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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AT THE THIRTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN NEUROLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, HELD IN ST. LOUIS, SEPTEMBER 15, 1904.

BY FRANK R. FRY, A.M., M.D.,

OF ST. LOUIS.

GENTLEMEN:—For the very great honor of presiding on this occasion I beg to express to you my grateful appreciation. I hasten also to assure you that your presence here is a most pleasant compliment to our city. St. Louis has realized from the first that the success of her exposition as a creditable celebration of human advancement must depend on the presence and participation of representatives from all branches of human activity. Her effort to accomplish this has been cordially supported. The attendance of an association as truly representative as this one is another important and gratifying recognition of the spirit and purposes of her undertaking.

Partaking of this spirit we are expected to announce our existence and our relation to other activities. If the members will therefore kindly indulge me in a reminiscent mood I promise it shall not be of long duration.

The specialty of neurology is an instance of the division of labor; a legitimate division, resting on the fact that modern and necessary diagnostic refinement in diseases of the nervous system can be reached only by persons possessing special knowledge and skill. In the present development of medical science this fact is gaining general recognition, but it has only

been comparatively recently that the force of many practical neurological distinctions has appealed to the mass of our own and other professions, and that they have discovered the convenience and usefulness of the neurologist and the evident scope of his distinctive art.

Naturally neurologists feel that this recognition has been somewhat tardy. They cannot overlook the fact that the scientific basis of their specialty was shaping itself over two generations ago, and that even before then much practical work had been accomplished, and that other scientific workers have at times failed to grasp the inspiration of certain master-minds in neurology, the significance of their prophecies and the close connection of the same with other scientific advancement. In this respect, however, neurology is not an exception to other worthy movements. The peculiar trials which have helped to shape its history have only the better disciplined its adherents for important functions. The present-day neurologist, recollecting the earlier struggles and patient labors of his masters, accepts with a keener and more substantial appreciation the better fortunes which have befallen his specialty in these later days, and with the vision of an enthusiast prophesies its future. For when he pauses to recall the order in which the mind of man has attacked the greater mysteries of his environment and the formation of those sciences through which his present enlightenment has been gained, it seems evident that neurology must eventually attain an exalted station; for it deals directly with the most remarkable structure known to all science, the nervous system of man, and it undertakes to scientifically elucidate the functions of this structure and to guard especially its health and preservation. The proportions of this undertaking are best conceived by those who have worked the longest with it and closest to it, the neurologists. Their pretensions are modest. They claim simply the application of the inductive method, and that by its use enough has already been accomplished to bring neurology into important relations with the scientific fraternity.

Chemical, physiologic, biologic and anatomic sciences long ago began to feel the attraction of certain neurologic problems, and this has been stimulated by the increasing capacity

of the neurologist to turn to practical account proffered knowledge from all these sources, until the alignment between them and him is now of no uncertain kind. Psychology has turned from the vagaries of metaphysics to the more tangible data of the psychiatrist and neurologist, and this of course brings us into the councils of the pedagogists and civicists and even those of the ecclesiastics, and that too on the footing of a recognized specialty. With this our social conquest would seem complete without looking farther among our correlated scientific neighbors for support of our pretensions.

Meantime our brother practitioners in the other branches of medicine have been discovering us. The surgeon first found the neurological fold a convenient receptacle for many of the fleeced failures of his art. But he now owns that this providential meeting with us had other benefits. He has gained a more conscientious dread of neuropathic snarls, especially those of a post-operative kind, and to avoid them turns to the proper sources for ante-operative guidance. In fact, in our placid way, we have made a friend of him. And a most valuable friend he has been. Much of the recent progress of neurology is due to the wonderful skill of modern surgery. We gratefully acknowledge the debt and felicitate ourselves over the intimacy which has grown between these two specialties. I allude particularly to surgery in this connection, not only because it is an old and great specialty, but because our more frequent friendly tilts with it serve best to illustrate the gradual and, I may say, natural process by which neurology has established its present professional standing. If time permitted it would be a pleasant task to run down the list of modern specialties and collect instances of interdependency wherein neurology supplies necessary links; and at the same time to distribute acknowledgements and thanks where they belong for the aid that has come to us from all sides.

