

During this time his health was not good. The office gave him an income, but it injured him professionally. During the war he had charge of one of the hospitals, in Louisville, for the soldiers.

Dr. Speed had a very social nature. He loved to have his friends and kinsfolk about him. Several family gatherings were at his house, and he never failed to be present at every reunion. He was very refined in his tastes, read a great deal and was fond of literature. He had nice and delicate perceptions, and loved music and fine art. His personal appearance would attract attention in any company. He was erect and carried himself well. His head was well poised, and there was intelligence and dignity in his countenance. He had iron-gray hair neatly trimmed and light side whiskers. In 1855 he had small-pox, which left its marks, though not unpleasantly. His eye was a rich brown and remarkably expressive, quick in its movements and very keen, ordinarily soft and liquid and responsive to pleasant emotions, but steel-like and piercing when excited. He loved pleasant and agreeable things, and disliked intensely everything to the contrary.

Following is an extract from an address he delivered to a graduating class of the medical school in which he was professor. It gives an idea of his style of thought and writing :

"The medical men of to-day are working in a broader daylight than fell to the lot of their fathers. They are above the mists which hang about the base of the mountains, and are climbing up bravely to the height where lies the granite. They may never reach it; perhaps, never will. Never will, simply by reason of an imperfect humanity. I know how impossible it is to stand squarely by our strongest convictions and work up to our highest conceptions. Conception is always greater than execution. What painter ever realized his finest ideal? What chisel of greatest sculptor has ever revealed in marble the glow of his imagination? What poet ever achieved in verse the dream of his spirit-life? What warrior ever maneuvered and fought his legions up to the precision and force of his own thought? What orator ever threw into speech the delicate cloud-tints of his revery, or the rushing storm-winds which his genius waked from reason made red hot by passion?

"Human action has always fallen below the highest reach of human thought. It is the fate of humanity in all lines of endeavor;