

OCCASIONAL NOTES ON AMERICAN MEDICAL
CLASSICS.¹

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE TO A COURSE OF CLINICAL OBSERVATIONS
IN THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL, DELIVERED THERE ON THE
3D OF DECEMBER, 1776, BY DR. THOMAS BOND.

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THIS is interesting to us as the first clinical lecture delivered in America. Founded in 1752, the Pennsylvania Hospital was the first general hospital organized in the English-speaking colonies. It grew rapidly, so that within fifteen years of its foundation there were 130 patients in the wards. The original staff consisted of Dr. Thomas Bond, Dr. Phineas Bond, and Dr. Lloyd Zacchary.

We have already heard, in speaking of Dr. John Morgan, how the Medical Faculty of the Philadelphia College had been organized. Neither Morgan nor Shippen, the two professors, were connected with the hospital, and it was doubtless felt that it would be of great importance to the young school if the students were enabled to attend its practice and receive instruction in the wards. Accordingly, we find from the minutes of the managers that a letter was received from Dr. Thomas Bond, in which he proposed to give clinical lectures to the students on physic on the nature, causes, and cure of diseases, and to put up a meteorological apparatus in the picture-room for observa-

¹ Read at a meeting of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Historical Society.

tion of the weather, and keeping an exact account of the epidemic diseases caused thereby. He requested them to call a meeting, at which he should present to them the advantages to be derived from the institution of such lectures. Accordingly, we find the note in the minutes "that on the 26th of the 11th month, 1766, in pursuance of the summons of the sitting managers, all the managers met at the house of Dr. Thomas Bond, together with the following physicians: Dr. Thomas Bond, Dr. Cadwallader, Dr. Shippen, Dr. Redman, and Dr. Evans." The lecture was ordered to be inserted in the minutes of the board, and has in this way been preserved. It is stated in the heading of the lecture that it was delivered in the Pennsylvania Hospital December 3, 1766, which would indicate that Dr. Bond had repeated the lecture before the students in public, and that the notice of the lecture, having been read on the 29th of November, referred to a private reading before the managers at Dr. Bond's house.

The lecture has a special interest as the first delivered in a hospital in this country. In 1827 it was copied by Mr. Paul Eve, at that time a student of the Pennsylvania Hospital (who subsequently became a distinguished surgeon in the West), and it appears in the *North American Medical and Surgical Journal*, Vol. IV, for that year.

Of the lecture itself I may give the following abstract: Dr. Bond refers first to the school of physic, lately opened in the city, which, with the co-operation of the institution of literature and charity already founded, will enable the student of physic to acquire all the knowledge necessary for practising every branch of his profession, reputably and judiciously. The student should study medicine in the country in which he is to practise, as every climate produces diseases peculiar to itself, and the precepts and a never-failing experience are handed down locally from father to son and from tutor to pupil. In speaking of the three chairs which had been organized at the medical school, he refers to the necessity of supplementing a theoretical and didactic instruction by a personal knowledge of disease, remarking that the student "must join examples with study before he can be sufficiently qualified to prescribe for the sick; for language and books alone can never give him adequate ideas of disease and the best method of treating them. For which reasons, infirmaries are justly reputed great theatres of medical knowledge." He gives an admirable picture of the way in which ward work should be conducted; "the clinical professor comes in to the aid of speculation and demonstrates the truth of theory by facts; he meets his pupils at stated times at the hospital; and when a case presents adapted to his purpose, he asks all those questions which lead to a certain knowledge of the disease and parts affected; this he does in the most exact and particular manner to con-

vince the students how many and what minute circumstances are necessary to form a judgment of the curative indications on which the safety and life of the patient depends; from all which circumstances and the present symptoms he pronounces what the disease is; whether it is curable or incurable; in what manner it should be treated, and gives his reasons, from authority or experience, for all he says on the occasion; and if the disease baffles the power of art, and the patient falls a sacrifice to it, he then brings his knowledge to the test and fixes honor or discredit on his reputation by exposing all the morbid parts to view, and demonstrates by what means it produces death; and if, perchance, he finds something unexpected, which betrays an error in judgment, he, like a great and good man, immediately acknowledges the mistake, and, for the benefit of survivors, points out other methods by which it might have been happily treated." He gives two illustrations of the value of post-mortem examinations in forming diagnosis and in giving students just ideas of the causes of death. In connection with one of these cases, an abscess of the brain, he remarks on the paralysis of the body on the opposite side.

