

## IN MEMORIAM.

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BENJAMIN FORDYCE BARKER, M.D., LL.D.

*Born May 2d, 1818 ; Died May 30th, 1891.*

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ALTHOUGH not entirely unexpected, for it was known to his friends and the majority of the profession that he was in feeble health, the death of Dr. Barker came like a thunderbolt to his many friends and admirers. When the news appeared in the evening papers of May 30th that Fordyce Barker was dead, it is no exaggeration to say that a gloom spread over the whole medical profession of the city of New York—a feeling which extended throughout the whole land and across the ocean as the sad news was promulgated. Not only those who had enjoyed the privilege of Dr. Barker's acquaintance and friendship, but also the many who had met him but casually, felt as though each had lost a dear friend, and as though he himself had been afflicted by a personal calamity.

There surely never was in the city of New York a member of the medical profession who was more popular, and deservedly so, than Fordyce Barker. If he had enemies among the medical profession, they, with rare exceptions, were careful to hide their feeling; and among the laity—that is to say, among the large, wealthy, and influential portion of the community whom he numbered among his patients—his name was a household word, his visit a ray of sunshine.

Dr. Barker understood, with a tact which was never at fault, how to impress his patients with the belief that he was their personal friend as well as medical adviser, and that no case interested him as much as the one which he was at that moment attending. And in conveying this impression Dr. Barker's kindness of heart and sympathetic manner had a large share. It is safe to say that no man ever approached the bedside of a patient who carried with him more of the qualities necessary to gain the confidence of the sufferer and lead him

or her to expect a speedy recovery, than did Dr. Barker. But let it not be inferred that the beneficial results of his visits were due mostly to his personal magnetism and genial words. While not a surgeon—indeed, rarely ever touching the knife—he understood to a marvellous degree the effect of drugs combined with hygiene upon the human system; and the writer of this memoir, while assistant surgeon to Dr. Barker at the New York Woman's Hospital, had many an opportunity to admire and profit by his *medical* treatment of gynecological cases.

As a family practitioner Dr. Barker's position in New York was practically unique. He enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the prominent families of the city, with many of whom he had, as it were, grown up in their rise to affluence and distinction.

As an obstetrician, Dr. Barker, almost up to the time of his death, was more sought for, by those able to pay his fees, than any other accoucheur in the city. Having been in practice in New York for forty years, his experience both in ordinary obstetric cases and as a consulting obstetrician was enormous, and his services were called for in the majority of difficult confinements occurring in high life. In spite of a defect of speech, owing to a partial paralysis of one of his vocal cords, which for over twenty years rendered his voice husky, Dr. Barker was an excellent teacher, a fluent speaker, and as an after-dinner orator second to none in the medical profession during his palmy days. His great fund of anecdote, his personal acquaintance with many prominent men in this country and abroad, his genial humor, and his hearty good-fellowship with all who enlisted his sympathies, rendered a speech from him or an evening spent in his company a treat always to be remembered and treasured up as a pleasant episode in the recollection of the participants. No more genial host than Fordyce Barker has, within the memory of the writer, figured in New York society. He had a faculty of making his guests feel at home, at peace with themselves and each other, and his dinners and receptions were so popular that on the latter occasions his hospitable home was invariably crowded by the élite of the profession. His generosity was unbounded, and his check book always at the service of professional enterprises

and needy fellow-practitioners. Truly, Fordyce Barker was one of Nature's gentlemen and a Prince among men!

Born in Wilton, Maine, and graduated at Bowdoin College, he visited Edinburgh and Paris, receiving the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the latter university in 1841. He first began practice in Norwich, Conn., was made professor of midwifery in Bowdoin Medical College in 1845, and professor of the same branch and the diseases of women at the New York Medical College in 1850, when he removed to this city.

In 1852 he became obstetric physician to Bellevue Hospital, and in 1860 professor of clinical midwifery and diseases of women in Bellevue Hospital Medical College, which positions he held for many years until increasing cares and years obliged him to relinquish them.

Dr. Barker was consulting physician to Bellevue Hospital, the Nursery and Child's Hospital, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, the Cancer Hospital, and for several years surgeon to the Woman's Hospital. He was a member of many medical associations, notably the New York Academy of Medicine, of which he was president from 1878 to 1884; the New York County Medical Society, the New York Obstetrical Society, the New York Pathological Society, the New York Medical and Surgical Society; the Medical Society of the State of New York, of which he was formerly president; and the American Gynecological Society, of which he was the first president in 1876. He was also Honorary Fellow of the Royal Medical Society of Athens and of the obstetrical societies of Edinburgh, London, Philadelphia, and Louisville, and of the Philadelphia College of Physicians. In 1886 the University of Edinburgh conferred upon him the degree of LL.D., which he had already received from Bowdoin and Columbia Colleges. He contributed to medical literature many lectures and papers, and was the author of a standard work on puerperal diseases, which was published in 1874, and was translated into Italian, French, German, and Spanish. He was also the author of a treatise on seasickness.

