OBITUARY NOTICE.

A RECITAL of what Dr. GEORGE B. WOOD has done is a fitting tribute to his memory. We may follow him through his public life, to use the language of woodmen, by the blazes which he has made, almost yearly, along his path, from the obscurity of private life to the brightness of renown. That the career of one who has deservedly attracted and long held the respectful attention of the profession, both at home and abroad, should be noticed in this Journal is unquestionable.

Dr. Wood was born March 13, 1797, in Greenwich, one of the oldest settlements on the river Cohansey, in Cumberland County, New Jersey. His parents belonged to the religious Society of Friends, were well-to-do farmers, and for some time kept a wholesale and retail store of miscellaneous goods. They and their ancestors, at the time of his birth, had owned and occupied the estate on which he was born a half century and upwards. They were always highly respected and influential in the community.

In 1815 Dr. Wood received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the University of Pennsylvania, became a pupil of Dr. Joseph Parrish, a leading practitioner of the day, and in 1818 acquired the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the same institution. Dyspepsia was the subject of his inaugural essay.

When Dr. Wood entered the ranks of the profession, the leading medical minds of Philadelphia and of the country generally had become more than usually interested in measures of improvement. Although the ability and disposition of the professors to teach thoroughly was not doubted, it was believed that the medical teaching of the University, then the only chartered medical school in the city, was defective. The length of the medical session did not afford time enough to enable the professors to deliver complete courses. Lectures on some subjects were omitted every year. As a remedy for such defect, preceptors, in addition to the personal attention which had been usually given to their pupils, employed assistants to impart instruction on special branches; and not long afterwards associations were formed to supplement the teaching of the University, by courses of lectures delivered during the spring and summer. One of these was The Medical Institute of Philadelphia, founded by Dr. Nathaniel Chapman, and another, The Philadelphia Association for Medical Instruction, founded by Dr. Joseph Parrish, both including members of the medical faculty of the University.

In the cities practitioners had ceased almost entirely to supply medicines to their patients. The apothecaries generally were not systematically taught. Very few of them were skilful or scientific pharmacists. No standard of official preparations had been established for the common observance of apothecaries of all parts of the country. The strength of preparations was not uniformly the same in different localities, nor even in all shops of the same town. Under such a condition it may be taken for granted that practitioners were reluctant to confide their prescriptions to be dispensed by apothecaries indiscriminately, and that the necessity of establishing a national pharmacopœia was manifest.

It was fortunate for him in the end, perhaps, that when Dr. Wood entered the field, the satisfaction of his personal wants and desires was to be attained and measured by the profits of his own labour. Besides a liberal education, he possessed good health, firmness of purpose, energy, and marked capability of continuous work. It is probable that his first professional aspiration was to become a teacher. He had learned that adequate knowledge and training are essential to success in every vocation, and early acquired a habit of carefully arranging what-

ever he conceived might be necessary to the occasion of his action; nothing was left to chance. He lost no time. It is related that he first lectured on chemistry to young persons of both sexes; and after a short time was employed by his preceptor, Dr. Parrish, to deliver lectures on chemistry to his private pupils. Such was his early training for his brilliant professorial career.

August 1, 1821, Dr. Wood was appointed one of the attending physicians of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. He discharged the duties of the office till Nov. 1844—twenty-three years—and from that time till his decease his name was on the list of the consulting physicians of the Institution.

The Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, with which Dr. Wood's early career is closely associated, owes its origin to a few public spirited and benevolent gentlemen, a majority of them members of the Society of Friends. Its foundation dates from Feb. 23, 1821, when Dr. Gerard Troost was appointed professor of chemistry, and Dr. Samuel Jackson professor of materia medica. The purpose of the founders of the college was to increase and diffuse knowledge of pharmacy. So well has it answered expectation, that what was at that time merely a trade, has become a scientific profession which has the confidence and respect of the community. Its members generally are competent and trustworthy, and in this respect are not inferior to physicians as a class. Since its foundation this institution has conferred its degree of graduate in pharmacy on 1528 of its 5913 matriculants. July 23, 1822, Dr. Wood was elected professor of chemistry in place of Dr. Troost, resigned.

About this time his intimacy with Dr. Franklin Bache, who was then teaching chemistry, began. This friendship was confiding and lifelong. Dr. Bache was five years older than his friend; and it is most probable that his experience contributed to the success of enterprises in which they jointly engaged.

