

**SOUVENIR OF BANQUET:
CELEBRATING THE COMPLETION
OF THE FIRST SERIES OF ONE
THOUSAND LAPAROTOMIES**

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Souvenir of Banquet: Celebrating the Completion of the First Series of One Thousand
Laparotomies by H. F. Biggar

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H. F. BIGGAR

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ONE THOUSAND
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H. F. BIGGAR

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THE HOLLENDEN
MAY 1, 1897
CLEVELAND

Men resemble the gods in nothing
so much as in doing good to their
fellow-creatures.

—CICERO.

INTRODUCTION.

The men, who in war fight and bleed side by side, greet each other even years afterwards with unbounded enthusiasm, for untold sacrifices and desperate struggles always inspire a deep mutual admiration. So we, who have toiled and battled against our terrible antagonist, Disease, clasped each others hands on the first of May, eighteen hundred and ninety-seven, with our hearts full of good-will—good-will which found but feeble expression through our lips.

The surgeons, physicians, assistants and nurses who assisted me in the completion of one thousand laparotomies *showed* their good wishes, not only by their presence around the festive board, but by their charming toasts. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the varied emotions of those assembled, for their responses all echoed the same feeling.

During the progress of the next thousand laparotomies, it may be encouraging to reflect upon what was said by those who assisted in the completion of the first.

**EXPRESSIONS FROM SOME OF THE
GUESTS BY REMARKS, AND
LETTERS FROM THE ABSENT.**

Remarks by O. D. Childs, M. D.

Doctor Biggar, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me the greatest pleasure to be permitted to participate in an occasion so notable as this.

As I think of it, it seems to me to be, perhaps, the most notable of any we may ever enjoy outside of our own immediate lives.

I have known Doctor Biggar since he was a boy, and I have always looked upon him as the same boy. Perhaps that is the reason this gathering seems the more worthy to me, as it commemorates a round thousand of the most delicate of surgical blessings to humanity—which were comparatively unknown and were considered extremely hazardous operations at the time when Dr. Biggar and I were boys in college together.

Let me say here, there was but one Doctor Biggar in the class that graduated from the old Cleveland Homœopathic Medical College! It takes a man with more than ordinary force to be

a pioneer, and more especially is this true in a professional calling, where precedent is apt to be considered the boundary which limits our progress. Only a spirit of genius can overstep the doings and thoughts of the past and show to the world a success based on laws the past knew not of.

I want to thank Dr. Biggar for his independence of thought and the bold and manly manner in which he has done the work which has made an occasion of this kind possible.



Remarks by M. H. Hill, M. D.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is quite remarkable that a person engaged in as active life as Dr. Biggar has been able to remember an incident that occurred over twenty-five years ago, which he has just related to you in every detail including the foot-ball scene. It was my fortune to assist Dr. Biggar in one of the first, if not the very first, case of laparotomy which he performed, and I came to him with a case last summer which, of course, was one of the closing number of the one thousand, and which we are now called upon to celebrate. The patient, being poor, wanted to wait and come before the class as clinic, therefore I aspirated the sack, taking twelve quarts and in four weeks I performed the operation again, drawing eighteen quarts. After this she went to the country and I did not see

her for two weeks. When I did, she was of enormous size, being larger than before last tapping. I had advised immediate removal at my first operation and now insisted on it and brought her to Dr. Biggar.

The shock of operation was so great, owing to the ænemic condition of the patient, and extensive adhesions complicating the case, that I wired her friends to prepare them for what I thought would inevitably follow, for she was very low. But she did not die and she with her friends bless Dr. Biggar and the nurses of Huron Street Hospital every day.



Remarks by G. G. Biggar, M. D.

Mr. Toastmaster, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Little did I think when I assisted my brother in his first cases of laparotomy, of looking forward to counting up to one thousand cases.

The surgeons of that day I believe deserved more credit than now, especially for this reason, they did not have the instruments that we now have. Then when a case of abdominal surgery came up, you had to have the instruments made to order and then wait the pleasure of Mr. Fenton, who was the only man in the city who made instruments at that time. And perhaps disappoint the patient once or twice before the operation could be performed, on account of not having the necessary instruments.

I believe this to be a fit time to say that my brother, Dr. Biggar, has the credit of being the first surgeon west of the Alleghenies who successfully removed sixteen and a half inches from the large bowel.

I am pleased to offer my hearty congratulations for the first thousand, and may they continue.



Remarks by Wm. Murdock, M. D.

Our host of the evening, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is an old and true saying, "Poets are born and not made," and what is true of poets, is as true of doctors and surgeons. There must be, in the truly successful doctor, an inborn talent, which makes good work, and this is especially true of the surgeon. He must be physically and morally strong; he must have mechanical genius; must have a quick eye, and ready, and at the same time steady hand; he must have no doubt of his ability, for "He that doubteth is damned if he doubt." In other words, he must believe in himself. Not the bold conceit of ignorance but the "I can" and "I will" of genius. Added to these hard study and hard work and we have the man equipped for a fine surgeon. All these qualities our host of the evening possesses in an eminent degree. That he is a gentleman goes without saying; to know his cultured taste, one has but to glance at the simple elegance