To this report were added, when it appeared in this Journal, the concurrence of Drs. Ware, Hurd and Flint, in the accuracy of Dr. Walker's statement; and also extracts from the report of the Inspectors of the Prison, showing that Dr. Webster had examined by chemical analysis the food of the convicts, and detected no poisonous substances in it; that the apothecary had found no deficiency in the store of medicines; that the ergot taken from the barrel of rye belonging to the Prison had been examined by Drs. Bigelow, Channing and Ware, and was by them stated to be "less than is ordinarily found in the same quantity of good merchantable rye, being less than a grain, by weight, to a quart."

W. H. T.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE MANHATTAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, NOV. 2d, 1848,

BY THE PRESIDENT, CLARKSON T. COLLINS, M.D., FELLOW OF THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE, AND FORMERLY EDITOR OF THE N. Y. MED. AND SUR. REPORTER.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

GENTLEMEN,—The period for our regular meeting has again arrived—we have assembled for the cultivation of a more intimate acquaintance with each other and the mutual advancement of our professional interests.

Such associations, by identifying us as brethren, cannot fail to prove lastingly beneficial to us, and to subserve effectually the true objects of our peculiar calling. They not only unite our sympathies, but elevate our intellectual characters; and by increasing our professional knowledge, benefit especially those of our fellow creatures who become the subjects of our care and solicitude. It is to associations of this kind that we may look for a higher tone of medical ethics. Here is a union of effort, for all are alike interested in the objects of the Society, and every member, from his daily intercourse with the sick, gathers practical facts of peculiar interest; and like the honey-bee conveys his burthen to the *common* stock, for the *common* good. What can be more fully calculated to accomplish those desirable ends at which I have hinted, than associations of this kind—based upon such motives? A personal standard of professional excellence each would attain; but it is by such means that the whole fraternity may enjoy with him the fruits of his labors. Indeed it is only by carrying out fully the principles of our organization, and establishing a reciprocal and cordial interchange of practical observation, that we are to reap the full benefit of our connection and support the dignity of our profession.

It is an obvious fact, that we, as a body, do not receive from society that sympathy and support so justly our due. Some waggish writer has perpetrated the following witticism, which seems to contain more truth than fiction:

"God and the Doctor we alike adore,
But only when in danger, not before;
The danger past, both are alike requited,
God is forgotten and the Doctor slighted."

To what cause shall we attribute this fact? Is it that the profession neglect in any way the performance of their painful and often most disgusting duties? Does the friend of humanity now dread to combat disease in its most deadly array? Does he shun its foulest and most disgusting dens? No: unwavering in his noble undertaking, we see him as heretofore, snatching from the very jaws of death the miserable victim; and with self-sacrificing energy he continues his toilsome rounds. Compare his labors of the past year, in staying the ravages of the ship or typhus fever, and other similar diseases, with those of preceding years, and you find him still the same, a *man of toil*. You still see him striving to attain those means by which he may best fulfil the Divine command, "Go, heal the sick."

Is it that the public mind is insensible to claims upon its liberality? This is not the case. The shouts of applause that welcomed to their quiet homes, and domestic endearments, those brave soldiers of our *Republic*, who have prostrated her foes, and wreathed her arms with proud and imperishable laurels, has scarcely subsided. The bugle note of fame that shall herald their names to posterity, still sounds in our ears. And we would not utter a discordant murmur—we rejoice at their success, we would not pluck a leaf from the bays that wreath their brows. Yet how is it that the physician, who has resisted, and that, too, successfully, the approach of an enemy more terrible than the legions of Mexico—whose approach caused the stoutest heart to throb, and struck with pallor the most undaunted countenance, has unnoticed and uncared-for pursued his warfare; and in conquest heard no note of applause, save the murmur of gratitude that has fallen from the lips of the wretched sufferer—no reward but an approving conscience. *And he is satisfied*, could he have in addition the public confidence, and that protection the physician, of all men, most needs.

