

## A MODERN PARABLE

WESTON W. FIELDS

A certain man lay on the operating table waiting for his anesthesia, and behold, he was greatly troubled, for he overheard his surgeon talking to a nurse in the next room saying, "I wish I had finished medical school, but after four years of college and one semester of medical school I was tired of studying and just couldn't see going three more years to finish. Besides, you know, it seems like the fellows who go on just 'dry up.' They don't have the same zeal and personal concern if they learn too much. I've seen it over and over again; a young fellow that really wants to help people goes to medical school and by the time he is finished he is ruined."

Now it came to pass that the patient could not believe his ears. Nevertheless, the surgeon continued to speak in like manner saying, "Another thing I could not see was why I had to learn to read all that Latin. After all I talk to my patients in English; why should I learn Latin just to write prescriptions and understand pharmacology? I can always go to Wuest's Word Studies in Pharmaceutics. I took Latin, but it took me too. Why, I have already forgotten more Latin than I ever learned.

"It seemed foolish to me to spend all that time learning medicine in medical school. Why should I take four years of Systematic Medicine and three semesters of Surgical Exegesis? When I have a medical problem, which is quite frequently, I just go to the commentators. J. Sidlow Baxter's Explore the Medical Field almost always has the answers I need. If that doesn't, then Halley's Medical Handbook does.

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## Since Moody Managed

"I know four years is not a very long time, but when I graduated from college the world needed heart surgeons so badly, and so many people were dying every day that I just had to get out into the work. After all, a call to be a doctor is all you need and the rest will fall into line. I knew that many died, and many were in poor condition because of the poor surgical techniques of their surgeons (which is usually a reflection of their schooling), but I felt that I would be an exception to the case and my patients would get the best of care in spite of my training! Sometimes it is rather difficult since I just had one course in surgery, but I thought that if men like D. L. Moody could be such great surgeons without much education, so could I."

By now the patient upon the operating table feared greatly and his countenance was fallen, for he thought within himself, "If this man knoweth not medicine, perchance I will die under his knife." And he made ready to flee. But before he could leave, behold, the same surgeon again spoke saying, "Well, this morning we will be operating on the right ventricle. I better look in one of my books to see just which part that is. I always seem to forget where it is.

"Let's see, I think I could find something on that in A. T. Robertson's A Manual of Modern Medicine. No, I guess that will not do any good. It is the best book I have on heart operations, but there is so much Latin in it I cannot understand it. I guess I had better look it up in Ironside's Medicine Simplified. There is not too much there, but that is about the best I can get. Of course there are very small discussions in Hyle's Medicine As I See It, and Pink's Gleanings From Medicine.

"I wish I would have listened more to the two lectures I heard on the heart in pre-med. classes, but I was working 40 hours a week and it was so hard to stay awake after working all night. However, I am glad I worked. My wife and I never had to do without anything while I was in school.

"Well, I think I know where the right ventricle is now. I have heard that in medical school they try to get you to do what they call 'exegetical surgery'--to do everything according to a diagram, to have an outline and all--but I go more for 'topical' and 'devotional' surgery myself. I just like to read what I can from the accounts of other men's operations and then go to the operating room and 'let the spirit lead.'

"I've noticed too, that those more conventional medical school graduates don't get as many patients as I do. Of course my results are not as lasting, but I contend that numbers ought to count for something.

If I don't have the best post-operative record, I still have one of the highest in numbers of operations.

"It was certainly a step forward when the state repealed the law requiring a medical school degree and a passing grade on the state exams for a license. All those educated doctors were just leading us downhill. Can you believe that some of them actually did not believe that warts are caused by frogs! It is true that some of the best books, I have were written by men with a good education, but I certainly am glad that I got out of that medical school. I heard a professor say one day that the King James translation of the Medical Encyclopedia has several errors in it. Well, I told him that if the King James was good enough for Hipocrates, it was good enough for me.

#### Visiting Comes First

"I've had so many other things to do this week, that I just have not had much time to study for this operation. For one thing, I've had so much visiting to do. Visiting, you know, is what I do best. I visited over 50 patients yesterday alone. Well, nurse, I guess we better go in."

But behold, when this vile surgeon and his nurse came into the room, the operating table was bare, for the patient had been filled with fear, and had fled. They sought the man, therefore, and when they had found him they rebuked him saying. "Why didst thou flee from our presence?" And the man answered, saying, "When I did hear what kind of preparation for thy work thou hadst, and how thou dost ridicule the medical school, I verily lost my confidence in thee. I will never return to thy operating table again."

Now the interpretation of the parable is on this wise: the medical school is the seminary, the surgeon is the preacher, the operation is his preaching, the operating table is the pew, the Latin is Greek and Hebrew, the surgical procedure is homiletics, and the patient is the layman. And many are just about ready to get up and leave.