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The Necrology.

A Memoir of William B. Rezner, M. D.

BY CHAS. M. VORCE.

Within a few days this Society has lost by death one of its most valued members. William Boal Rezner was born at Mifflinsburgh, Union County, Pennsylvania, June 18th, 1824. When a young man of eighteen he came to Mesopotamia, Trumbull County, Ohio, and there lived until 1854, when he came to Cleveland, O., where he has since remained, except during the war. In the year of 1846 he graduated at the Cincinnati Medical College and soon after began the practice of medicine in Mesopotamia, meeting with flattering success. In 1846 he married Adaline, the daughter of Col. Linus Tracy, and she, together with three daughters and a son, survives him.

Dr. Rezner came to Cleveland in the fall of 1854, and at once entered upon a successful practice of his profession. Gifted by nature with warm and sympathetic feelings and the most genial and engaging manners his patients became at once admiring friends. During a considerable portion of his career he was so located as to be accessible to a large class of people, composed largely of employes in railroad shops and iron mills, who, though comparatively poor were not actually needy, usually supporting large families. Among these people Dr. Rezner soon became widely known, and their calls, usually unremunerative, his kindly and charitable disposition would not allow him to disregard, and they were never un-

heeded or neglected. The result was that among a large portion of this class of the population of the city his name was a household word and he was by them regarded with affection and reverence. Among his well-to-do and wealthy patients, of whom he had a large list, he was regarded with an affectionate and respectful esteem which falls to the lot of but few men. That this should be so was indeed inevitable, since the many pleasing qualities which Dr. Rezner possessed are but seldom united in the same person, but the degree to which admiration of his professional skill and respect for his personal qualities extended was still remarkable and continued to the day of his death.

In October, 1861, Dr. Rezner, then in the prime of life and in the full flush of success in his profession, and with the most flattering prospects opening before him, responded to the call of his country and joined the army, disregarding in response to this call, as he had often done in response to more humble calls, what seemed his most material interests for the sake of what he considered a duty. He was Surgeon of the 6th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry and Chief Surgeon of his brigade. His career in the army was an honorable one, and he proved himself to be an excellent surgeon and physician during the four years of his service. He was in the campaigns around Richmond and Gettysburg, and was with Sheridan and the dashing Kilpatrick.

On his return from the army Dr. Rezner resumed the practice of his profession, and with his naturally great skill enhanced by the valuable experience he had gained during his service in the army rapidly recovered the practice he had surrendered, and speedily advanced until he stood in the foremost rank of the most skillful physicians and surgeons of the day, and had he been gifted with more worldly ambition and less retiring modesty he might have won a renown that would have made his name famous, but he had a horror of anything that seemed to him like boastfulness which led him rather to conceal merits, and undoubtedly operated somewhat to prevent in many cases his receiving the credit which was his due. But to those who experienced his skill he seemed infallible, and no physician or surgeon ever enjoyed a more implicit confidence on the part of his patients than did he.

He was a man of unusual inventive genius and had the constructive faculty marvellously developed. Many of his contrivances have come into general use among microscopists. Among these is a form of a mechanical finger, known as "Rezner's Mechanical Finger," which is well and favorably known to many microscopists of this and other countries. An example of his skill may be seen in the two terminal spans of the street bridge over Walworth Creek, Cleveland. They were erected upon a plan of which he was the designer. So well known was his mechanical genius that he was at one time induced to join in the formation of a company, known as the Ohio Bridge Company, to engage in the erection of bridges, but the enterprise proved unsuccessful and he returned to the practice of his profession which he did not again cease until his death.

His interest in Microscopy was very great and had extended over a period of about twenty years, during which so far as he had time he prosecuted unceasingly the study of various problems connected with it, giving great attention to methods of staining and dissection as applied to pathology. Although a great deal of his work was worthy of publication he could not be induced to publish it, and only his friends and associates learned of it from him, though they in turn frequently communicated it to others. He was President of the Cleveland Microscopical Society at the time of his decease, and stood at the head of microscopists in the city. His mounting of slides was not excelled by any of the specialists in that line. The special devices which he has constructed and the many modifications he has devised of microscopical apparatus are too numerous even for mention in this place. Sometime previous to his demise, he had completed a spectroscope of his own manufacture, which was so delicate and so fine an instrument that with it the sodium line, D, in the solar spectrum could be resolved and the nickel line seen.

Dr. Rezner was for some years Health Officer of the City of Cleveland, and filled the duties of his office in such a manner as to elicit the praise and admiration of all parties, which could only have been done by one gifted with his fine sense of justice and right, and his rigid impartiality to all. He was also for many years the physician employed by the county to attend the inmates of the county jail, when required, which in a city like Cleveland was not seldom.

He was a man of the strictest private and public morality, and he might truly be called a Christian gentleman.

For some time previous to his death he had not been feeling well, but attended his patients as usual up to Sunday, July 15th, when he experienced an attack of Angina Pectoris, from which, however, he recovered somewhat and during the week even visited one or two of his patients, and on Saturday, July 21st, he had arranged to visit a patient in the afternoon, feeling then much better than he had during the week. He ate dinner on that day as usual, enjoying it well, and after dinner lay down for a short rest and evidently must have experienced a sense of oppression as he tried to arise, and falling forward on his face, expired without a struggle.

On Wednesday, July 25th, his remains were deposited in Woodland Cemetery, at Cleveland, his funeral being very largely attended. The members of The Cleveland Microscopical Society attended in a body, and many of his older patients, in nowise related to him, after their last look upon his face went away with eyes streaming with tears. No man in his sphere of life was ever more widely lamented or more sincerely mourned.

CHARLES R. FERRIS died at his residence in Detroit, Michigan, November 3d, 1882, at the age of 26 years. Mr. Ferris was elected a member of the Society at the Detroit Meeting (1880). He was a member of the Griffith Microscopical Club.