April 2, 1823, the young professor married Caroline, the only child of Mr. Peter Hahn. This act severed his rightful connection with the Society of Friends.

Feb. 14, 1824, he delivered, pursuant to appointment, an oration before the Philadelphia Medical Society, in which he said: "Few professions are more truly respectable than that of pharmacy; few require in their members more science, skill, and moral integrity; and, so long as he moves within the proper sphere of his duties, the apothecary may challenge our highest este

Nov. 16, 1824, he delivered an address to the members of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, the object of which was to excite attention to its importance, and rouse the zeal of the druggists and pharmacists of the city in its favour. Thirty-five years afterwards he wrote: "It has been among the highest gratifications of my life, that I was able to contribute towards the expansion and permanent success of a school which has been productive of much good, which is still in prosperous operation, and the establishment of which may be considered as the commencement of a new era in the pharmacy of the United States."

Dr. Wood perceived that the influence of scientific and other societies on the lives of their members is often beneficent. His opinion was that "a young man thus connected, if disposed to take advantage of his opportunities, will have much greater chances of distinction and usefulness than if isolated in his course of life."

Feb. 1825, he was elected a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia; but during his life he never manifested interest in the pursuits of the society. April, 1827, he was elected a fellow of the College of Physicians, of Philadelphia; and Nov. 3, 1845, he was duly elected vice-president in competition with three other candidates, *vice* Dr. Henry Neill, deceased. On the death of Dr. Thomas T. Hewson, he was unanimously elected president of the

society March 7, 1848, and held the office until the close of his life—a period of thirty-one years.

As long as the condition of his health permitted, Dr. Wood actively participated in its proceedings, and performed all his duties in the society most acceptably, and gave liberally towards its progress in various ways. On condition that the library should be open daily, he annually contributed \$500 from June, 1866, and bequeathed \$10,000 to constitute a permanent fund for the perpetuation of this bounty, and directed besides that a mortgage of \$5000, which he held on the building, should be cancelled, and that all the medical books in his library, copies of which were not already in possession of the College, should be given to it.

Oct. 29, 1827, Dr. Wood read before the council of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, a "History of the University of Pennsylvania," which was printed by the council.

Jan. 17, 1829, he was selected to be a member of the American Philosophical Society, and was elected president, Jan. 1859, and died in office. He bequeathed \$20,000 to the building-fund of the Society; and his "copy of the great work of Canova on the ancient buildings of Rome."

The *Journal of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy* was started in 1825; four numbers were issued in the course of three years. March 31, 1829, Dr. Wood was appointed a member of the publication committee of the College, and served on it till 1844. The first number of a new series of the journal was issued in April, 1829. Since then it has been published regularly, and now appears monthly.

Jan. 1830, Dr. Wood was a member of the Philadelphia Association for Medical Instruction; he lectured on materia medica and the institutes of medicine, and continued till the association was dissolved in 1836.

In Jan. 1830, he was one of the delegates appointed by the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, to the National Convention for the revision of the Pharmacopœia of the United States. The convention met in Washington, D. C. Drs. Wood and Bache were appointed members of the committee of revision and publication.

The first Pharmacopœia of the United States was published in Boston in 1820, under authority of a convention composed of representatives of several incorporated medical institutions of the Union, including the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, which met in Washington in January. Dr. Franklin Bache published a review of the organic part of this work in the *American Medical Record* of 1821, vol. iv. p. 483, which is immediately followed in the same volume by an elaborate criticism of the organic part, which is ascribed to Dr. Wood.

Dr. Wood was elected vice-president of the National Convention, and chairman of the committee of revision and publication of the pharmacopœia, in 1840; president in 1850 and 1860, and member of the committee of revision and publication in 1870. Dr. Bache was associated with him in every revision of the pharmacopœia, except the last.

Sept. 28, 1830, Dr. Wood was elected a trustee of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy. On his motion a committee was appointed, Oct. 26, 1830, to examine the newly prepared Pharmacopœia. It reported, Dec. 28, 1830, that it was in every respect improved, and recommended that the observance of its formulæ be enjoined on all members of the college. The work was published in Philadelphia, April, 1831, by John Grigg.

