

THE PATIENT'S VIEW POINT

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The Patient's View Point by Paluel J. Flagg

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PALUEL J. FLAGG

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Author of "The Art of Anaesthesia"



The Bruce Publishing Company
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

PREFACE



THE following pages were prepared for the purpose of meeting what appears to be a vital need in the medical world of today, namely, a reconsideration of fundamental truths.

We find ourselves concentrating our attention upon the disease, to the exclusion of the suffering patient. The unwise employment of exhaustive laboratory methods to the exclusion of the personal attention and suggestive therapeutics which the sick require, coupled with the small result often obtained, drives our patients to the exponents of the various pathies. Here they find that which they crave, a recognition of their personality, satisfaction for the mental distress which they experience and treatment for the symptoms of which they complain.

These conditions exist and cannot be ignored. Shall we allow the enemy of the legitimate physician to invade the sacred precincts of the practice of medicine, using as his entering wedge an aspect in the care of the sick which we have come to ignore; or shall we, true to our trust, treat our patient as a man who is sick, instead of looking upon him merely as the possessor of an interesting disease?

In our consideration of the patient's viewpoint we must penetrate more deeply than the mere visual requirements which such an angle might imply. The patient's viewpoint comprises primarily his "best interests," the consideration due him, which is by virtue of his lack of medical training beyond his ken. The patient's viewpoint can only be adequately embraced by a medical mind, endowed with the patience to return to its pre-medical point of view.

For each error which the author ventilates, a remedy is offered which experience has shown will heal the wounds to which it is applied.

Men have enjoyed the isms of the faddists as intellectual recreation. The World War, however, brought out the inadequacy of a fad as death's companion and men are reaching for essential truths.

The natural process by which materialism is acquired in the medical school is set forth in the first chapter. The rational "Remedy" is then suggested. "Intramural Life before Graduation" develops the idea of the spiritual faculty as evident in obstetrics. "The Transition" considers the student as we find him, married, engaged or single, and suggests that the theory of evolution is still a matter far from being generally accepted. A comparison is drawn

between the ward and the private case. The organized speed of the institution which acts to endanger the patient is pointed out. The outstanding characteristics of the civil hospital and that under religious control are set forth. The "Flotsam and Jetsam" of human life are considered. The difference between the "General Practitioner" and the "Specialist" is pointed out. The possible relations existing between "Doctor and Nurse" are mentioned and the question of "Professional Fees" is discussed. The last chapter shows the ultimate result of pure materialism and rehearses the reasons at our disposal for the maintenance of a practical Monotheism.

It may be argued that profound questions have been dealt with superficially and dogmatically. In reply, the reader will be reminded that these pages are not intended to represent a comprehensive metaphysical point of view. The philosophy and the Theism introduced are but the high lights of sciences which are as vitally alive today as in the days of Socrates, Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. The mysticism evinced finds its source in the font from which Dante Alighieri drew his inimitable "Divine Comedy."

In submitting this little book the author is well aware that it may be construed as

ammunition for the enemy. It may be pointed out, however, that the errors exposed are not born of malice or deliberate design. They are the normal reactions of human nature under pressure. To make them known is to cure them.

By the permission of my publisher, The Bruce Publishing Company, practically all of this book appeared as a serial in the Hospital Progress magazine, before being offered in its present form.

The author wishes to thank those who have read his manuscript, first, for their aid, and secondly, for their willingness to remain unknown. He has quoted the writings of Sir Bertram Windle, Bernard Otten and Canon Moyes with such freedom that he may quite properly be accused of plagiarism.

Finally, he is at a loss to determine how he shall repay his publishers for their many uncalled for acts of thoughtful courtesy.

P. J. F.

Table of Contents

	Page
Chapter I. Disillusionment.....	11-25
Chapter II. The Remedy.....	26-38
Chapter III. Intramural Life Before Graduation.....	39-51
Chapter IV. The Transition — The Student Becomes the Doctor..	52-68
Chapter V. Intramural Life After Graduation.....	69-81
Chapter VI. Incense To Mercury.....	82-98
Chapter VII. Tribute to Caesar — Frankincense to God.....	99-108
Chapter VIII. Flotsam and Jetsam.....	109-30
Chapter IX. General Practitioner and Specialist.....	131-46
Chapter X. The Physician and the Nurse.	147-55
Chapter XI. Professional Fees.....	156-66
Chapter XII. Alpha and Omega.....	167-82