Those espousing neurology to-day either as a branch of practice or as a laboratory specialty find opening to them an inviting field; a great specialty wherein the pioneering has been so thorough that the lines may readily be drawn between the genuine and spurious, so that the newcomer must be possessed of a considerable equipment and of a definite kind be-

fore he may hope to take rank in the actual work. There are, however, abundant opportunities, and an eager welcome on the part of those who are most interested in advancing both medical science and the art of neurologic practice.

The influence of neurological thought and practice upon modern medicine deserves a closer analysis and better defence than are here attempted. I must leave it to abler advocates. In passing, however, I cannot refrain from mention of the share that Americans have contributed to its advancement. I had thought of a brief chronological résumé of their work. But it was soon evident that even the briefest possible would carry me far beyond the limitations of the usual opening remarks, and that I must content myself with mere allusions to some of the more evident results. In the way of illustration, the names erythromelalgia, athetosis, amaurotic family idiocy, adiposis dolorosa, progressive hemiplegia are the world over borne by well-recognized syndromes or diseases which were first recognized and described and named by Americans—all of them, by the way, members of this Association. I venture to cite these instances not as the only or even the most remarkable achievements of the kind, but they quite readily impress us with the alertness of our own neurologists. Other American names are just as indissolubly connected with the literature of neurology in all its departments. In the work-a-day problems of anatomy and physiology of cerebral localization and spinal cord differentiations, in the clinico-pathological studies of the same and of the neuroses and psychoses, in nutritional and familial diseases they have shown their ability to keep abreast the tide of a rapidly growing science. The volume of work thus placed to their credit is only known to our confreres, busily absorbed in other lines, when some one embraces a convenient opportunity to indulge in a little pardonable boasting.

Americans also were among the first to recognize the necessity of providing for the systematic teaching of neurology. Their early efforts to gain an adequate recognition for the branch in our schools and in stimulating others to train for the better teaching of it have never been collectively chronicled. The result of their work appears, however, when we

compare the present status of neurological teaching in this country with what it was ten, fifteen and twenty years ago. Twenty years ago an occasional lecture with a neurological title in some few of the schools was about all the pupil heard of the subject. Now every school of any pretention provides for both laboratory and clinical instruction in neurology as carefully as its resources permit. When the resources for scientific, literary and school work in this country are compared with those abroad it becomes evident, if one considers the matter attentively, that American neurologists have accomplished a great deal.

Again, in the organization of special societies wherein high-grade work is encouraged the American neurologists early adopted another well-recognized means for their advancement. Our leading men and most earnest workers have given these societies a loyal support. Those of us who are most familiar with efforts to maintain a worthy standing for these bodies feel a deep sense of gratitude for their patient and invaluable help. The men who have made these societies are the men who have made American neurology. In short, there has been a fortunate harmony, a strong and helpful harmony, in the work of American neurologists during the formation period of their specialty.

A happy illustration of the fact is the history of this Association. It was organized thirty years ago. A comparison between conditions then and now will give some idea of what its experiences have been. This is not only its thirtieth year but its thirtieth annual meeting. Its members are to-day proud of its record. And in the pleasant associations that have grown about it they find attractions which year by year more closely cement the bonds of fellowship and helpful unity. That it has been the alma mater of American neurology none will dispute. In all these years it has never lost sight of what should be the highest aim of a society of medical specialists, namely, to broaden the scope of the profession by working in touch and sympathy with all branches thereof. The friendly exchanges, the conditions of scientific reciprocity between these various branches are more satisfactory to-day than they have ever been before. In the accomplishment of this end

neurology has had an important rôle. To maintain the same it has at times been called upon to exercise considerable polite persistence and scientific insistence, as I have already intimated. Under the shelter of wholesome organizations these necessary contentions attain a dignity and value on all sides which may be assured in no other manner. The validating function of a professional society is, however, only useful when never abused. Hence the necessity of maintaining the high standard which this Association has sought after.

We find, therefore, multiplying reasons why we shall seek as an Association to strengthen ourselves, but the chief one always will be that we may thereby help others.