The *North American Medical and Surgical Journal* for Jan. 1831, contains a review ascribed to the pen of Dr. Wood, on "The Pharmacopœia of the United States of America, by authority of the General Convention held in 1830. Second edition from the first edition published in 1820, with additions and cor-

rections, New York, Nov. 1830." The reviewer condemns the plan and execution of the work, and shows that the national convention did not authorize or sanction its publication.

May 24, 1831, he was elected professor of materia medica in the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, *vice* Dr. Benjamin Ellis, deceased, and was succeeded in the chair of chemistry by Dr. Franklin Bache.

Jan. 1833, *The Dispensatory of the United States of America* was published. This work was begun in Oct. 1830, in conjunction with Dr. Franklin Bache and Mr. Daniel B. Smith. The latter very soon withdrew. This Dispensatory is mainly an explanatory commentary on the Pharmacopœia of the United States. The first edition contains 1073 pages 8vo., and the fourteenth, published 1877, 1879 pages. It is estimated that 120,000 copies of this work have been sold.

Dr. Wood was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of the Girard College, February, 1833, by the City Councils, and served on it till the board was abolished Dec. 23, 1841—eight years. April 1, 1835, he presented a "Report of the Committee on Clothing, Diet, etc., to the Board of Trustees of the Girard College for Orphans;" and July 16, 1840, a "Communication from the Board of Trustees of the Girard College for Orphans to the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia." This paper is a succinct history of the transactions of the Board from its commencement.

Dr. Wood was always an advocate of temperance. He has recorded his views on "The Temperance Cause" in an essay published in the *United States Review* for January, 1834. He believed that "so long as the advocates of temperance refuse to admit the moderate use of pure fermented liquors, as cider, ale, the light wines, etc., within the meaning of the term, their cause will never be universally nor even generally adopted."

The death of his wife's father, May 10, 1835, placed him in comparatively easy circumstances, and he was soon after enabled to erect a spacious house in which he resided during the remainder of his life.

Oct. 6, 1835, he was elected professor of materia medica and pharmacy in the University of Pennsylvania, in place of Dr. John Rodman Cox. Dr. Wood's lectures on materia medica were demonstrative. In addition to the collection of an admirable cabinet of illustrative drawings and specimens, he erected a spacious green-house in connection with a garden in the rear of his dwelling for the preservation and collection of medicinal plants.¹

In 1835 he was elected one of the attending physicians of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and served till 1859—twenty-four years.

In his address to the medical graduates at the commencement, March 26, 1836, he gave a "Sketch of the History of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania."

Jan. 23, 1839, he delivered an address on the "British East India Empire," before The Athenian Institute, an association of gentlemen formed for the purpose of promoting literary tastes and habits in Philadelphia. With this view they set on foot a series of weekly lectures, the subject being left to the choice of the lecturer. During the early years of his career, when he had less professional occupation than he desired, Dr. Wood became so much interested in the affairs of India, especially of Hindostan, that he began to qualify himself to write a history of the country, and employed his leisure in preparing a history of Christianity in India in eleven chapters. At this point his increasing professional avocations induced him to abandon the enterprise; but that so much work might not

¹ See Carson's History of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania, Philada., 1869.

be lost, he published it in 1872, in a volume of Historical and Biographical Memoirs.

In 1847 he published his *Treatise on the Practice of Medicine*, 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 1848. The sixth edition, pp. 1984, was published in 1867. The aggregate of copies sold up to this time is estimated at 30,000.

In May, 1850, he was elected professor of the theory and practice of medicine and of clinical medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, in place of Dr. Nathaniel Chapman, resigned. During the summer, accompanied by Dr. Joseph Leidy, he visited England, France, Germany, and the northern part of Italy. The fruits of this journey were a large number of drawings of pathological lesions, casts, and models of disease, a quantity of apparatus, and an extensive range of pathological specimens, through the means of which he made his lectures on the practice of medicine eminently demonstrative.¹

June 10, 1851, at the centennial celebration of its foundation he read his "History of the Pennsylvania Hospital."

In the company of Dr. Franklin Bache he passed the summer of 1853 in Europe.

May 6, 1856, at Detroit, he delivered an address to the American Medical Association of which he had been elected president at the preceding meeting. He was a member of the association from its formation, 1847, and always manifested zealous interest in its great objects, improvement of medical education, increase of the qualification of the members of the profession, and the advancement of medical science.