It was Dr. Barker's habit for many years to spend his summers abroad, where he made the acquaintance not only of the leading members of the medical profession, chiefly in England and France, but also of many literary, social, and artistic

celebrities, such as Dickens, Thackeray, Christine Nilsson, who, on visiting this country, were his friends and patients. His parlors, waiting and consulting rooms were filled with mementoes of these and many other distinguished people, and his house was in a measure a rendezvous for eminent foreigners, who will miss by his death the opportunity to meet kindred spirits on this side of the Atlantic.

Time will show who will prove himself willing and able to take Dr. Barker's place. The writer cannot close this imperfect sketch without referring to the personal obligation which he bears to the memory of his lamented friend. When a young, struggling practitioner, seeking to establish himself in this city with a view of eventually becoming a specialist, and when the road seemed steep and narrow, and success at the best doubtful, Dr. Barker was among the first to lend a helping hand by offering the writer the position as assistant surgeon on his service at the Woman's Hospital, to which he (Dr. Barker) had just been appointed to succeed Dr. J. Marion Sims. For this act of friendly kindness the writer can never sufficiently express his thanks.

Although not connected with Dr. Barker in private practice, the writer has never ceased to entertain for his former chief the sentiments of unbounded respect and admiration which were inspired by the kindly act referred to and maintained by many subsequent evidences of friendship and good-feeling. This memoir is but a slight tribute of the author's affection for his old friend and teacher.

PAUL F. MUNDÉ.

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RESOLUTIONS OF THE NEW YORK OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY ON THE  
DEATH OF DR. FORDYCE BARKER.

*Resolved*, That by the death of Dr. Fordyce Barker the New York Obstetrical Society has sustained the loss of its oldest and most eminent Honorary Fellow, who, though prevented in recent years, by reason of his failing health, from taking an active part in its scientific work, always maintained a lively interest in its proceedings and rejoiced in its prosperity.

*Resolved*, That the Fellows of this Society, recalling his numerous acts of kindness toward them individually, feel that when his great, warm heart ceased to beat they lost not only one who was the finest type of professional honor and dignity, but a long-trying personal friend.

*Resolved*, That they will cherish his memory as that of a wise physician and a chivalrous, high-toned gentleman, whose name will ever remain a synonym for all that is noblest and best in our profession.

*Resolved*, That they respectfully tender to the family of the deceased their sincere sympathy, and that copies of these resolutions be sent to them and published in the various medical journals.

For the Society,

THOMAS ADDIS EMMET, M.D.

WILLIAM M. POLK, M.D.

JOSEPH E. JANVRIN, M.D.

HENRY C. COE, M.D.

THE MEDICAL BOARD OF THE NEW YORK MATERNITY HOSPITAL adopted the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That by the death of Dr. Fordyce Barker, consulting surgeon to the Hospital, we have met with the loss of a warm personal friend as well as of a valued counsellor. Although unable, by reason of increasing infirmities, to take an active part in the work of the Hospital, his interest in its welfare and in the branch of medicine in which he was so eminent never abated. In common with the whole profession, we cherish his memory as that of a wise physician and a good man, who died full of years and honors.

By the Board,

HENRY C. COE, M.D.,

*Secretary.*

At a meeting of the MEDICAL BOARD OF BELLEVUE HOSPITAL, held June 1st, 1891, the following resolutions were adopted:

*Resolved*, That it is with the deepest sentiments of regret that this Board has learned of the death of Fordyce Barker, M.D., LL.D., who has been identified for so many years with

the medical staff of this Hospital as one of its most distinguished and deservedly esteemed members ; that his removal at this time is felt by his colleagues as a special loss to this institution.

*Resolved*, That in Dr. Barker his colleagues have always recognized a man of exceptional endowments, both of mind and education, which made him the ornament and pride of medicine, which caused him to be an example in these respects to all his fellows.

*Resolved*, That the thirty-five years spent in ministering to the sick in this Hospital with the faithfulness to that duty which characterized Dr. Barker, is of itself a testimony to the worth of the life which is now closed. But, in addition to this, Dr. Barker used the opportunities of his connection with this Hospital to teach others by his experience, by his wide knowledge, by his exceptional skill, and by his great literary gifts, to an extent which has been widely appreciated by the whole medical profession in America and abroad.

GEORGE WOOLSEY, M.D.,  
*Secretary Medical Board.*



A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF FORDYCE BARKER, M. D.

*"Homo sum: humani nihil alienum a me puto."*

THESE words of the great Orator, little enough true though they probably were when applied to himself, undoubtedly give us the keynote to the whole character of DOCTOR BARKER.

A disposition, on which the sun never set, brought those natural virtues and charms of disposition which all men love for their rarity to complete a fruition which lasted while he lived. Unfailing cheerfulness, universal kindliness, untiring energy and enthusiasm in all he undertook to do, a lover of Mankind, and possessed of rare tact, he was loved by all who knew him.