Why is it that this support and protection have been withdrawn? Is it not to be attributed to the presence in society of so many pretenders in the science—so many of that vermin of the *quack species*, which every physician must heartily detest—and to the fact that so many *pill venders*, *sarsaparilla makers*, *cancer*, *steam* and *cayenne pepper doctors*, and inventors of *all-healing ointment*, and elixirs of life, have so often deluded the public, and humbugged them out of their money, that they have lost the power of discriminating between real and pretended merit? The hydropath, with characteristic modesty, has urged the claims of *cold water*. He has referred to the lore of antiquity—dwelt long upon the aquatic habits of the refined Romans, and the hardy Greeks, and with the timely assistance of some interested, but deluded friends, he has succeeded in persuading the invalid to be *doused* and *blanketed* according to the theory of the ignorant Priessnitz, the hero of Græffenburg. The homœopath, too, claims attention—discoursing right eloquently upon the advantages of *his* practice—the harmlessness of *his* doses, and the certainty of their operation. Then follows a tirade upon the murderous practice of the allopaths, as they are significantly termed, by these *refined gentlemen*. Here, too, there are influences operating against us

from a higher source. Some clerical gentlemen, whose judgments, perhaps, have been flattered by addresses well suited to those of classical taste and a limited knowledge, even, of the first principles of pathology or medicine, so far forget their true calling as to advise a trial of this *imported* absurdity. Often the tastes of children and fastidious females are consulted, who, of course, prefer *sugar pills* and infinitesimal doses. Besides, the race of Judas Iscariot is not yet extinct—for there are those who (if they would not sell the Saviour for thirty pieces of silver) are found ready to exchange their standing in the profession (by which they can at least make an honest subsistence) for an easier and more ready way to wealth. To such men, money seems to answer an admirable end—compensating for loss of standing or reputation. It is, in fact, to them, a good article to take dark spots out of character.

To such our attention is frequently directed, as men who are keeping pace with the spirit of the age, by those who, incapable or unwilling to judge for themselves, are readily made to believe that the science of medicine, like the many vague and undefined theories of the day, must give place to something of more recent date. Such persons cannot appreciate the fact, that our science is based upon a durable foundation; that for centuries it has remained upon the same basis—a splendid superstructure, *not perfected*, but *receiving*, and *destined to receive*, touches of skill from the masters that shall more fully develop its beauties, and enhance the interest with which it is already surrounded; and after the puny creations of Thomson, Priessnitz and Hahnemann have vanished, like some of their predecessors, shall remain an established and noble science.

This may with propriety be called the reign of quackery—the public are not allowed to recover from the novel effects of one *discovery*, before another is brought forth. Now a domestic remedy is curing its thousands—now an imported nostrum is astounding the world with its unparalleled success—every disease is cured by one remedy—another, more modest, assumes less. In this way thousands are yearly destroyed—if not by these nostrums, by some ignorant practitioner, or lack of proper treatment. An investigation of the means by which these men bring themselves into notice, and an exposure of some of the most glaring popular deceptions of quackery, would not fail to interest and repay the inquirer. I will now relate a few facts, as they have fallen under my observation.

A man in this city who makes considerable noise as a homœopathic physician, calls himself a graduate in medicine; yet from the strictest inquiry, I find that the most intimate of his acquaintance never knew of his studying any work on medicine, or any of its branches—but on the contrary he was, up to a late period, employed as an under workman in an artist's shop; and from that situation entered society as a practitioner of medicine (to be called upon by the unsuspecting in urgent and dangerous cases), having the audacity to assume the affix of M.D. And this man finds plenty of employment—is accumulating wealth, and is by some of the good people considered a public *benefactor*.

“ If the sick gudgeons to the bait attend,
And come in shoals, the angler gains his end.”

Pardon me, gentlemen, for alluding to another case ; that of one of the most extensive practitioners of homœopathy in this city—a man who a few years ago occupied a very *memorable* position in the regular profession, but who now drives about our streets in splendid style. He employs, or did, up to a late period, a regular practitioner in his family, who from regard to the wife and children was induced to attend them professionally. Dr. Homœopathy, some time since, walked, late at night, to the house of *his family* physician, and rang the bell. Dr. Allopathy, from the window, inquired who it was. Dr. H. replied, stating that one of his children had a slight attack of croup—and desired him to go and see it. Dr. A. remarked, that having been unwell for a few days past himself, he did not like to go out ; and, said he, “ as the child is not dangerously ill, suppose you go home and give it some homœopathic medicine, and I will go round in the morning.” Said Dr. H., “ do you think I am a — fool.”

