

MASTER SURGEONS OF AMERICA

THOMAS BOND

THOMAS BOND, son of Richard Bond and Elizabeth Benson Chew Bond, was born in Calvert County, Maryland, in 1712. We have little account of his early years, except that he studied medicine under Dr. Hamilton, of his native county, and then went to Europe, studying chiefly in Paris. Upon his return to America, he settled in Philadelphia and began practice in 1734. He soon took high rank as a surgeon as well as a physician. He was particularly distinguished for his skill in lithotomy. He was apparently the first in America to perform this operation, there being a record of such a procedure in 1756, four years previous to the operation by Doctor Jones, of New York, who is credited with this honor. Doctor Bond's dexterity is attested by a quotation from a letter written in 1772, by a layman, which says: "I had the curiosity to be present at the hospital, at Doctor Bond's cutting for stone, and was agreeably disappointed, for instead of seeing an operation, said to be perplexed with difficulty and uncertainty, and attended with violence and cruelty, it was performed with such ease, regularity and success, that it scarcely gave a shock to the most sympathizing bystander, the whole operation being completed, and a stone, 2 inches in length and 1 in diameter, extracted in less than 2 minutes." "If," adds the writer, "surgery is productive of such blessed effects, may we not with Cicero justly rank it among the first of arts, and esteem it worthy of the highest culture and encouragement?"

The credit of originating the Pennsylvania Hospital is sometimes given to Benjamin Franklin, but he himself asserts that the suggestion came from Doctor Bond, and we find in the history of that period several such statements as this:

"The foundation of hospitals among us produced the most important effects on the character of the medical profession, and forms a great era in our progress. The Pennsylvania Hospital, the first of these institutions established in the country, was erected principally by contributors of the benevolent citizens of Philadelphia, though aided by a grant of two thousand pounds from the Colonial Assembly, and received its charter in 1751. Its establishment, as has been already stated, was owing to the suggestion of a physician, Dr. Thomas Bond. Up to the period of its foundation, no college of medicine existed on the continent, and the hospital, under the care of some of the first medical men of the period, early attracted the attention of both physicians and students, and very materially con-

tributed to the advancement and distinguished position attained by the medical school which was soon afterwards begun."

When the Medical School was originated, it was decided to ask Doctor Bond to give a course of clinical lectures; the first regular lectures of the kind ever given in America. It is asserted that he had a regular class of thirty students in 1766, the first year. He began these lectures with these remarks:

"I am now to inform you, gentlemen, that the Managers and Physicians of the Pennsylvania Hospital, on seeing the great number of you attending the School of Physic in this city, are of the opinion, this excellent institution likewise affords a favorable opportunity of further improvement to you in the practical part of your profession; and being desirous it should answer all the good purposes intended by the generous contributors to it, have allotted me the task of giving a course of clinical and meteorological observations in it, which I cheerfully undertake (though the season of my life points out relaxation and retirement rather than encumbrances), in hopes that remarks on the many curious cases that must daily occur amongst an hundred and thirty sick persons collected together at one time may be very instructive to you. I therefore purpose to meet you at stated times here, and give you the best information in my power of the nature and treatment of chronical diseases, and of the proper management of ulcers, wounds, and fractures. I shall show you all the operations of surgery, and endeavor, from the experience of thirty years, to introduce you to a familiar acquaintance with the acute diseases of your country; in order to which I shall put up a complete meteorological apparatus, and endeavor to inform you of all the known properties of the atmosphere which surround us, and the effects its frequent variations produce on animal bodies; and confirm the doctrine by an exact register of the weather, and of the prevailing diseases, both here and in the neighboring provinces; to which I shall add all the interesting observations which may occur to private practice, and sincerely wish it may be in my power to do them to your satisfaction."

It is stated in several places that, by virtue of the fact that he delivered the first clinical lecture in the United States at the Pennsylvania Hospital on December 3, 1766, Dr. Bond may be called the Father of Clinical Medicine in the United States, if not in America.

When a petition to the Assembly to establish the Pennsylvania Hospital was read, it was pointed out that the salaries to doctors would consume all the appropriation; whereupon three members of the medical profession, Doctors Lloyd Zachary, Thomas Bond, and Phineas Bond, his brother, offered their services gratis for three years.

Dr. Bond was elected a member of the First Board of Contributors of the Hospital, but resigned at the end of a year to devote his time entirely to the Medical Staff. Dr. Bond was one of the founders of the College and Academy

which afterward became the University of Pennsylvania. He was elected a trustee in 1749 and remained such to the time of his death.

He was also one of the original members of the American Philosophical Society and was elected vice president, a position which he occupied as long as he lived, Benjamin Franklin being the president during this entire period.

Accounts are given of several articles published in medical journals, some of them being the relation of interesting cases which he encountered in his practice. There is also an account of a paper read before the Philosophical Society on "The Rank of Man in the Scale of Being and the Conveniences and Advantages He Derives From the Arts and Sciences."

The *Standard History of the Medical Profession of Philadelphia* (page 434) states: "The earliest invention by a Philadelphian of which we have been able to find any record was the Bond splint, invented by Thomas Bond for the treatment of fractures of the lower end of the radius and still much used for the purpose." He also invented an œsophageal forceps for the extraction of foreign bodies from the œsophagus.

Clinton Street, Philadelphia, was at one time named Bond Street as the result of a resolution passed at a meeting of The Contributors of the Pennsylvania Hospital. "On motion, it was unanimously resolved that the twenty feet street intended to be laid out as stated in the preceding resolution shall be named Bond Street in grateful recollection of the early, long, and faithful services of Doctors Thomas and Phineas Bond as physicians to this institution."

At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, Dr. Bond, then past his sixtieth year, tendered his services to his country in a letter dated December 4, 1776; this letter being addressed to the Committee of Safety. This received a favorable response and both Dr. Bond and his son rendered distinguished services to the American cause by taking an active part in the organization of the medical department of the Army.

Dr. Bond was a delicate man, having, according to accounts, a tendency to pulmonary tuberculosis, but by unremitting care of his health, he lived to reach the age of 72.

On a tombstone in Christ Church burying-ground, we find this inscription:

"In memory of Thomas Bond, M.D. who practised Physic and Surgery with signal reputation and success nearly half a century, lamented and beloved by many, respected and esteemed by all, and adorned by literary honors sustained by him with dignity. He departed this life March 26, 1784. Aged 72 years."

It is a pleasant coincidence to find, as an introduction to Morton's *History of the Pennsylvania Hospital*, a poem of a little later date by another distinguished Marylander, Francis Scott Key:

ON VISITING THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL

"Whose fair abode is this? Whose happy lot
Has drawn them in these peaceful shades to rest
And hear the distant hum of busy life?
The city's noise, its clouds of smoke and dust,
Vainly invade these leafy walls that wave
On high around it, sheltering all within,
And wooing the scared bird to stay its flight,
And add its note of joy to bless the scene!
The city's toils, and cares, and strifes are, sure,
Alike excluded here—Content here smiles
And reigns, and leads her vot'ries through the maze
Of flower-embroidered walks to bowers of bliss!
O! 'tis a sight to warm the heart of him
Who feels for man, and shares the joys he sees."

WALTER D. WISE.