

Acceptance of the Howland Award

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I am deeply touched by the great honor that the American Pediatric Society has bestowed upon me, especially because so much that I have accomplished is thanks to Dr. Edwards A. Park, the first recipient of the Howland Award. In 1930, he put me in charge of the Cardiac Clinic of the Harriet Lane Home. When the fluoroscope was installed, he said to me, "Now you will learn congenital malformations of the heart." When I expressed surprise, he replied, "It does not matter how you feel; you cannot possibly run a children's heart clinic and not learn congenital malformations." Then he added, "When you do, it will be a great day." That was in 1930.

In 1952 Dr. Grover Powers presented the first Howland Award to Dr. Park. On that occasion Dr. Powers said, "Upon no other person could this tribute of honor and respect be so fittingly bestowed. . . . These two great leaders of pediatrics became colleagues when both were working in the New York Foundling Hospital." In reply, Dr. Park devoted his address to Dr. John Howland.

Since Dr. Park has been a guiding light, not only in my life, but in the lives of many members of this Association, and since I was so fortunate as to have been on his staff virtually throughout his years as Chief-of-Pediatrics at the Harriet Lane Home (during the 22 years thereafter our friendship steadily deepened), it seems appropriate that today I should try to do for him what he did for Dr. Howland and try to make him become alive to you.

Edwards A. Park—"Ned"

1877-1969

According to his Yale Class Book "Ned" first wandered in upon the world on December 30, 1877, via Gloversville, New York. His father, William E. Park, Yale '61 (1861) was a minister in Gloversville. Ned said that his most famous ancestors were, in order of seniority,

as follows: ". . . Zeus, Venus, Andrises [I believe that Andrises is "Andriscus," the son of Perseus, the last King of Macedonia], Julius Caesar, and Jonathan Edwards." The only one of these ancestors whom I have been able to trace was Jonathan Edwards; he was Dr. Park's great, great, great, great grandfather. The Yale script goes on to say, "Of course, the above list is somewhat incomplete but the names given will show clearly enough that our Hero is of no mean origin." In truth Dr. Park did come from a long line of theologians and men who had married the daughters of ministers. His father had wished to join the academic ranks as a historian but because of his theological heritage he felt obligated to enter the ministry. Although Dr. Park did not find this possible, he shared his father's interest in history and his love of the woods, and fortunately for us the family habit of letter writing.

Let me here and now thank all of you who have been so generous as to share Dr. Park's letters with me and thereby help me paint this picture.

We first see him at 3 years of age with his sister Marion—the future Pediatrician-in-Chief of the Harriet Lane Home and Professor of Pediatrics of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine with the future President of Bryn Mawr College (Fig. 1).

Many of Ned's early letters tell of going to the woods, of fishing, and of the first owl that he saw in the wild. The year before he entered college he wrote a delightful letter to his grandfather in which he said, "It is very queer that mama and grandma and all that side of the family never seem to learn by experience. In other words their desire to do good and to accommodate overpowers all their other feelings. For example, for the last 82 years Grandma Edwards, when asked what she would desire for supper, would reply, 'whatever is easiest to procure' and then would enlarge on this and say 'some gruel, some toast, and I should like an egg very much but I think that some tea

would be just as good, or some mush or some toast if that would be easier.' This process continues for at least fifteen minutes every night. Now for some calculations, 80 years or 29,200 days, saying there are fifteen working hours in each day and accordingly 900 minutes, grandmother loses one-sixtieth of each day in non-committals on the supper question, or she loses every year six days and out of her eighty years she has lost 480 days or over one year entirely lost because of her desire to accommodate. Mama loses a greater percentage of time by overdoing and accordingly is losing more time than grandma; she must have lost at least two years in that way. Hoping I shall not be as loose with my time as they, I remain your affectionate grandson, E. A. Park."

Although he criticized his mother for never learning to live within her strength and for using her time loosely, he loved her dearly and in later years talked about her more frequently than about his father.



Fig. 1. Ned Park at 3 years of age. Marion Park at 5 years of age. (The future Pediatrician-in-Chief of the Harriet Lane Home and Professor of Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, with his sister—the future President of Bryn Mawr.)