With a wisdom we can appreciate better than his hearers, he urges the study of the causes of disease, particularly of the severe epidemics, with which Philadelphia had been plagued for many years. He states "the atmosphere which surrounds us is fine, the air we breathe free, pure, and naturally healthy, and I am fully persuaded we shall find, on strict study, when it becomes otherwise, it is from contagion imported or neglected sources of putrefaction among ourselves, and, therefore, whenever we are able to demonstrate the causes, they may be removed and the effect prevented." In the case of malaria, which had been particularly severe during the preceding year in the Middle and Southern States, he held out hopes, from the experience he had had in Philadelphia, that by proper drainage and cleanliness, the severity of the epidemics could be mitigated. He says, "When I first came into this city, the Dock was the common sewer of filth, and was such a nuisance to the inhabitants about it that they were obliged to use more pounds of bark than they have ounces since it has been raised and levelled. Another striking instance of the advantage of cleanliness for the preservation of health affords me an opportunity of paying a tribute, justly due, to the wisdom of the legislature of this province, in framing salutary laws for paving and regulating the streets of this city, and to the indefatigable industry and skill of the commissioners in executing them; whereby they have contributed so much to the healthiness of the inhabitants that I am confident the whole expense will be repaired in

ten years, by a lessening of the physic bills alone." It is very interesting to note the clear and decisive manner in which Dr. Bond speaks of the necessity of isolation and disinfection of cases of contagious disease. Speaking of typhus fever, he states that he had lately visited an Irish vessel, which had come into the port, and had found five passengers ill with the jail fever,—the typhus. He saw that the *fomes* of infection were spreading, and ordered the ship "to lay quarantine, to be well purified with the steams of sulphur and with vinegar; directed the bedding and clothing of the people to be well washed and dried before any person should be permitted to land out of it; after which I advised separating the sick from the healthy." We cannot consider him so happy in his remarks upon the prevention of autumnal and intermittent fevers; referring in particular to his remedies, which still are popularly believed to lessen the receptivity of the malarial poison,—namely, sassafras-bark and the natural chalybeate sulphur-waters. In conclusion, he tells the students that he will be prepared to meet them at stated times and to introduce them to a familiar acquaintance with the acute diseases, and with the nature and treatment of chronic diseases, and the proper management of ulcers, wounds, and fractures, and he promises that they shall see many curious cases among the 130 sick persons at the hospital. He promises also to put up a complete meteorological apparatus, in order to study the effects of the variation of the weather upon the prevailing diseases. And he advises the students to attend Provost Smith's course of experimental philosophy, in order that they may the better appreciate his remarks on meteorology.

In a subsequent minute the managers unanimously agree to the proposal to institute clinical lectures, and placed the fee for the privilege of attendance at one guinea per annum; the money to be applied towards establishing and promoting a medical library.

A few details about Dr. Thomas Bond may be of interest, and for the most of these I am indebted to Dr. W. A. Armstrong, of Philadelphia.

Dr. Bond was born in Calvert County, Md., in 1712. He received his medical education in Europe, and began to practise in Philadelphia in 1732. He appears to have been a very philanthropic man, and about 1750 the idea of a hospital for the sick poor occurred to him. After repeated unsuccessful interviews with wealthy and influential people he finally consulted Benjamin Franklin, who eagerly embraced the project, and who "by the use of a little cunning" introduced a bill into the Assembly, February 7, 1751, entitled "an act to encourage the establishment of a hospital." Franklin's diplomacy secured the unanimous passage of this act, which received the gov-

ernor's signature May 11, 1751. Soon after this a meeting was called and managers elected, of whom Dr. Bond was one. A contributor, Samuel Rhoads, a builder, was instructed to "look for and secure boards to build the hospital." In the mean time a private dwelling-house on Market Street above Fifth was leased at £40 a year.

October 23, 1751, Dr. Lloyd Zacchary, Thomas Bond, and his brother Phineas Bond, offered "to attend gratis for the first three years." Drs. Graeme, Cadwallader, Moore, and Redman were to be called in extraordinary cases.

The first patients were not admitted until February 11, 1752, and it was not until 1754 that the present site of the Pennsylvania Hospital was purchased. Dr. Bond would appear unquestionably to have been the originator of the Pennsylvania Hospital, and full credit is given to him by Benjamin Franklin. Several notes in the minutes refer to Dr. Bond; thus, on November 30, 1757, he presented the library with medical books valued at £12 4s 9d. On March 28, 1769, the first mention of fees (£26 7s 0d) received from medical students attending the lectures of Dr. Bond. Dr. Bond served as surgeon and physician to the hospital from October 2, 1751, to May, 1776. No mention of his name as attending physician occurred after this date, but at a subsequent meeting, March 26, there is an appropriate minute on his death, in 1784.