

(Extract from letter from Mrs. Hamilton Emmons)

January 1, 1920.

"Such a sad beginning to the New Year, and yet - with it all, the lovely quiet acceptance of what has come is so inspiring. Grace has never felt that he would recover, she had implicit faith in him, and he told her from the beginning the course his illness would take, his insight was marvellous. They say he looked so beautiful, every vestige of illness and age vanished and all was so still at the last, she felt he would tell her of Revere; but he never opened his eyes, just slipped oh so gently away.

He lies in his coffin in the middle of his room, windows and doors open, with a dark violet velvet pall over it, and just a book very dear to him on it; flowers in vases all around, no emblems or wreaths, and we all go in and out and there seems no keeping apart or "outward" mourning.

Grace and I had a long talk beside him, and she told me all about the anxious days, and how he loved certain little poems read to him every night that he used to read to Revere.

Monday was a dreadful day, Sue telephoned the sudden, serious change had come -- the breaking of some internal wall of the "pleura" (I don't know how to spell it) worn thin by his coughing; and later the news that all was over. It came so suddenly when we all felt perhaps there was some hope. Bob and Marion felt bereft indeed of guide, counsellor and friend - and such a friend.

Sue and Marion can do so much and Grace likes to talk to me, and she is so brave and dear and is arranging everything for today. I will leave this open and tell you of the funeral service.

Hamilton is coming from Leamington and we all go in together. Oh how thankful I am Sue and Bill and I got here in time and Marion is such a comfort to Grace. Sir William talked of her almost at the last, so grieved that she should be coming home to this, but he would not let her come for fear of the influenza bacillus, and because he looked so ill, he did not want her to remember him like that.

Thousands of cables keep coming, 81 letters this a.m., 86 yesterday, a personal one so charming, from the King who feels it a "National Calamity". What a wonderful mind he must have had, and you know he has left his brain to the Phila University, I suppose, or Johns Hopkins, I don't know which, and his ashes, I think to McGill; he wished to be cremated.

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(cont. next page)

(Extract from letter from Mrs. Emmons - cont.)

Jan. 2, 1920.

Jan. 2nd.

I came right home after the funeral. It was all so impressive and so simple. The Cathedral quite full, and beautiful music, a Latin hymn that he loved and a wonderful solo on the organ (no voices) that thrilled and thrilled, and then faded away and not a sound in the whole place. Only Grace's lilies on the coffin and all of us together quite near him. A great many came from London and everywhere, private individuals and societies and Universities represented. The obituaries have been wonderful, and in today's Times a very fine article ends up, "We mourn him as the greatest Physician of History". Think what that implies. and such Love you never saw, the men all with tears almost in their eyes as they talked of him.

The evening before he died he wrote in pencil in his favorite little book of poems lying beside him, "dear Grace, give this to little Marion" and how she values it. Well, it is all over and I know you are thinking of Grace in her loneliness; she will devote herself to finishing his great work of cataloguing his books for McGill. * * *

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