In 1896, Ned entered Yale. He had wanted to row on the varsity crew but found that he did not have the physical stamina, yet as he later remarked, "... he outlived all the members of that crew." His Yale yearbook goes on to say, "Ned writes that his future occupation will be cutting ice but does not specify in what particular branch this ice cutting will go on. There have been various rumors afloat that he is destined for the ministry but he denies them all. At all events it matters little what Ned decides to do; every one wishes him success in whatever he does, for he is undoubtedly one of the very best men in the whole class. There should be more like him."

The reason that Ned could not enter the ministry is apparent in a letter to Dr. Harrison, apropos of the Dead Sea Scrolls. "I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed the scrolls. Since old enough to think I have believed the Christ story a legend appealing to the emotional conviction through the drama. But the scrolls indicate strongly that the teachings of Christ and the theological conceptions and practices, life after death, reward and punishment, baptism, etc., were the developments of a Jewish sect a hundred or more years before Christ, and that he, a man of mystery surrounded by clouds of obscurity, put the conception in a form which coming in the period of world misery and oppression made a great popular appeal; suffering borne in this life, freedom and equality in the next."

Then he went on to say, "The scrolls are a blow to the Christian conception comparable to evolution and the probability is that the theologians will find some evasions which will preserve the *status quo*. It is astonishing that reason is so weak an instrument. People say that this is so and go on just the same."

Although his analytical mind prevented Dr. Park from entering the ministry, he knew that he had to support himself. To decide where he would do his ice cutting, he climbed a hill, sat down, and listed all possible occupations and professions. Then he crossed them out one by one until only Greek and medicine remained. He shied away from Greek because of the syntax and he feared that Greek would lead to a dead end, whereas he felt the future of intellectuality lay in medicine. That fall he entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York.

Alas, he found that the climate in which he had chosen to do his ice cutting was more bleak and raw than he had anticipated. He was disgusted to find that most of his teachers were primarily interested in the monetary aspect of medicine and at the end of the first year he left, thinking that he would never return.

After a year of tutoring he realized that he must do more serious work. Once again he climbed his hill and repeated the same process and came out with the same answer, medicine. Back he went to Physicians and Surgeons. By the time he reached his clinical years he knew that he was in the right field. He interned at Roosevelt Hospital and then at the New York Foundling Hospital, a miserable place where over the years more than 4,000 babies were left in a basket which hung by the doorstep day and night. Nevertheless, it was there that Dr. Park first worked with Dr. Howland.

Time does not permit a full account of his New York experiences; suffice it to say that during this period he worked with Dr. Theodore Janeway as a "proud fellow in medicine" and together with Dr. Janeway he published his first paper on the response of arteries to adrenaline. That year his magnificent salary of \$500 was not enough for him to live on, so he entered private practice. One of the great rewards of private practice was that, thanks to a grateful family, he was able to hear almost all of the operas given in New York City in those years.

The summer of 1912 was memorable. Dr. Park went to Germany. While there Dr. Howland offered him a position on his staff. Dr. Janeway with whom Ned was working cabled his release, whereupon Ned promptly and gladly accepted Dr. Howland's offer. That summer was memorable in another way, for when Ned reached Göttingen he sought the advice of a place to stay from an English minister and there he met the minister's wife and daughter. Ned wrote his mother saying that he wished only to learn German and hence would see nothing of them. In reality for the next 3 weeks he saw Agnes Bevan almost every afternoon. Agnes in her memoirs writes, "Mostly we played tennis. We did not talk of love," but when they parted Agnes realized she was deeply in love with Ned. Ned, for his part, stopped over in London on his way home to ask Agnes to marry him. With an affirmative answer, he left 2 days later for Baltimore.

Dr. Howland met Ned at the Pennsylvania railroad station and together they rode in a tram to the hospital. At that time the Harriet Lane Home was completed but unoccupied. The first staff (Fig. 2) was small, just Howland, Blackfan and Park, Walters, Wolfe, and McClure. These were golden years at Hopkins. The medical school was small; everybody knew everybody; the dominant note was learning. Ned was in his element.

