



Dr. Arch E. Spelman

Light of ideals

A.E. Spelman

1-8-21

Age 19

The following is a long considered and coolly calculated expression of my ambitions and intentions in life, and a statement of the principles which my conscience has convicted me are the ones I should follow.

In the first place, I am an ardent believer in the theory that one should do his honest best to find the rights and wrongs of life – both those of God and of man – and adhere to them strictly as his conscience convicts him regardless of criticism and headless of the danger impaired or he outcome. He should establish a moral standard based on an unselfish foundation and with both a worldly and a Godly viewpoint. With these fixed principles clearly in mind he should face life and let his common sense be his guide with integrity as his superb influence.

From the above expressed viewpoint, I see every man born with a responsibility, that responsibility being to give the limit of his best abilities to the world. This should be done unselfishly with no thought of worldly gain and only with the idea of happiness he will gain from his own achievements and the pleasure of improving humanity. In the first place, he should let his instincts with the help of liberal education teach him the thing he is least fitted for in life, viewing this from the greatest distance from mercenary thoughts. When once firmly convinced of his “calling” it may be expressed as that of every effort should be concentrated toward, achieving the highest possible attainments his natural abilities will allow in his art or life work. To lay down an absolutely definite program of my life in accordance with time would be impossible at my early age in that I am not aware of the status in my life work to which my natural ability will place me. However, I will state my ambitions and a general outline of my plans in life.

To begin with I wish to live a Christian life, to do the least harm to and the most good for humanity and be respected as a man with a sense of honor and of firm integrity. I intend to spend at least five years in the study of medicine and then without a recess continue and study until I have mastered surgery. I wish during this time to learn the greatest possible amount of technique and develop my limit of cool judgment.

Then at the age of 31-35 I wish to begin the practice of my profession. In practicing I wish to be void of any influence in which money may play a part and to make my charges according to the ability to pay. During my time if I meet a man or group of men who have the same moral convictions in my profession as I have, I wish to become affiliated with them and with theirs and God’s help establish a haven for humanity needing surgical aid. The constitution of this foundation must be based on the same principles of pecuniary remuneration as I have had in my early days, that is to say, according to ability to pay.

If I am not blessed with acquaintances described above I want only the Supreme Power to help me. I wish to build an establishment so firmly that youth of the next generation may take up and continue with the original principles of the foundation. I want to live only so long as I am a benefiting factor to the world and then pass peacefully to the next abiding place prepared for humanity. I wish to become the acme of my profession to be able to teach others of my calling and to leave only a monument of remembrance. I wish my earthly remains to be given to the anatomical study of my race and my remains such as they may be after my profession is through with them, to be placed with those of my family beneath a very modest stone.

The above is my present intentions and convictions and I wish them to be changed only as they will raise my character to a higher plain.