Oct. 1, 1856, he read his "Historical Sketch of the department of Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane," at the laying of the corner stone of the new building.

In 1856 he published his *Treatise on Therapeutics and Pharmacology*, two volumes, pp. 1741, 8vo. The third edition, pp. 1848, was issued in 1868. The number of copies sold up to this time is estimated at 10,000.

December, 1859, he published "Introductory Lectures and Addresses on Medical Subjects delivered chiefly before the Medical Classes of the University of Pennsylvania." 8vo. pp. 460.

Having completed the sixty-third year of his life, Dr. Wood determined to relinquish his practice of medicine, which was never very large, and retire. In 1860 he resigned his professorship, and was elected Emeritus Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, a position for which a retired pay should be provided for life instead of being merely complimentary. He had been a professor in the University twenty-five years.

May 6, 1860, a complimentary dinner was given to Dr. George B. Wood, at the Academy of Music, "by a large number of his professional friends, in testimony of their respect and esteem for him personally, and of their estimate of the value of his labours to elevate the character of the profession and to extend the bounds of our science. Certainly, no one in this country has better earned this compliment from his professional brethren."²

Dr. Wood went to Europe in the summer of 1860 and returned in 1862. In 1863 he was chosen a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania.

At the instigation of Dr. Wood the board of trustees created, April 4, 1865, in connection with the Medical Department of the University, the Auxiliary Faculty of Medicine. The professors receive a salary. It consists of professors of: 1, zoology and comparative anatomy; 2, botany; 3, mineralogy; 4, hygiene; 5, medical jurisprudence and toxicology. Each course consists of at least thirty-

¹ See Carson's History of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania.

² The Medical News and Library, June, 1860.

four lectures delivered in April, May, and June. The first courses were delivered in 1866, and are continued.

Dr. Wood paid each professor \$500 annually from the commencement, and bequeathed a fund of \$50,000 from which the payment is to be continued. He also bequeathed to the University his numerous collections, all his medicinal plants, and \$5000 to establish a botanial garden and conservatory, and to the University Hospital \$75,000 to establish in it "the Peter Hahn Ward."

March 4, 1867, Mrs. Wood died. The marriage was without issue.

April, 1872, he published his "Historical and Biographical Memoirs, Essays, Addresses, etc. etc., written at various times during the last fifty years, and now first published in a collected form," 8vo. pp. 576.

The aggregate of Dr. Wood's published writings exceeds 7000 pages 8vo., and, it is understood, he has left some manuscripts unprinted. He has achieved nothing in the fields of original research and invention.

He was an uncommonly skilful teacher, an effective writer, and successful author. Most of his study and writing were done during the night, between the hours of 10 P. M. and 4 A. M. He gathered reward as he worked without reckoning the prospective profit of his toil. He wrought incessantly. Even his annual summer journeys to different parts of the United States, or in Europe, seemingly for relaxation alone, always had some object of professional interest to be attained. Those summer jaunts were always made in a somewhat ostentatious style, so that he never appeared to strangers as a commonplace traveller. Though he frequently at home entertained tastefully and sumptuously numerous evening guests, social intercourse in the ordinary sense was not necessary to his happiness. His great pleasure was found in the solitude of his study. He was methodical in his way, painstaking and accurate in his work, and always punctual to the minute of appointment. He seemed to think that society generally is not aware of the incalculable benefits which are derived from the medical profession, independently of the services that the sick and wounded receive from it; that, in the estimation of the unthinking, medical attendance is necessarily personal service, and therefore a sort of servile occupation; and for this reason that the value of the profession is not appreciated as it should be. To make its dignity conspicuous, and place it higher in public estimation, was a lifelong purpose, to be achieved, in his opinion, by augmenting the facilities of the education and increasing the qualifications of its members. This disposition is manifest in his beneficence to the College of Physicians and to the University of Pennsylvania, as well as in his laborious contributions to the progress of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, and to giving stability and due authority to the Pharmacopœia, which is ascribable largely to his labours.

Dr. George B. Wood died at his residence in Philadelphia, March 30, 1879, at the advanced age of 82 years, having spent his long life usefully and acceptably in every respect. He was generous, benevolent, charitable in the broadest sense of the term. His character is without stain.

W. S. W. R.