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THE STATUS OF DENTISTRY.*

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Navigators in unknown seas have very frequently to take their bearings in order to get an intelligent idea of their course. We, like them, in navigating our professional vessel through the great unknown sea of time, must sometimes take our bearings also, in order that we may know what course we are steering, and whither we may bring up.

We wish to know whether we shall anchor in that harbor called Success, or, on the other hand, make shipwreck of a noble vessel laden with grand possibilities. Our fate is, within certain limitations, in our own hands; ours are the quadrant and the compass, the lead and the tiller.

The status of dentistry in the professions has never been rigidly defined nor universally recognized.

We are continually being confronted by the question, whether it is a profession in itself, a branch of the medical profession, or a mechanical art.

In naming the leading professions, law, medicine, engineering and theology are nearly always mentioned, but dentistry, except amongst its own practitioners, is seldom added.

Is this because it is included in medicine, or is it because the majority do not consider it a learned profession?

* Paper read before the Eastern Ontario Dental Association at Ottawa, on June 11th, 1896.