So much has been already written about Fordyce Barker in every Medical Journal that a detailed account of his medical life would be but a tale many times told. I shall content myself, in this tribute of sincere admiration, with mentioning merely the signal steps in a career singularly complete, and in detailing a few reminiscences illustrative of his character, obtained from some who knew him long and well.

Fordyce Barker was born at Wilton, Maine, in May, 1818. The son of a physician, he received the education of a professional man, obtaining his Academical degree at Bowdoin College at nineteen years of age, and his Medical degree four years later at the same institution.

It is said that his mother was noted for her personal attractiveness, and this we can well believe who remember the sweetness of disposition and sympathetic qualities, almost feminine, which made for her son such hosts of disinterested friends of every nationality and of every age.

Perhaps the wisest step he ever took, and certainly that one which became the most important factor in the development of his character, was his marriage in 1843 with Miss DWIGHT, of Springfield, Mass. It is not possible to appreciate truly Dr. Barker's remarkable talents and career without some knowledge of this lady, his widow, and of the part she played in their long, happy and united life. Altogether devoted to her husband in his aims and interests, yet single-minded steadfast and strong in her own convictions and purposes, her influence over him, though unostentatious, must have nourished into perfection many of those strong and beautiful qualities of heart and mind which made him what he was.

One year after marriage, he and his wife sailed for Europe, where, at the University of Paris, he obtained a degree of Doctor of Medicine. Before his name had been posted as a graduate he was attacked by small-pox; shortly after his recovery from which, while traveling on the continent, family matters of sad import necessitated his immediate return to America.

Hearing nothing of his diploma from Paris, he believed he had failed to pass his examinations. Later, his name not appearing among the Alumni, he was confirmed in this belief, while the cares of a constantly increasing practice led him to neglect any precise investigation. Years afterward, while on a visit to the French Capital, he was dining one evening with some friends, among whom were several of his old classmates. Upon some one referring to his Paris degree, Dr. Barker expressed regret that he had failed to ob-

tain it. Great was his surprise upon being informed that it had been granted him and that his diploma had even been seen, signed, by one of those who were present. Then he learned that owing to his absence at the time and the fact that he had never made personal application for it later, his diploma had been retained, and for the same reason, by an ancient rule, his name was not made to appear in the list of the Alumni. This incident, which Dr. Barker related to the author on a recent occasion, was the foundation for a cruel and virulent attack upon the former's personal veracity by interested persons a few years ago—a charge which would have received a sufficient refutation in the spontaneous and overwhelming rebuke of the entire Medical Profession.

In 1850, Dr. Barker came to New York to practice at the suggestion of Dr. Willard Parker and others. He was one of the Founders of the New York Medical College, and, being appointed to the Medical Staff of Bellevue Hospital, served that Institution till the day of his death.

In 1854, he stood sponsor to Dr. Marion Sims, who at this time made an appeal to the medical profession at large for their moral support of a hospital for the cure of vesico-vaginal fistula and of the few other then recognized accidents of child-birth. Dr. Barker entered enthusiastically into this scheme and made up from among his own patients almost the entire first Board of Lady Managers, on which Mrs. Barker served for several years as Secretary with great devotion and conscientiousness.

As a matter of curious interest to gynæcologists and obstetricians I will state that Dr. Barker obtained from Dr. Mott the first case of vesico-vaginal fistula that Dr. Sims operated upon in this city. For many years and until the time of his death, Dr. Barker held the dual post of Consulting Physician to the Woman's Hospital and President of its Medical Board.

His writings were numerous and widely known and quoted and many were the honors, academical and professional, which he received both in his own country and abroad. Full lists of all these have been given to the world and recorded, nor do I think it necessary to again detail them here. Four times he received the Doctor's Cap and still again it was offered him by the University of Bologna, which he declined owing to his inability to be present. Of all these honors, that which he valued highest was undoubtedly the Doctor's degree from the University of Edinburgh. He was one of the very few Americans who have ever received the degree of Doctor of Laws from that University.

Though perhaps no American physician, with the exception of Oliver Wendell Holmes, has had so numerous a host of warm personal friends among his professional brethren in other lands, his friendships were by no means confined to this class. Besides many other men great in Literature and Art, he counted among his intimates both Thackeray and Dickens, and was accustomed to spend some time at the house of each during his frequent summer visits to England.