The following summer (1913) Ned returned to England and married Agnes Bevan. For the next 52 years



Fig. 2. The First Harriet Lane Home House Staff in 1912. Top row: Walters, Wolfe, McClure. Bottom row: Park, Howland, Blackfan.

she was his constant companion and built a home of such warmth and hospitality that they seldom had a day, far less a week-end, to themselves. The endless succession of visitors could not have been easy for Agnes while her three children were small (Fig. 3) but in later years she said, "The warmth of the friendships we established was a royal reward for never having a moment to ourselves." She was right, for at their home the barriers were down. The relation was no longer teacher and student but friend to friend, companion to companion. There we appreciated the breadth of Dr. Park's interests and the depth of his knowledge. All sorts of things were discussed: history, philosophy, art, science, music, poetry, world events, and world personalities. Although Agnes was a wonderful raconteur, giving warmth and color to her stories, Ned never indulged in gossip, nor did he embroider a story. He adhered strictly to the truth, giving a critical appraisal of a person, his strength, and his weakness. His analysis was often not complimentary, nor was it exaggerated or distorted, just the bleak naked truth.

During the early years at Harriet Lane Dr. Howland

established pediatrics as an academic profession, but at the same time he was determined always to be the leader in all branches. Under his leadership young Park was working on the thymus gland. Dr. James Gamble, a life-long friend of Ned Park, in reminiscing on their early days at Harriet Lane, recounts the following incident.

"The scene is a small laboratory in the Hunterian building in which two young investigators, Park and McClure, would now and then remove the thymus gland from a guinea pig. John Howland held an *ex officio* position in this enterprise so it was necessary that he be present at the ceremony of extirpation. When all was in readiness he would be notified by telephone and would come over from the Harriet Lane. On one occasion he found the operating equipment beautifully laid out but was astonished by the behavior of his young investigators. They were on their knees searching frantically under cupboards and radiators for the subject of the experiment. After some fifteen



Fig. 3. Agnes reading to her children—Sally and Rollo. (David had not yet arrived in this world).

minutes of futile quest, Dr. Howland became restive and strode back to the Harriet Lane. Ned went along to offer soothing words and properly display his contrition. When they reached the Harriet Lane steps Ned happened to place his hand in the pocket of his laboratory gown and there it encountered a discreetly quiet guinea pig."

In 1917 when the United States entered World War I, Dr. Park joined the Belgium Red Cross and was assigned to work in France. There he encountered great difficulties as the representatives of the Belgium Red Cross disagreed with the American group as to the best use which could be made of a building that the French had put at their disposal in Le Havre. In April he wrote, "I have come to the conclusion that I must be crabbed and disagreeable in my old age." (He was then 41.) "Tis too bad. Two months since I left America and no actual work yet! Not a stethoscope to a chest, not a pill administered except once and that to myself. It made me worse. Farewell! 'nos morituri te salutamus'."

During April the war steadily worsened and he wrote, "As regards my own plans I don't know what to do. . . . The question which troubles me most, however, is whether my duty is not with the Army Medical Corp." Indeed he was ready "to enlist as a common soldier if such was the greatest need." Fortunately, during the next month the situation changed and Ned found that he was not needed in the army. Moreover, his work in Le Havre was beginning. He immediately planned and eventually built a small but well-nigh perfect hospital for children, with a large makeshift but extremely active dispensary. As soon as the war ended Ned returned to Baltimore.

Upon his return Dr. Park expected to be restored to his former position but soon learned that Grover Powers was to remain in charge of the outpatient department. In later years Dr. Park said, "Fortunately for me, although much to my annoyance at the time, I was assigned to the Hunterian Laboratory to devote myself to research without any clinical outlet, and at the same time Dr. Howland expected me to teach. To teach without having clinical experience naturally put me in an intolerable situation," a situation which in his own regime he never permitted. On the contrary, he required everyone who was doing research to spend some months teaching in the dispensary. In later years he remarked, "What seems a disappointment at the time may later prove to be one's good fortune." How true, for during the next 2 years he did his monumental study on bone pathology which not only gave Dr. McCollum proof that diet had an important effect on

bone growth but also gave proof of the existence of a new substance which they called vitamin D and that its deficiency caused rickets. These studies led to Dr. Park's life-long interest in bone growth and bone metabolism. He never failed to be excited by every new advance. Forty-seven years later he wrote to Professor Bonner saying, "There is great excitement in cyclic AMP. The reason why I am so excited by your work is the conviction that cyclic AMP and phosphodiesterase are involved; in the bone formation cyclic AMP, and in bone dissolution probably the diesterase. The importance of your work in calling attention to both factors is that you are dealing with cells which can be independent entities. The effect on the slime molds are free from the complicated conditions surrounding my bone cells."

Another of the consequences of Dr. Park's original work on rickets was that in 1921 Dr. Winternitz called him to New Haven to build a department of pediatrics. This was no easy job as the children were scattered on seven different wards and the various departments jealously guarded their "rights."

