

**DR. WILLIAM
FRANCIS SHEEHAN.
AN MEMORIAM**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649308576

Dr. William Francis Sheehan. An memoriam by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

**DR. WILLIAM
FRANCIS SHEEHAN.
AN MEMORIAM**

DR. WILLIAM FRANCIS SHEEHAN.

Born at County Limerick, Ireland, February 12th, 1855.

Died at Rochester, New York, July 22d, 1884.

In Memoriam.

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

1886.

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PRINTED BY
E. R. ANDREWS,
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

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MEMORIAL

"DEATH TAKES US BY SURPRISE
AND STAYS OUR HURRYING FEET;
THE GREAT DESIGN UNFINISHED LIES,
OUR LIVES ARE INCOMPLETE."

—LONGFELLOW.

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1886

Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.

—Milton.

From Vol. X., Transactions of American Public Health Association.

DR. WILLIAM FRANCIS SHEEHAN was born in County Limerick, Ireland, February 12, 1855. Having received a liberal education, he came to this country in 1874, and commenced the study of medicine with his uncle, Dr. J. W. Casey, of Rochester. He graduated in 1877 at the Buffalo (N. Y.) Medical College, with marked honors, taking several prizes for proficiency in various branches. In the same year he engaged in private practice in Rochester, and on April 28th, 1880, married Miss Katie L. Kramer, daughter of one of Rochester's most respected citizens. Becoming a member of the Monroe County Medical Society, May 30, 1877, he was in the following year made a delegate to the Medical Association of Central New York, which place he filled for two years. The county society in 1880 elected him delegate to the American Medical Association, and in 1882 he went in a similar capacity to the New York State Medical Society. From 1880 to 1882 he was Secretary of the Monroe County Medical Society, which position he filled with honor to himself and with benefit to the society. During this time he served on a committee of the society to prosecute illegal practitioners. October 12, 1877, he became a member of the Rochester Pathological Society, and

soon thereafter was elected secretary, and, later, president of the organization. He has held medical offices of responsibility with never varying faithfulness and ability. Appointed by the Common Council in 1878, he held the office of city physician for one year. The Board of Supervisors, in 1880, chose him to be corner's physician for that year, and in 1882 he was made health officer of the city. Talented and zealous in his official capacity, he was re-appointed in 1883, and during two years of his service as guardian of the public health he was instrumental in bringing about many changes for the better in the city's sanitation. His deep research, his untiring devotion to the subject in all its bearings—frequently sacrificing his time, his rest and his private interests to the demands of the office,—and his clear-headed comprehension of the details of sanitary science, make it a well-known and generally admitted fact that he was the best health officer the city ever had.

Ever an earnest worker in the interests of medical science, his contributions to the fund of medical knowledge comprised papers on the "Anatomy of Club-foot," "The Anatomy of President Garfield's Wounds," "Fractures Near the Elbow Joint," "Vesico-Vaginal Fistula," "Chicken-pox," "The Statistics of Diphtheria," "House Sanitation," "School Hygiene," "Filth as a Cause of Disease," etc. Through the medium of the public press he did much to educate the masses on the causes and prevention of cholera infantum. Thoroughly conversant with the anatomy of the human body, he for some time conducted a class in practical anatomy. He was a member of the Rochester Academy of

Science, and president of its anatomical section. His lectures before this body were spoken of in the highest terms of commendation. The Kindergarten movement in this city, three years ago, received his warm support, and he was one of the originators and promoters of the scheme to establish a hospital at the lake shore for sick children. A true lover of his profession, he had, during his brief medical career, built up a large and lucrative practice. His tender interest in the welfare of his patients, his charity to those whose circumstances were not of the best, his Christian spirit and quiet, unassuming manner, caused the deepest attachments to exist between him and a large circle of friends. He was a devout member of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Cathedral, and while he made no outward show of his religion, it was a potent element in influencing his life and daily demeanor. In politics he was a Democrat, and at the time of his death was president of the Young Men's Independent Democratic Club.

On the morning of July 22, 1884, he was called to attend a confinement. He left home apparently in the best of health and spirits, full of hopefulness for the future. The case to which he went was a long, tedious labor, and he spent the day at the house of his patient, completing the delivery with forceps at nine in the evening. Immediately thereafter, while he was making ready to leave the house, he was seized with an intense pain in his head, and in a few minutes became unconscious. Medical aid was at once summoned, but he remained unconscious until his death, which occurred at 2 A. M., from rupture of a vessel and pressure on the medulla oblongata. It can truly be said of him that he