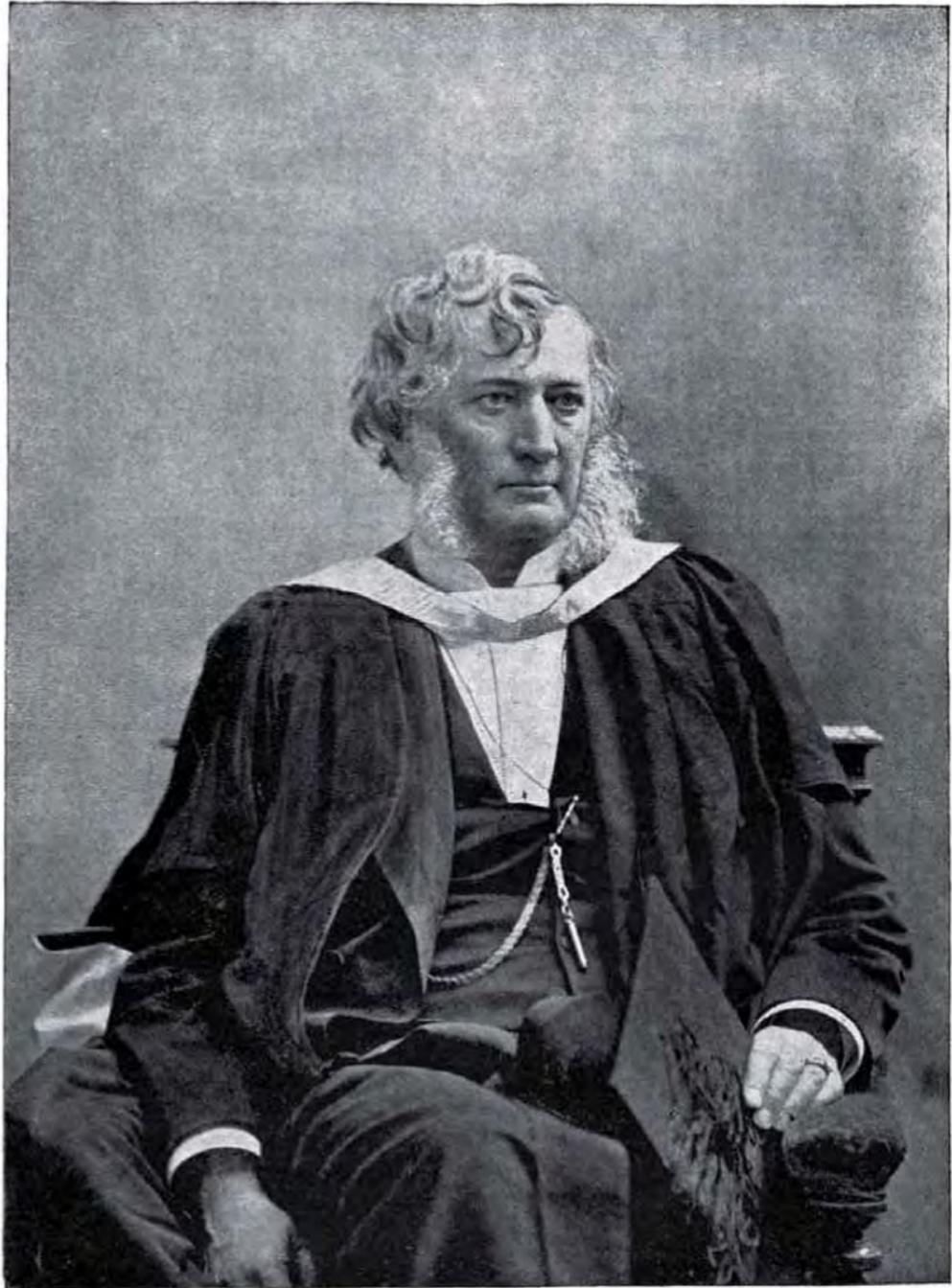
His reputation in General Medicine and Obstetrics was very great, and no man in New York was more sought after in consultation, especially as an Obstetrician, than he. He was probably the first American to impress upon the profession the great importance and danger of puerperal fever and to suggest systematic means for its avoidance.

To his learning and intelligence he necessarily brought in aid his vast experience, and although the demands of an immense and most exacting practice prevented him from pursuing the theory of Medicine very far in the field of original research, yet he never felt himself too old to learn. His interest in his profession in all its branches, and in his professional brethren never flagged throughout his long and useful life, and he died, as he had lived, at the age of 74, followed by the profound regret of the whole Medical World, on May 30, 1891.

I have endeavored to show what this man was, rather than what he did. What he did was well-done and he had his reward even in this world; but it has been done equally well before, nor will the world be void hereafter of many who will follow with equal success his earnest example. But what he was will live in the hearts of those who knew him well, so long as they live. His gentleness, his consideration and forbearance for the weaknesses and vanity of others, his unfailing notice and encouragement of the younger members of his profession, the entire absence in him of professional jealousy and spite, made him indeed a rare example for the majority of men.

It is when we raise our eyes to an occasional view of characters such as his, that we are given pause to realize that this world was worth redeeming.

J. D. E.



FORDYCE BARKER, A.M., M.D., LL.D.