Ned, as he founded the Department of Pediatrics at New Haven, did what he subsequently advised Mel Avery to do, "Find the best possible people, surround yourself by them, and give them absolute freedom." The first staff of the new pediatric department was composed of Grover Powers, Ethel Dunham, Martha Eliot, Molly Putnam, Ernest Caulfield, and Alfred Scholl (Fig. 4).

Dr. Park insisted on having formal rounds every day starting at one end of the hospital and ending at the other. Dr. Caulfield describes the rounds, saying, "Dr. Park, six foot four, headed the parade and I, five feet four, brought up the rear. Ethel Dunham and Martha Eliot were next, then came Ruth Guy and Marian Putnam. The men at Yale did not take kindly to the women Dr. Park brought to his clinic but they soon got over their pettiness, especially with the help of Ethel Dunham who was such a lovely person." Rounds started at 8:00 in the morning and continued until 6:00 PM. In order for the staff to get their work done, one half attended rounds in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. Rounds were not of



Fig. 4. Dr. Park and his staff at New Haven, 1921.

great length because of the number of patients but because of the care with which Dr. Park discussed every single child. Ned was a great believer in transfusions and they transfused everything. Dr. Caulfield said that the standard joke came one Sunday morning when Dr. Park ordered seven transfusions when he had only six patients in the hospital.

Dr. Howland died in the summer of 1926. During the academic year 1926–1927 the Hopkins Committee appointed to select Dr. Howland's successor invited each of the leading pediatricians of the country to give one of the weekly pediatric 4th year clinics. The greatest of all of these lectures was Dr. Park's famous lecture on rickets. Happily for Hopkins the Committee recognized Dr. Park's ability and offered him the chair in Pediatrics.

Dr. Park must have been greatly pleased and deeply touched to become Dr. Howland's successor for he had tremendous admiration for Dr. Howland as "a keen clinician, an extraordinarily good administrator, an excellent teacher, and an able investigator." Nevertheless, with his great admiration he was able to see Howland's weaknesses. He was determined to keep the best of the Howland regime and to correct the weaknesses. The people who worked under Dr. Howland had felt constrained by him. In contrast, Dr. Park wanted to develop the full potentiality of every person who worked under or rather *with* him. He wished in no way to limit their endeavors.

Dr. Howland used the dispensary as a place to teach pediatrics, not to care for patients with pediatric problems. Dr. Park, in addition to his academic interests, had a strong humanitarian interest. He wished the patients in the dispensary to receive good care. The chronically ill children had suffered most. Therefore, in spite of great opposition from the doctors working in the outpatient department, within 3 months of his arrival as Chief of the Harriet Lane Home, he started the first three of the special clinics; the cardiac, the tuberculosis, and the psychiatric clinics. He counted on the improvement of patient care and the increased knowledge to bring more patients to the dispensary. The rapid growth of the dispensary vindicated his theory.

Another great innovation which Dr. Park made was a basic change in the wards. In those days the wards were arranged, as was the custom of the times, with the white children on one side and the colored on the other. Dr. Park realized that it was far sounder to separate the infectious from noninfectious patients than to separate children according to the color of their skin.

Thus, in the early 1930's the pediatric wards were quietly and completely integrated.

Dr. Park was a great teacher and never missed an opportunity to teach. One day in the early 1930's when my clinic was large and heavy and I had little help, he sent word that he wanted my opinion on a private patient. To me that was absurd. Clearly he knew more than I did. As my clinic was heavy I was slow to respond. He sent word a second time and I promptly went to Harriet Lane II. I examined the patient and found the child had a dextrocardia and said to him, "You wanted to know if I knew a dextrocardia when I saw one?" "Yes," he replied, and back I went to my clinic.

Dr. Park usually taught by asking questions and seeking information and thereby made many a young pediatrician feel that he was a great authority. In later years when asking a penetrating question of one colleague concerning a recent advance, Dr. Park said, apropos of his own question, "Even an ignoramus can stimulate a great philosopher." In all probability this philosophy unconsciously lay behind many of the questions that he asked young pediatricians and they in turn were stimulated by his questions.

Whenever one asked Dr. Park a question, his reply always was, "Who knows most about this? Who is best to ask?" Thereupon, regardless of how much he, himself, knew, he would always seek out the person whom he considered the best authority or call that person on the long distance telephone.

