

For many years there stood in the doctor's office, at his elbow as he wrote, a bust of Voltaire, upon which he liked to discourse. The shrewd, quizzical glance of the eye, the sneer of the lip and the mocking smile of the face amused and fascinated him. It appealed, perhaps, to one side of his own nature, seeing, as one must, the foibles and weaknesses of mankind. But his interest in the bust did not imply that he himself was a mocker at goodness. The crafty and cynical philosopher interested him as one addition to the multimiform human types, the *comédie humaine*, which he was himself always studying. It did not mean that he looked out upon the world through those leering eyes. The purely surgical specialist, who sees a patient only for a brief space before and after the operation, may get no deeper vision into that man than the particular anatomical cavity which he explores. But Dr. Bolles was throughout his life also a general practitioner, and in that somewhat outgrown and scorned capacity he had an opportunity to see more of the great drama of human life, its strength as well as its weakness, its triumphs as well as its defeats. If he viewed its unlovely aspects with the eye of the cynic, he yet saw, on the whole, much more to attract his admiration and regard. No man could hold, as Dr. Bolles did, the personal regard and love of so many patients, unless he had himself recognized in most of them some spark of nobility.

He sometimes referred to himself jestingly as the slave of beauty, under which pleasantry he meant, I think, that he seriously worshipped beauty wherever he found it,—that beauty which clothed the flowers of the field that he so greatly loved, the beauty of art and of every skilled handiwork; the beauty of books and of their appropriate clothing; the beauty of the human form divine; of human life and the human soul.

And who of us all shall venture to deny that that great passion is now being fed, to a fuller satisfaction, in some realm of cosmic beauty?

II.

WILLIAM PALMER BOLLES.*

By EDWARD WALDO EMERSON, M.D., CONCORD, MASS.

It is a disappointment to me that I cannot present my memories of a dear and honored friend in informal speech—the more human way—rather than in writing, and that confinement from illness must prevent a better furnished and prepared paper.

I look back through forty-seven years to the daunting first immersion into anatomy by way of the difficult Latin-English of Quain, cleared by the admirable Holmes, and helped out by our first dissecting-room experience. At the afternoon recitation to Dr. C. B. Porter, the dem-

onstrator, I trembled when called up, and retired mortified. But I noticed a small, hectic-looking student who answered the call coolly and recited accurately. His habitual preparedness mortified me, but, looking closely at him, I said to myself, "It is costing that man too much. He won't be alive two years hence." This was William Bolles, but he lived forty-six years more, a helper to others, through a busy life filled with manifold and interesting activities.

It was his second year of medical study, and I supposed him my senior. He soon made friendly advances, and invited me to his room, with one or two others, for mutual quiz. Then it turned out that he was the younger, but a remarkable student, faithful and exact. Learning that some illustrations were desired for a lecture, he drew, on a large scale, and painted with great skill and correctness what had been asked for. The reward for this service was the merest casual mention by the distinguished professor of "these paintings by one of your number—a Mr. Ball, or Bull—I forget the name."

Bolles was born in New London,—the old family home which he loved to visit was nearby in Waterford, Conn.,—and had the eager instinct for natural history, which probably saved him in his delicate youth, when he was not fitted for rough games. He knew all about flowers; was a good botanist all his life. Physics attracted his taste and skilful hand and true eye.

He made good use of the New London schools; did not go to college, but studied under the guidance of his father, whose interest in literature and science seem to have, in his son's case, served quite as well as the curriculum. He then, in accordance with general usage for medical students, studied and rode for a year with a local physician.

His father died, and William came to Boston to pursue his studies. Bolles's class took their degrees before the reform in the Harvard Medical School. All students paid for all the lectures for two years. These went on through the autumn, winter and spring. We could attend them in any order, and without guidance—surgery before anatomy, therapeutics before physiology, if we chose. In pathological anatomy the question whether "cheesy masses" or "miliary tubercles" were the real thing was unsettled. Microscopy was just introduced, a sort of elective; and physiology was taught didactically. Asepsis was unthought of in the hospitals, and antiseptics were being grossly introduced. So Bolles, graduating under the ancient régime, but aiming at hospital and city practice, had to learn all these things as he went along, later.