## OBITUARY.

### BENJAMIN FORDYCE BARKER, M.D.

It is with the deepest regret that we record the death of Dr. Fordyce Barker, one of the most distinguished honorary Fellows of the British Gynæcological Society. During his frequent visits to Europe Fordyce Barker had become personally known to a large number of medical men, and had endeared himself to all who knew him. *The British Medical Journal*, in commenting upon his death, says:—

“The announcement by telegram of the death of Dr. Fordyce Barker will have caused widespread and keen regret. To say that America has lost one of her most illustrious physicians and distinguished citizens is to express but very imperfectly the extent of the calamity. His position as a man honoured and beloved in England and throughout Europe was altogether exceptional. For many years he was a regular visitor to our shores. Everyone who had once seen his handsome face, beaming with bright intelligence and kindness of heart, longed to see him again. At the annual meetings of our Association he was often present and always welcome. This feeling found cordial expression in the titular honours showered upon him by our societies, colleges, and universities. It is a long list to draw up. Not one who looks over our academical rolls but will recognise his name with pride and affection.

“We cannot now describe all his work. His book on ‘Puerperal Fever’ charms by its style, whilst it instructs by the richness of experience and the soundness of its reasoning. He was, we believe, connected with Dr. Fordyce, who holds so prominent a place in the history of English medicine. The portrait of Dr. Fordyce was treasured in his house. All who



were acquainted with Dr. Barker were familiar with his peculiar utterance—a hoarse whisper, but still very distinct. It was the result of paralysis of the vocal cords. This defect in no way impaired his power as a speaker or lecturer. His classes at New York were well attended. He was a popular and effective teacher.

“He leaves a widow who traces her descent from Pitt, our great statesman. Her personal qualities, inherited and reflected, endeared her to many friends. He leaves also an only son, who holds an eminent position in the States.”

Dr. Mundé, of New York, writes the following biographical notice in the *American Journal of Obstetrics*:—

“Although not entirely unexpected, for it was known to his friends and the majority of the profession that he was in feeble health, the death of Dr. Barker came like a thunderbolt to his many friends and admirers. When the news appeared in the evening papers of May 30th that Fordyce Barker was dead, it is no exaggeration to say that a gloom spread over the whole medical profession of the city of New York—a feeling which extended throughout the whole land and across the ocean as the sad news was promulgated. Not only those who had enjoyed the privilege of Dr. Barker’s acquaintance and friendship, but also the many who had met him but casually, felt as though each had lost a dear friend, and as though he himself had been afflicted by a personal calamity.

“There surely never was in the city of New York a member of the medical profession who was more popular, and deservedly so, than Fordyce Barker. If he had enemies among the medical profession, they, with rare exceptions, were careful to hide their feeling; and among the laity—that is to say, among the large, wealthy, and influential portion of the community whom he numbered among his patients—his name was a household word, his visit a ray of sunshine.

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their personal friend as well as medical adviser, and that no case interested him as much as the one which he was at that moment attending. And in conveying this impression Dr. Barker's kindness of heart and sympathetic manner had a large share. It is safe to say that no man ever approached the bedside of a patient who carried with him more of the qualities necessary to gain the confidence of the sufferer and lead him or her to expect a speedy recovery, than did Dr. Barker. But let it not be inferred that the beneficial results of his visits were due mostly to his personal magnetism and genial words. While not a surgeon—indeed, rarely ever touching the knife—he understood to a marvellous degree the effect of drugs combined with hygiene upon the human system; and the writer of this memoir, while assistant surgeon to Dr. Barker at the New York Woman's Hospital, had many an opportunity to admire and profit by his *medical* treatment of gynæcological cases.

“As a family practitioner Dr. Barker's position in New York was practically unique. He enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the prominent families of the city, with many of whom he had, as it were, grown up in their rise to affluence and distinction.

“As an obstetrician, Dr. Barker, almost up to the time of his death, was more sought for, by those able to pay his fees, than any other accoucheur in the city. Having been in practice in New York for forty years, his experience both in ordinary obstetric cases and as a consulting obstetrician was enormous, and his services were called for in the majority of difficult confinements occurring in high life. In spite of a defect of speech, owing to a partial paralysis of one of his vocal cords, which for over twenty years rendered his voice husky, Dr. Barker was an excellent teacher, a fluent speaker, and as an after-dinner orator second to none in the medical profession during his palmy days. His great fund of anecdote, his personal acquaintance with many prominent men in this country and abroad, his genial humour, and his hearty good-fellowship with all who enlisted his sympathies, rendered a

speech from him or an evening spent in his company, a treat always to be remembered and treasured up as a pleasant episode in the recollection of the participants. No more genial host than Fordyce Barker has, within the memory of the writer, figured in New York society. He had a faculty of making his guests feel at home, at peace with themselves and each other, and his dinners and receptions were so popular that on the latter occasions his hospitable home was invariably crowded by the *élite* of the profession. His generosity was unbounded, and his cheque book always at the service of professional enterprises and needy fellow-practitioners. Truly, Fordyce Barker was one of Nature's gentlemen, and a prince among men!