Another homœopath, formerly of the regular practice, and somewhat celebrated for his *piety*, but who by some of the less charitable of his brethren is thought to practise a little hypocrisy to accomplish his purposes, finding his wife dangerously ill, and having tried in vain to subdue the disease by his *most refined treatment*—became alarmed and applied to a regular practitioner ; who so far violated the rules of our body as to respond to the summons. After prescribing for the lady, he asked the homœopath, “ had the patient been any one but your own wife, would you have sent for a physician of the old school ? ” He at first evaded the question, but finally replied, “ *I would not.* ” Or, in other words, he admitted that he would have sacrificed the life of a human being at the shrine of *quackery*, rather than so far humiliate himself as to ask the advice of those whose advantages are superior to his own.

I will relate one more circumstance of this kind. A lady calling upon me a short time since, stated that having been troubled with an urgent cough for some months, by the advice of some of her *interested* friends she had been induced to place herself under the care of a homœopath, who told her that her lungs had been diseased for a long time, but assured her that by the use of his medicine they could be *healed*. She continued to take the sugar pill regularly for a considerable time, and finally told him that her cough grew worse, instead of better, and that she had a continued tickling in her throat. He gravely assured her that it was only the *powerful* effects of his medicine, *working* a radical cure, and *hunting out the disease*, the very result he wanted. When she came under my care, I removed about half an inch of her *palate*, by which simple treatment she was soon relieved, and has not been troubled since with a cough.

These are a few of the many facts which are continually developed in our city ; and these, I think, are sufficient to direct our attention to the real cause of public neglect to the *claims* of our *profession* ; and the establishment of laws calculated to aid us in our labors in promoting the health of society.

I need not at this time advert to the necessity, in a *city like ours*, of a well-regulated medical police, to guard the public health, and carry out sanitary improvements upon hygienic principles; but you well know the obstacles to such a regulation.

That the inhabitants of this city may be visited with that scourge of the world, the Asiatic cholera, in another year, seems (to me) not at all unlikely. I judge only from the past. This frightful malady, which is of comparatively recent date in this country, has, as you all know, been long an epidemic in Hindostan. It commenced anew on the 19th of August, 1817, at Jessore, about 100 miles northeast of Calcutta. A Hindoo was attacked with violent vomiting and purging, and died on the following day, when 17 more expired suddenly of the same symptoms. After that it became general throughout the town. It reached Calcutta in the following September, where it raged with great severity during the whole of 1818, and also pervaded the provinces of northern and eastern Bengal. In 1819 it went into Ceylon, Malacca, Java and Siam. In 1820 it invaded China; in 1821, Muscat, and destroyed in the city of Bassorah 50,000 persons. In 1822 it showed itself in Turkey, along the Caspian Sea. In 1829 it suddenly broke out in Russia, and was attended with great fatality. In 1830 it invaded Poland, Austria, and the coast of the German Ocean. In 1831 it reached Hamburg, and made its appearance in England in January of the same year. In 1832 it passed into Scotland, Ireland, France, and made its debut on this side of the Atlantic, in Quebec, on the 8th of June; on the 21st of that month, it suddenly appeared in New York city, and subsequently in the principal cities in the United States during that year. In 1834 it re-appeared in many of the cities in this country. It also visited some of the cities of France and Italy, during the years 1835, 1836 and 1837.

God forbid that, following its former course, it shall re-appear in our midst, or that public neglect shall lend new terrors to its ravages. Yet should it come, and in all its terrors, I doubt not there will be found in our ranks, in a large proportion to our numbers, men ready not only to *sacrifice enjoyment and personal interest*, but to *peril even life itself* in responding to the calls of the distressed. Then shall this Association be a *school of personal observation*, from which we shall derive that *assistance and confidence* which will conduce to the most desirable ends, and whose lessons, like beacon lights, shall direct our way.

AMPUTATION AT THE SHOULDER-JOINT, FOR GUN-SHOT WOUND.

BY PAUL F. EVE, PROFESSOR OF SURGERY IN THE MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA.

ON the 11th of February, 1848, I removed the arm at the shoulder-joint of a black boy, who had about 48 hours previous been accidentally shot. The discharge from the gun was received at a distance of only a few feet; it was loaded with squirrel shot, and tow was used for the wadding. This occurred in a neighboring county, and the patient was