In all of his work Dr. Park relentlessly sought for objective evidence which might throw light on any problem. Frequently at x-ray conferences Dr. Park would point out x-ray changes in the bones of a child and then correlate these with the microscopic findings in the bone and the clinical condition of the child. He presented his evidence so clearly and so firmly that many of us, myself included, did not realize that he was presenting new knowledge.

With all of the stimulation and guidance he gave us, he was both generous and humble beyond belief. He told me in all sincerity that he did not think that the Chief was very important. He said, "The people who worked there are the ones that make the clinic's reputation." In this regard he was, however, inconsistent, for he wrote to Dr. Bonner saying, "Don't get tied up in administration. At the end of your life you will regard the time spent in administration as having been futile and worthless. If your department becomes famous it will not be because of administration but because of the work you do and the people whom you

stimulate. It is the work that comes out of your clinic which counts." Nevertheless, anyone who listened to the tales of the way that medicine was taught in his day would appreciate Ned's feelings. He told me of an extraordinary doctor, named Thompson, at the Roosevelt Hospital. Dr. Park said he did not know whether the man was in his dotage or had always been that way, but Dr. Thompson in all seriousness would say, "One diagnosed pericarditis with effusion by whether the corners of the patient's mouth would turn up or down." He differentiated pneumonia from tuberculosis by asking the patient to stand up, if he could, and then dropped a weighed string from the patient's chin to the floor; if it touched his abdomen the patient had pneumonia, if it cleared the abdomen it was tuberculosis! Little wonder that Dr. Park thought that his teachers did not have a very important influence on his life! Nevertheless, he did have the opportunity to work

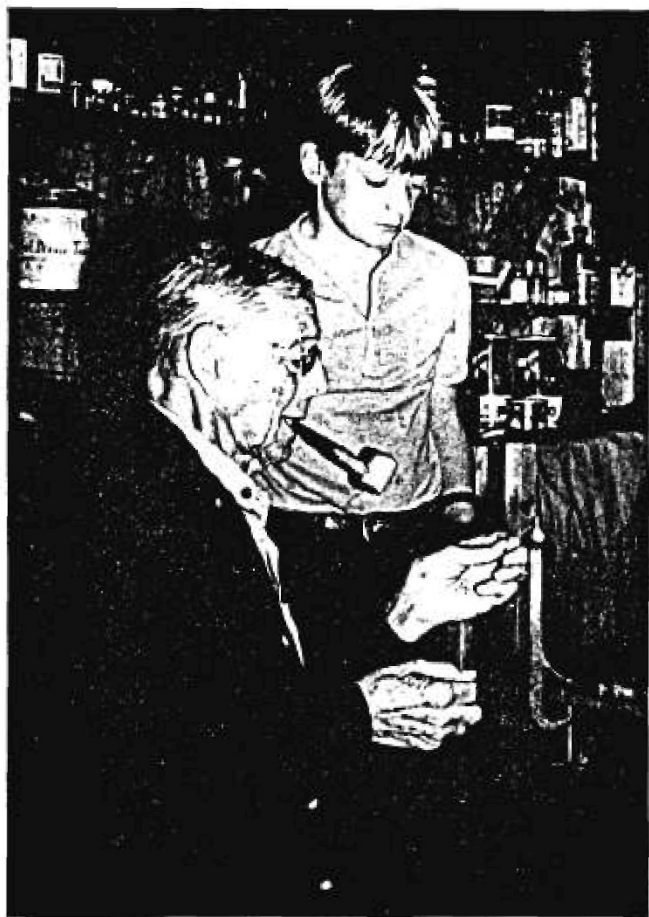


Fig. 5. Dr. Park with his grandson Edwards Park watching Dr. Park tie a fly at the northeast Margaree.



Fig. 6. Dr. Park's portrait.

with the great of his day, L. Emmett Holt, Sr., Theodore Janeway, and John Howland, and from each he absorbed the best.

No one ever mentions Dr. Park without mentioning his unswerving honesty, his desire for truth, and his abhorrence to anything pretentious or for taking credit where credit was not due.