"Born in Wilton, Maine, and graduated at Bowdoin College, he visited Edinburgh and Paris, receiving the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the latter university in 1841. He first began practice in Norwich, Conn., was made professor of midwifery in Bowdoin Medical College in 1845, and professor of the same branch and the diseases of women at the New York Medical College in 1850, when he removed to this city.

"In 1852 he became obstetric physician to Bellevue Hospital, and in 1860 professor of clinical midwifery and diseases of women in Bellevue Hospital Medical College, which positions he held for many years until increasing cares and years obliged him to relinquish them.

"Dr. Barker was consulting physician to Bellevue Hospital, the Nursery and Child's Hospital, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, the Cancer Hospital, and for several years surgeon to the Woman's Hospital. He was a member of many medical associations, notably the New York Academy of Medicine, of which he was president from 1878 to 1884; the New York County Medical Society, the New York Obstetrical Society, the New York Pathological Society, the New York Medical and Surgical Society; the Medical Society of the State of New York, of which he was formerly president; and the American Gynæcological Society, of which he was the first president in 1876. He was also Honorary Fellow of the

Royal Medical Society of Athens and of the obstetrical societies of Edinburgh, London, Philadelphia, and Louisville, and of the Philadelphia College of Physicians. In 1886 the University of Edinburgh conferred upon him the degree of LL.D., which he had already received from Bowdoin and Columbia Colleges. He contributed to medical literature many lectures and papers, and was the author of a standard work on puerperal diseases, which was published in 1874, and was translated into Italian, French, German, and Spanish. He was also the author of a treatise on sea-sickness.

"It was Dr. Barker's habit for many years to spend his summers abroad, where he made the acquaintance not only of the leading members of the medical profession, chiefly in England and France, but also of many literary, social, and artistic celebrities, such as Dickens, Thackeray, Christine Nilsson, who, on visiting this country, were his friends and patients. His parlours, waiting and consulting rooms were filled with mementoes of these and many other distinguished people, and his house was in a measure a rendezvous for eminent foreigners, who will miss by his death the opportunity to meet kindred spirits on this side of the Atlantic.

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chief the sentiments of unbounded respect and admiration which were inspired by the kindly act referred to and maintained by many subsequent evidences of friendship and good-feeling. This memoir is but a slight tribute of the author's affection for his old friend and teacher."

*IN MEMORIAM.*

FORDYCE BARKER, M.D., LL.D.<sup>1</sup>

By HENRY C. COE, M.D.

Glowing eulogies have been, and will be, uttered over our departed friend by those whose position and long association with him render them best fitted for the task. An attempt to imitate these would be mere presumption on my part. It is far from my intention to pronounce a formal eulogy; I would offer a simple personal tribute to the memory of him who was so loved and honored.

It seems peculiarly appropriate that among so many testimonials of his worth, there should not be wanting one from the younger members of the profession, of whom he was ever the warm friend. To others let us leave the review of his public career, the rehearsal of his many honors, the criticism of his literary productions, and recall in affectionate remembrance those personal qualities which so endeared him to us all, deriving from an analysis of his character inspiration for our own life-work.

It has been said that Dr. Barker was not a *great* man. A discussion of this question would be unprofitable. Greatness in the abstract is difficult of definition, as our standards are so variable. One who towers above his fellows in the community to which he belongs may, when measured by his relation to the world at large, dwarf into insignificance. The great man of one century may be consigned to the ranks of mediocrity when his character is mercilessly dissected by the historian of a later age. Greatness is elusive. We regard a prominent personage more critically, and with less reverence, when we are no longer under the direct influence of his strong personality. The grave strips the most brilliant character of its illusions. Affection may almost deify the loved and lost, but posterity is colder, though more just, in its judgment. The words of the quaint old English poet re-echo through two centuries with all their original force:

"Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust."

In our profession we naturally regard every individual in his two-fold character—that of the physician and of the man. Our own

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<sup>1</sup> Read.

estimate of our fellows is necessarily different from that of the laity. One we respect for his scientific attainments, another on account of his matured experience and ripe judgment; in another, with less natural gifts, we feel confidence by reason of his perfect candor and sterling integrity. It is seldom that these qualities are combined in a single individual. Popularity, reputation (or its counterfeit, notoriety) with the world at large is by no means synonymous with the high and universal respect of one's professional associates, who are really the most competent judges of the genuineness of a character. And yet we are apt, among ourselves, to measure men by too rigid a standard, forgetting that mere scientific acquirements are not the only factors which constitute true eminence. The influence of a physician upon the community is not indicated by these alone. He may be a profound thinker, yet fail to stamp the impress of his thoughts upon any outside of the limited circle to whom he appeals. His is a rare mind who at once commands the respect of the intellectual and touches the heart of the common people. Some of the most prominent medical writers are to us mere personifications of wisdom, not warm, living entities. Dr. Barker was not a student in the narrow sense of the word—he did not love books more than men, and draw from them his only inspiration. Though scholarly in his tastes, and widely read in general as well as in professional subjects, his interests lay outside of the study. He was essentially social in his nature, fond of contact with his fellows—illustrating in himself Goethe's keen definition :

"Es bildet ein Talent sich in der Stille,  
Doch ein Charakter in dem Strom der Welt."

