

of to-day; (3) a clearer understanding with the medical profession. When we have secured the above we may hope to practice dentistry as it should be practised—a united profession, a just cause.

IMPORTANCE OF CHEMISTRY TO DENTISTS.

BY A. A. HUMBER, D.D.S., VICTORIA, B.C.

THE average student leaving college with his newly acquired qualification for practice is, one would think, in as good a position to express himself intelligently upon the fundamental principles relating to the science of chemistry as he ever will be, remembering that few dentists pursue its study to any extent after graduation. And yet how few know anything worth mentioning about the subject.

Only the other day the writer was informed by a student attending college that in his own opinion he was progressing satisfactorily in all his subjects of study with the exception of chemistry. Now, can it be that other subjects are so much easier, or is it that the colleges are to blame? The latter seems more probable. We all understand chemistry to be a life study in itself, but surely a knowledge of the names and properties of the commoner elementary bodies must be easy enough of acquirement. Without such knowledge we cannot truly claim to be scientific, and surely nothing but failure to grasp its importance prevents a more widespread acquirement of knowledge in this direction.

The simple reaction of sulphuric acid on tooth substance; the perfect understanding of the refinement of metals; the action of the peroxides of hydrogen or sodium, or of the potassium-sodium mixture are all happenings in our daily practice, and how few dentists really know what takes place when these agents are brought into play. When we stop to think that the future discoverer of a cement which will fulfil the requirements of the dentist will more than probably be a man who has at least dabbled with chemicals, and that if we had more in our midst who knew something of this subject we would perhaps at the present time possess a cement having qualities that would place it in the list of permanent filling materials. We ought all to recognize