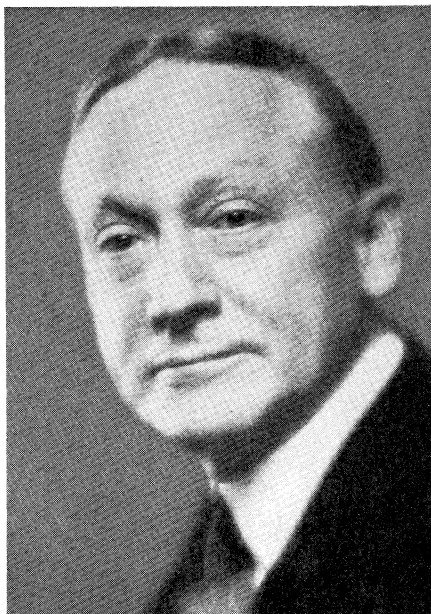




WILLIAM D. HAGGARD, M.D.
Nashville, Tenn.
1872-1940

*Seventy-eighth President, A. M. A.
Atlantic City Session
May 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 1925*



THE SELECTION OF DR. WILLIAM D. HAGGARD for the presidency of the Association was a recognition of his eminence as a surgeon, of the medicine of the South, of his service in the advancement of medical education, and of the qualities of leadership and congeniality which he possessed to a high degree.

He was born in Nashville, September 28, 1872. It is interesting to note that the name of his father, Dr. William David Haggard, appears frequently in the early Transactions of this Association; he was also the first president and one of the founders of the Southern Surgical Association. The son received his preliminary education in the schools of Nashville, and graduated from the University of Tennessee Medical Department with the degree Doctor of Medicine in 1893. Soon afterwards he began practice in Nashville.

In 1896, he was appointed assistant professor of gynecology in his Alma Mater, and in 1900 professor of gynecology and abdominal surgery. He served in the latter capacity until 1912, when he became professor of surgery and clinical surgery at Vanderbilt University Medical School, and served in this position the remainder of his life. He held the position of surgeon and first president of the Staff at St. Thomas Hospital, and that of visiting surgeon at Vanderbilt University Hospital.

After the declaration of war in April 1917, Doctor Haggard was appointed by Surgeon General Gorgas on the Advisory Board of the Division of Surgery and was first on duty in the office of the Surgeon General in Washington. Later he served as Major and Lieutenant Colonel in the Medical Corps of the Army, and acted as surgeon to Evacuation Hospital No. 1 at Toul, France, and later as consultant in surgery at the Mesves Hospital Center.

In the American Medical Association, Doctor Haggard held many positions of importance. In 1898 and 1899 when he was only twenty-six years old, he was chosen secretary of the Section on Surgery; he served again in 1909 and 1910, and as chairman of the Section in 1916-1917. He was a member of the House of Delegates in 1905, 1906, and 1922. In 1912 he became a member of the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals, serving continuously until 1921.

When he was chosen president-elect in 1924, in his brief acceptance speech, he enunciated his great belief in the possibilities of preventive as well as curative medicine, expressing the dictum—"Prevention runs as a thread of gold through the fabric of medicine."

His address as president in 1925 on the "Romance of Medicine" permitted full play for his eloquence and charm of delivery. He originated the activating concept and importance of having a thorough physical examination on one's birthday. Since then the "periodic health examination" has become the accepted educational policy of the medical profession and a slogan* of health agencies. This address with other papers was published in book form in 1927.

Through many of his addresses before medical and surgical associations, the theme of preventive medicine was a prominent feature. In his address as president of the Tennessee State Medical Association in 1914 on "Present-day Problems of the Medical Profession" he discussed some new frontiers in the development of public health in this country; the concluding paragraph was significant: "Every physician, no matter how engrossed with the exacting care of those entrusting their lives and health to him, must not fail to interest himself in the larger community interests that relate to the prevention of disease and the wholesome saving of human life."

Doctor Haggard was instrumental in aiding the organization of the American College of Surgery, serving as regent for a number of years, and becoming president in 1933. His address as president entitled "Surgery, Queen of the Arts" with other papers and addresses was published in 1935. His further contributions to medical literature included numerous scientific articles, covering particularly the surgery of appendicitis, goitre and carcinoma.

He was a member of the American Surgical Association, the

Society of Clinical Surgery, and the Southeastern Surgical Congress. Doctor Haggard was further honored with the presidency of the Nashville Academy of Medicine, the Middle Tennessee Medical Association, and vice-president of the Pan-American Medical Congress.

Doctor Haggard was a distinguished gentleman, a masterly surgeon, a facile speaker and raconteur, and widely recognized as a diplomat in medical affairs.

His life's philosophy may be somewhat envisioned by quotations which he gave in beginning and concluding a notable address delivered at the University of Toronto in 1934 on "Seeds of Time"; this was a discussion of the genesis of chronic disease, with a decided philosophical slant. He began by quoting from Macbeth: "If you can look into the seeds of time, and say which grain will grow and which will not, speak then to me," and closed with the quotation, "So live that when thy eternal summons comes, be able and resigned to say: 'Earth you have shown us all; I am ready for the call.' "

Death came to him at Palm Beach, Florida, where he had gone for a brief vacation on January 28, 1940, at the age of sixty-seven years.