Professionally, his success was attained rather through his sound judgment and vast experience, and knowledge of human nature, than by wide reading. It was this that made him esteemed as a consultant. Brilliant as was his success, it was not alone by the exercise of his great natural gifts that he at once achieved eminence. His mental grasp was deep as well as broad. He was an admirable generalizer, quickly assimilating knowledge and storing it away for future use. The results of past experience he could at once bring to bear in a doubtful case. Though essentially conservative in regard to the treatment of diseases of women, he took a keen interest in the rapid progress of gynæcological surgery. It is a mistake to think that he did not, in his later years, keep abreast of recent medical thought. I was surprised to see how alive he was to every new issue, even to the end of his life. His forte was ac-

tion, not meditation. He was essentially a practitioner. Just where some of the best-equipped fail, he was conspicuously successful. His superb presence, wonderful tact, tender sympathetic nature were irresistible. He was a physician "of the old school" (would that the type were not becoming extinct!) who did not sacrifice sympathy to science. As he grew older, he grew more tender. The gentle courtesy which marked his bearing toward his patients was not extended to the rich alone. I once saw him bend over and kiss upon her forehead a poor woman in the hospital who had just undergone a severe operation. The act was impulsive, spontaneous. Many would have smiled at it as an evidence of sentimentality or the weakness of age. To me it was inexpressibly touching. It was a brief, lightning-like glimpse into the recesses of a great soul. A Victor Hugo would have immortalized it. What wonder that his patients idolized such a man—that their respect for the eminent physician was blended with their love for the sympathizing friend! Need we seek further for a clew to the secret of his power of inspiring confidence?

As a consultant, Dr. Barker was dignified, impressive, but never pedantic. Punctilious with regard to the unwritten, as well as the written, code of medical etiquette, he was helpful and encouraging, never overbearing, with his younger brethren. They gathered support, not discouragement, from his presence. It was as a friend and father, rather than as a teacher, that he met us. He did not lightly regard our opinions. He, whose heart was ever young, did not under-estimate the energy of youth. "The spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes," the restless struggles of the ambitious soul, beating vainly against the bars of its narrow cage, our hopes, our fears, our disappointments—all these he understood, and with all he sympathized.

How much weight his opinion carried with the general public is well known, not alone because of the eminent patients whom he attended, but because he was recognized as a man of broad general culture, who represented the highest type of the profession. The publicity given to his opinions carried with it none of that suspicion of love of notoriety from which every right-minded, sensitive physician shrinks.

There are few men in the profession who were so besieged with requests for light upon obscure cases. He was constantly in receipt of letters from all parts of the country, from physicians who knew him only by reputation, asking for advice. He did not, as most would do, throw them into the waste-basket, but always read them

carefully and replied promptly, sometimes at considerable length. The writers had no claim upon him, but could always be sure of a courteous answer. From his broad catholic point of view to every member of the profession, however obscure, it was a duty, as well as a privilege, to extend a helping hand.

Concerning his personal traits, one could write a volume and not exhaust the theme. I feel how little I can do justice to it. One carried away from a single interview the most delightful impression of his kindly nature, yet only those who met him often and intimately could rightly appreciate his beautiful character. He was the most accessible of men, always ready to assist one whom he believed to be worthy, yet not to be imposed upon. He was quick to detect the ring of false metal, and was not to be moved by flattery, through which the strongest minds are often influenced. A recommendation from Barker was all-powerful. When he had once determined to assist a man, he was never lukewarm. How many of us in New York owe their success to his earnest advocacy! It seemed an actual pleasure to him. He counted it a privilege, not a burden, to endeavor to further the interests of others; whether he would ever gain anything himself was far from his thoughts. This is the rarest kind of assistance rendered in our selfish world, that leaves no heavy sense of obligation to be repaid, only a deep and abiding gratitude towards the helper. What more touching than the affection with which he was regarded by his professional brethren! When he entered a society meeting, every eye was turned towards him in welcome, every ear was strained to catch his words. At his rare appearances at a social gathering of physicians, he became at once the centre of attraction. As the word went round "Barker has come," all crowded to do him honor; none held aloof. For all he had a kindly greeting and a warm hand-clasp. Alas! that has become only a memory.

