account of the accident, which deprived the world of much of the recorded usefulness and information of Dr. Wells, will be found in the following extract from a letter from his son, Richard Wells, M. D., late of Canandaigua, N. Y. I wrote to him for information concerning his father, in the spring of 1840. He replied to me in a letter of March 30, of the same year, that the proposition which I made to him, of writing some account of the life of his father, was peculiarly gratifying to him, and that nothing could have afforded him greater satisfaction than to know that the circumstances connected with the sphere of action in the latter part of his father's life were carefully and accurately narrated. "Yet," he says, "should I attempt to enter upon, or prosecute any plan to accomplish so desirable an object, I should feel myself greatly embarrassed for the want of sufficient data, for the ground-work you so ardently solicit. I have for many years had in my possession all, or nearly all, my father's manuscripts, which were always kept at my office. Amongst them were many cases which he had noticed in the course of his practice, where any peculiarity of symptoms presented. Also, a common-place book, in which he had noticed new theories and contrasted them. If I was still in possession of them, it would add much to the interest

of his memoirs. Of all these I have unfortunately been deprived. A crazy man entered my office, one morning, the key being left in the door, and soon began his work of destruction, by stripping himself, and burning every rag of his own clothing; next, all the wearing apparel he could find, coats, boots and shoes, of a hired man of mine, then the shop furniture, and all the books that were out of the cases, and every day-book and ledger, from 1824 to 1832, all the loose papers, letters, orders, memorandums, and, with the rest, the manuscripts above-mentioned. It requires more energy of body and mind, than I now possess, to communicate even what I may, on suitable reflection, get up on summoning my resolution." Thus, at one fell swoop, were the principal part of the written mental labors of this great man buried in everlasting oblivion.

Dr. Wells was affected, for many years, with what was supposed to be Angina Pectoris. He often thought he experienced much relief in this distressing and painful affection from the tartar emetic lotion, carried to the extent of pustulation. I do not know the complaint of which he died, but I believe it was not an affection of the heart.*

* The following notice of him was written by the Rev. Dr. WILLARD, of Deerfield, and published in the Franklin Herald, for Sept. 8, 1814. It is so correct and just, that I have no doubt you will excuse me for copying it:

Died in Montague, Aug. 24, 1814, HENRY WELLS, M. D., M. M. S., aged 72. The uncommon interest the public must feel in this great and good man, will, it is presumed, justify and require a brief sketch of his character and life.

Dr. Wells received a collegiate education at Princeton, N. J., studied his profession at Lebanon, Conn., practised a short time in New York,

I regret, extremely, that my limits do not allow me, at this time, to speak of the venerable Dr. Erastus

and then removed to Brattleborough, Vt., where he continued 18 years. His practice and reputation soon became extensive; and it was with the design of placing himself nearer the centre of his business, he removed in the year 1782 to Montague, where he spent the remainder of his life.

In his profession, Dr. Wells attained the most distinguished rank. He combined those talents and habits, which, in the course of a long life, must, with the blessing of God, be attended with great proficiency. His natural powers of apprehension were good; his application methodical and patient. His professional reading was extensive and judicious. His eminent skill, however, in the management of diseases was in a great measure derived from his own observation and experience. The symptoms of diseases were marked by him with a critical eye, and minutely recorded, together with the medicine administered, and the consequent changes in the symptoms. In this way he formed his judgment of the proper method of treating the several diseases which fell within the circuit of his practice, under the great diversities they derive from many different causes. His practical inductions were the results of enlarged views and cautious deliberations; and, of course, they were remarkably free from the errors of harsh conclusions even in the greatest minds. The fruit of this ingenious method was a degree of professional eminence, that commanded the confidence of his brethren and of the public, to a wide extent. In all difficult cases, his counsel was sought, and, in general, envy and vanity were silent at his name.

With all his greatness, Dr. Wells was modest and unassuming. With a due independence of thought, he readily listened to the judgments and reasonings of others. It is well known that the theories of diseases, and, of course, the modes of treatment in many cases underwent a great change after he attained to the meridian of life. But he discovered nothing of that bigoted attachment to former modes, which from principles or feelings very common to men, might have been expected. His mind was ever open to conviction, and he was ever ready to adopt any new improvements in the art of healing, that were sufficiently attested. He preserved a happy medium between visionary innovation, and a blind adherence to old theories and principles.

In his professional business, and indeed in every thing else in which he was engaged, Dr. Wells was remarkable for his punctuality. He was extremely moderate in his charges. He was tender, and in all respects faithful to those who applied for medical aid. In his death,

Sergeant, of Stockbridge, who received his medical education in the county of Franklin; and who was a distinguished Fellow of this Society from the year 1785 to 1814, when he died at the age of seventy-two.

While on the subject of the biography of the distinguished physicians of Franklin, I cannot but express the hope that the venerable Dr. Thatcher, of Plymouth, one of the most learned and aged physicians in this Institution, may be induced to publish another volume of the biography of the distinguished physicians of America, who are now enrolled among the dead. Or, if the increasing infirmities of years, spent in the cultivation of the noble profession of medicine, are such as to forbid him from engaging in this arduous but pleasing performance, it is highly desirable that some other physician should undertake it. We have many who are amply qualified to do

his brethren are bereaved of an able counsellor, and the public of one pre-eminently capable, under God, of relieving their heaviest temporal calamities.

As a man, Dr. Wells was highly respected and beloved by those who knew his worth. He professed a firm belief in the gospel of Christ, and was much attached to the moral and religious institutions of our land. He was a man of peculiar sensibility of heart. He was characteristically meek and humble. He was a pattern of temperance, rarely, or never making any use of those spirituous liquors which are among the principal causes of disease and death; and finally, in all his trials, some of which were great, he was patient, resigned, and cheerful. His conduct in the domestic relations of domestic life was affectionate and faithful. His children, some of whom are in circumstances truly interesting to a benevolent public,* mourn the loss of the kindest of parents. But the recollection of his virtues must alleviate their sorrows, through the blessed hopes of a resurrection to come, and a glorious state of rest and joy in reserve for all, who believe and embrace the gospel of peace.

* Three of them are deaf and dumb.

it in this Society, and the length of time which has elapsed, since the publication of that inestimable and highly popular work, is so great, as loudly to call for a new edition of it, with the biographies of such distinguished physicians as have died among us within the last eighteen years; or an additional volume containing the much wished for reminiscences. I hope this hint may receive the attention which it merits, and that the memories of some of our most eminent medical men may be placed upon more durable records than ephemeral or weekly newspapers.

It is a subject of much congratulation that the Society has been called to mourn the loss of but a few of its members during the past year; and while we drop the tear of sympathy and regret at the decease of our late associates,* we ought to rejoice at the full measure of health which has been bestowed upon the surviving members of the Society. A parallel instance can hardly be found in the annals of any Institution, embracing so large a number of Fellows as ours. With fervent and devout aspirations of praise and thanksgiving to the eternal Jehovah, ought this conspicuous goodness to inspire our hearts.

* The following members of the Society have died during the year:

	Age.
July 14, 1841, SAMUEL BUGBEE, M. D., Wrentham,	60
Jan. 23, 1842, WILLIAM E. FOSTER, M. D., Boston,	33
March, " CHESTER COWLES, M. D., Amherst,	71
March, " EZEKIEL W. LEACH, M. D., Boston,	30
April 13, " GEORGE B. DOANE, M. D., Boston,	49
May 6, " ARTEMAS BULLARD, M. D., Sutton,	73
Dr. RICHARD WELLS, of Canandaigua, N.Y., formerly a Fellow of the Society in Conway, also, died in 1841, aged 70 years.	