NECROLOGY.

BERIAH ANDREW WATSON.

Beriah A. Watson was born on a farm near Lake George, on the 26th of March, 1836. He was the third son of Perry and Marion Watson. At an early age he was sent to the district school, where he acquired, in connection with a judicious course of outside reading, a good elementary education. He soon became a member of the family of Jonathan Streeter, a Quaker teacher of that locality, where broader opportunities were afforded to pursue a higher course of education. After two or three years he taught school, and thereby acquired sufficient means to farther prosecute his studies. He attended later the State Normal School at Albany, where he secured an academic education. At the age of twenty-one he took up a preliminary course of medical reading in the office of the late Dr. James Reilly, at Succasunna, N. J.

In the fall of 1859 he matriculated in the medical department of the New York University. He graduated in the spring of 1861. After receiving his degree he located at White House, N. J. When the Civil War broke out he entered the United States service, having passed the examining board of which Valentine Mott was president. He was assigned a position at the Army Hospital at Newark, where he remained until the 26th of March, 1863. He was then commissioned assistant surgeon Fourth New Jersey Volunteers. He was later placed in charge of the Fourth Artillery Brigade, at Falmouth, Va. After the battle of Gettysburg he was commissioned surgeon with rank of major. Soon after this he was detailed operating surgeon of the First Brigade, First Division, Sixth Army Corps, and was subsequently ordered to take charge of the hospital of this Division. He was also made acting medical purveyor of the corps. He returned to civil life in July, 1865, and resumed the practice of medicine, locating in Jersey City, N. J., where he soon acquired a large practice.
Amid the arduous labors of his profession he found time for study and literary work. An act legalizing dissections of human cadavers in New Jersey was passed and secured mainly through the efforts of Dr. Watson and Dr. J. D. McGill. Dr. Watson was instrumental in the formation of the New Jersey Academy of Medicine. He was also one of the organizers of the Jersey City Hospital, and received the appointment of attending surgeon in 1869. In 1873 he was appointed attending surgeon to St. Francis Hospital, and later to Christ Hospital. He was also consulting surgeon to the Bayonne Hospital. Dr. Watson's contributions to medical literature have been extensive and important, among which may be mentioned the following:

"A Case of Facial Neuralgia Treated by Extermination of the Superior Maxillary Nerve" (reprinted from Medical Record, October 16, 1871).

"A Case of Hamatoma of the Thigh: Two Operations: Death" (Medical Record, October 26, 1875).

"The Pathology and Treatment of Chronic Ulcers" (New York Medical Journal, July, 1875).

"Cases of Rabies Canina Treated with Strychnia and Woorara: Recovery" (American Journal of Medical Sciences, July, 1876).

"Femoral Aneurism Treated by Plugging the Sac: Death Caused by Hæmorrhage from Deep Epigastric Artery on the Eighth Day: Autopsy: Remarks" (American Journal of Medical Sciences, October, 1870).

"Stomach Pump, Aspiration and Syringe" (Medical Record, Vol. II, p. 805).


"Lever Exsection Sac" (Medical Record, Vol. XIII, 38).

"Discotome" (Ibid., Vol. XIV, p. 78).

"Gunpowder Disfigurements" (St. Louis Medical and Surgical Journal, Vol. XXXV, p. 145).


"An Experimental Study of Anaesthetics" (read before the American Surgical Association, at Washington, D. C., April 30, 1884).

He translated several medical essays from the French and German, and published two volumes of note, “Amputations and their Complications” (1885) and “The Sportsman’s Paradise” (1888). He contributed the chapter on "Pyæmia and Septicæmia" in the "American System of Practical Medicine," edited by William Pepper, M.D., L.L.D. (1885), and also a chapter on the "Operative Treatment of the Spleen," in Keating’s “Diseases of Children.” Among the more recent works are a "History of Surgery" and a brochure on "Experimental Study of Lesions Arising from Severe Concussions." He left an unfinished work on the "Surgery of the Spine," which he intended to have finished and published at an early date. It embodies the results of and deductions from experiments on dogs made by the doctor five years ago.

In 1882 Rutgers College conferred upon Dr. Watson the honorary degree of Master of Arts.

The doctor accumulated one of the largest private libraries in the State, and one of the most complete surgical libraries in the world.

Four years ago he took a trip abroad, accompanied by his daughter and niece. His health was very poor, he having been a
suffered from diabetes for nearly fifteen years. While there he spent the greater part of his time attending clinics and visiting hospitals in all the larger cities of Europe. Dr. Esmarch, the surgeon-general of the Prussian Army, gave a reception in his honor, and Dr. Billroth, of Vienna, was equally demonstrative in his welcome.

Dr. Watson was always an enthusiastic sportsman. He took pleasure in collecting and adorning the walls of his residence with the trophies of his skill. In 1888 he wrote and put to press the admirable volume "Sportsman's Paradise."

In mineralogy, too, he took a very deep interest, having collected specimens from all parts of the world.

For the last three years Dr. Watson had been in very ill health, but continued steadily at his work until eight weeks prior to his death. Throughout the latter part of his illness he exhibited the same indomitable will power that has always characterized him. While confined to his room a patient presented himself for examination. The Doctor, realizing the seriousness of the case, advised the woman to be operated upon. She consented upon condition he himself would operate. Accordingly, on the 30th of November, two weeks prior to his death, he arose from the bed to which he had already been confined over a week, and performed a complete amputation of the right breast.

One of the last acts the Doctor performed was the reading of a paper before the New York State Association of Railway Surgeons, at the New York Academy of Medicine, November 14. Subject, "Expert Examinations and Testimony in Railway Cases."

His death was the result of exposure and fatigue while in pursuit of game. This sad event occurred Thursday, December 22, 1892.

Dr. Watson was a man of deep thought and great natural ability. He was polite, refined and pleasing in his manner, and a delightful conversationalist. As a military officer he was faithful and conscientious. As a physician and surgeon he was held in the highest estimation. He was a true husband and father, kind and sympathetic in his nature, and always endeavoring to make those around him...
happy. Knowing the disease with which he was afflicted to be inevitably fatal, he endeavored to conceal from his family its serious nature.

It was on the 24th of December that the mortal remains of Dr. Watson were conveyed to their last resting-place in Greenwood. When he passed away no class of men felt more severely the loss than the members of the medical profession. He was widely known and universally beloved. His wife and one daughter survive him.

Roy Inglis.