Many of you will recall, as I can not, what he was in his prime. If the ruin was so stately, how imposing must have been the original structure! He presented to me a picture of an enviable old age—serene, unembittered, at peace with all mankind. A harsh, unkind expression I never heard him apply to any one of his professional brethren, even though he had been deeply injured by him. Envy and jealousy, carping criticism, hasty judgment—above all these he had risen, if he ever lived in such shadows, into the pure atmosphere of universal charity. Sad, indeed, is the truth that

"They whose hearts are dry as summer's dust  
Burn to the socket."

His was a happier fate. Having tasted to the full the sweets of success, with a pure, unsullied name and a consciousness of having added to the sum of human knowledge and ministered to thousands of sufferers, he could ill have borne the burden of increasing infirmities, had he not been cheered by the thought that he had outgrown all enmities and was beloved of all men. The years mellowed but did not blight his heart. He was like a towering, snow-capped mountain peak, its base fringed with green and pleasant pastures.

His was like the serene old age of Goethe, sustained not by philosophy alone, but by "a calm, unfaltering trust." He had quaffed to the full the cup of prosperity, not unmixed with adversity, but found no dregs at the bottom. He did not preach, like the wise teacher, that "all is vanity," but showed that life was worth living up to the very end, when "crowned with honor, love, obedience, troops of friends." Better like him to spend and be spent for others than to drag out a loveless old age, wrapped in the mantle of one's own pride and selfishness.

He did not spare himself—would that he had! He might even now be with us, hale and hearty for many years to come. His restless activity, his love of social joys, taxed to the utmost his failing powers. He shrank from the contemplation of his infirmities, and to the last sought to continue his old life. He could not be unemployed. It was his wish to "die in harness," and it was fulfilled. Often have I seen him on his daily round when I knew that it was at a fearful expenditure of his scanty stock of vitality. His struggle against the slow, but relentless, approach of the destroyer was most pathetic. Men's eyes would fill as they would see at his carriage window the beloved face which they expected each time never to see again. He was mercifully preserved from the fate which the English satirist dreaded; he did not "die at the top." His end was peaceful, dignified; with faculties unimpaired, he died, as he had lived, a Christian gentleman.

It is not for one of the younger men to pass judgment upon his literary works; his compeers are better fitted for that task. Yet for us of the present generation, reviewing his writings in the light of the time at which they were written, it is easy to understand how great must have been their influence. They will ever remain to us as models of elegant literary style, combining the results of ripe experience with rare judgment and fearless expression of opinion. Few American medical writers, even though much more prolific, have exercised such an influence abroad. Barker was, like Sims, cosmopolitan. Even more than the latter he broke down the bar-

riers of English conservatism, and in winning honor for himself, won it also for his countrymen. He was to American medicine what Lowell was to literature—the representative of its best intellectual culture. Like Lowell, he was many-sided, not profound, but one who entered into every phase of human nature. Both were aristocratic in their tastes and associations, but thoroughly democratic and American at the core. Both had stood before kings, yet they were of the people. The last affectionate tribute of Holmes to his lost friend is singularly applicable to his beloved medical brother:

“Fit for the loftiest or the lowliest lot,  
Self-poised, imperial, yet of simplest ways;  
At home alike in castle or in cot,  
True to his aim, let others blame or praise.”

What shall we answer in after years when we are asked the secret of Barker's influence, why he was so loved and honored? Can we by any cold analysis of his character render it intelligible? We may describe his striking personality, his intense vitality, his charming social qualities; we may tell of his broad culture, his vigorous intellect, his unequaled knowledge of men—but, with all these, he would still not have been one the fragrance of whose memory will linger with us after other names have been forgotten. It was his great, warm heart which kept in touch with the heart of humanity.

Of my personal relations with Dr. Barker I cannot trust myself to speak, nor would it be fitting to do so here. It was only because he had felt the charm of daily intercourse with his great master that Phædo could say of the strange old Attic philosopher: “This was a man, the best of all his time that we have known; and, moreover, the most wise and just.”

One evening in the early summer I sat with him in his favorite nook in the dining-room. He reclined on the old familiar sofa, and though weak and suffering in body, his mind was as keen and active as ever. He asked eagerly for the latest news in the medical world, being most interested, as was his wont, in the progress of one and another of the young men. Seeing that he was growing weary, I rose to take my leave, when, with that fine old-school courtesy which became him so gracefully, he insisted on accompanying me to the head of the stairs, refusing (as he invariably did) the offer of my arm to assist his steps. As I descended the stairs, I turned and looked at him standing there, the declining

light resting upon that kingly head and softly touching the kindly face. Ah! how often his halls had echoed to the departing footsteps of a throng of guests who had enjoyed his charming hospitality. Was it a premonition, the sadness that came over me as I uttered what was to be my last farewell? A few days later I sat before the empty chair in his office, by the well-worn desk. There were his pen as he had laid it down, his unopened letters—eloquent of his presence—but, alas! these only deepened the unutterable feeling of loneliness which crept over me as I tried to realize that he would return no more; for “he whose heart was as that of a little child” had entered the Kingdom of Heaven.