Dr. Park often said that it was harder to know what was right than to do what was right. When he was convinced that something was right he always acted accordingly. Never did he show his convictions more strongly than when the first Health Insurance Bill (Murray-Wagner-Dingall Bill) was introduced into Congress in 1949. Dr. Park strongly opposed the bill because he thought that its abrupt introduction would cause chaos. He felt equally strongly that the American Medical Association should come up with a counterproposal and outline a plan for preventive and curative medicine for the nation. He consulted his colleagues and within 2 weeks obtained signatures of 125 prominent physicians to a letter protesting the assess-

the country, the fishing, tying his own flies, wading the streams, studying the habits of the birds in the woods and the fish in the stream (Fig. 5). There in remote Nova Scotia, their friends, in a never ending line, were always welcome just as they were on the Sunday picnics in Baltimore.

Everyone who knew Ned was delighted when in 1950 he received the Kober Award from the Association of American Physicians. On that occasion Dr. Gamble said, "I recall vividly the walks in the hills beyond New Haven and in the woods in Baltimore in the company of students, interns, and investigators. They learned a bit of ornithology by looking through Ned's binoculars, which they have perhaps forgotten, but

what they saw through the prism of his personality they did not forget." Then Dr. Gamble went on to say, "His humility regarding his own attainments is measured inversely by his generous evaluation of the work of others." Indeed, Dr. Park's letters to young investigators are filled with extravagant praise, always urging the young investigator to press forward, and frequently suggesting that he was on the eve of a great discovery. Thus, Ned fostered "learning and romantic expectation," those two ingredients which Emerson has said are so essential for the growth of art, science, and poetry.

Ned also appreciated the danger of too much extracurricular activity, abroad and at home. He wrote



Dr. Park

Fig. 8. Dr. Park—drawing. (Reproduced by courtesy of Andrew Wyeth.)

Victor Najjar that he ought to concentrate on his laboratory work, saying "I have seen too many men stop when the invitations to speak or attend important committees, etc., poured in. Locke, the philosopher, pointed out that present glory has more allurements than glory in the future. It is your work which will count in the end and the rest is effluvia."

Many of us will remember the dinner honoring Ned Park when his portrait was unveiled (Fig. 6) and the lovely menu depicting Ned's many interests: rickets, scurvy, goats milk, the cardiac clinic, the tuberculosis clinic, the psychiatric clinic, the Harriet Lane Home, the thymus gland, and his famous rickets lecture (Fig. 7). All "thanks to you Ned Park." Many of us at the time did not like the portrait but over the period of years we are very glad to have it.

The luncheon celebrating Dr. Park's 80th birthday, arranged by Dr. Barry Wood, was a most perfect occasion. Ned in his lovely letter of thanks said, "Time does not lift us gently over the hurdles of birthdays of late life; it hurls us across them. I wish to express my pleasure and gratification of the celebration of my eightieth birthday, which chance transformed the landing place into a feather bed, a depressing event into a joy. At the luncheon party it was delightful to find myself surrounded by friends so loved and respected. As I looked around I thought how wonderful the possession of so glorious a group in another existence. I felt like telling all to hurry up and pack their bags, and then it occurred to me that I might conduct them to the wrong place. . . . The dimension of the scholarship bearing my name was to me staggering. This designation to provide scholarship to needy students gave me particular satisfaction, for I was sent through the College of Physicians in New York by a cousin, Mr. Charles Coffin, who would never allow me to repay

him. The funds will render that service to others which he rendered to me. I wish that he was living so that he could realize how his generosity to me has suddenly become animated and multiplied. I never had any desire to escape, even for a brief day, the oblivion which engulfs the great mass of humanity. I secretly wished that the fund could have carried the name of my great predecessor, Dr. John Howland. He instituted the first University Clinic in pediatrics in this country and started a new era on this continent in the study of disease in children, and I, like others of his associates, was created by him. My debt to him is tremendous. His influence in turning the direction of pediatrics into scientific channels is in danger of being forgotten.

"Nice things were said to me at the luncheon by Arnold Rich with his usual grace, indicating that myself was not myself. It was pleasant to be praised even if I could not accept it, and Mrs. Park, who has known me for forty years, returned home deceived. My only wish is that I might be actually what my friends in their generosity and loyalty would like to have me be. Oscar Wilde in a pathetic letter from Reading Gaol wrote, 'By their friendships men can be judged.' I should prefer above all else to be measured by my friendships. E. A. P." (Fig. 8).

I hope that this portrait of one of the truly great of medicine, inadequate though it is, has brought to each of you some happy memories. In addition, I hope that it helps you to understand how deeply I appreciate this Howland Medal which in a sense groups me "as a peer with my heroes of old."

References and Notes

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