Bolles's advance is very interesting. Not physically strong, with some weakness in the back while in the Medical School (he worked standing when he must, but studied lying down instead of sitting): without relatives or acquaintance in Boston society; not then striking in ap-

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pearance, and always very plainly clothed, he won general respect among the body of students: he had little chance for an appointment as house officer at the Massachusetts General Hospital, which usually were given then to youths who "came of kenneled folk," but he passed his examination at the City Hospital and *won* his appointment on the surgical side; on leaving the hospital he took a summer vacation, to recuperate his health, as surgeon on a sailing vessel, studied for one winter in Vienna, and soon after his return, was placed on the surgical out-patient staff at the City Hospital; soon after, he received the appointment of Professor of Materia Medica and Botany at the new Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. He settled in a pleasant and then semi-rural part of Dorchester. Practice began to come in, and his eager mind, and hands of manifold deftness, knew well how to fill the hours. Before long his professional intelligence, fidelity and skill brought to him, still young, the appointment on the active surgical staff of the City Hospital. This position he held with advancing credit for twenty-five years. Retired on the age-limit, he remained a consultant. Happily for his neighbors he remained an admirable general practitioner until within the last few years. This choice, of course, prevented him from advancing to highest rank as a modern surgeon. His was a history of success fairly won by character and brave, cheerful effort.

Dr. Bolles early made a home for his widowed mother and younger brother. After the death of the former, he married Miss Martha B. Sumner, who survives him. The untimely death of their son, an only child, was a grievous blow to them.

But Bolles was not only a doctor. He was a natural craftsman, self-taught, in many directions. He had a work-shop with the best tools and apparatus. There, long before breakfast, he was happily at work. When I began practice, I received a gift of his carved splints of many kinds, of original and excellent device, such as could not be bought; finger and thumb-splints, too, of brass. One day he showed me a set of instruments of precision in minutest weighing and measuring, his own handiwork. He melted silver and fashioned it into artistic shapes. Always a good microscopist, in his later days he bought a telescope and studied the skies with delight. His skill with pencil and paint-brush has been mentioned, but photography, in which he was a master, interested him more than art. His photographs of flowers could hardly be surpassed, and in landscape he had a good sense of composition, yet with regard to old masters and Renaissance painting, it pleased him to play the Philistine. On his first visit to Antwerp and Brussels he wrote to me of a new and unlooked-for interest he had found in the galleries—dermatological. Rubens' rich renderings of Rubella, Scarlatina, Roseola, *et id omne genus*, in

goddesses, nymphs and warriors, he revelled in, in a highly amusing letter.

At different times, later, he spent three summer vacations in Europe, surely finding more than mere medical interest in art, but he was not of a romantic temperament, and his microscopic eyes wanted more than color-generalizations. Similarly, in his eagerness for nature and science, he found no time for poetry or novels.

The busy years of faithful and successful practice sped by, leaving each its crown of respect and gratitude as his hair silvered. He looked healthier and even younger in his later days. His kindness was overflowing, and "he believed the best of everybody."

Last winter, Dr. Bolles decided to visit California for the first time, his wife accompanying him. They took one of those rose-embowered cottages under the beautifully folded mountains of Santa Barbara. There was really no winter; the paradise of that place was a revelation to them, the flowers and trees all new. They found old friends there, and made new, and the climate favored the excursions afield which he loved. On the 18th of last March, at the end of a happy day out of doors, Dr. Bolles had a sudden heart-attack, and in a few minutes received his release.

I like to end this sketch of William Bolles with our old master's, Dr. Holmes's, answer by the majestic shades of the brave healers of the past as to the rewards of our profession:

"List while they speak:

In life's uneven road

Our willing hands have eased our brother's load;

One forehead smoothed, one pang of torture less,
One peaceful hour a sufferer's couch to bless.

The smile brought back to fever's parching lips,
The light restored to reason in eclipse,

Life's Treasure rescued like a burning brand
Snatched from the dread destroyer's wasteful hand.

Such were our simple records, day by day,
For gains like these we wore our lives away.
In toilsome paths our daily bread we sought.
But bread from Heaven attending angels brought.

Pain was our teacher, speaking to the heart,
Mother of pity, nurse of pitying art:
Our lesson learned, we reached the peaceful shore

Where the pale sufferer asks our aid no more,—
These gracious works our welcome, our reward;
Ye served your brothers; ye have served your Lord!"