

stable are human prospects. Perhaps, none other illustrates this melancholy truth so frequently, or to so large an extent. The preparatory study which a man is compelled to undergo, ere he can join our ranks with credit, and with legitimate chances of successful practice, is eminently calculated to weaken his powers of constitution, and lessen the probability of length being added to his days." Severe study, rigid abstemious discipline, and continual exposure to the effluvia of disease and death, are so many sources of physical weakness, and early physical decay. The commencement of practice, if not marked by that singular success, the issue of accident, and the lot of only a few, requires the exercise of such energy, and entails the suffering of such anxiety, as few stamina can sustain with impunity. Hence, how common a thing it is, to find the hopes, expectations and efforts, of the few years of a practitioner's life, only the heralds of early death bed, where ambition pauses in its career of distinction, and its best, and its brightest enterprises are proved to be as empty and valueless as vanity.

As Dr. Daniel once observed, to a general meeting of the Medical Practitioners in Norwich, (England) on the subject of a general annuity fund—I also, am not one who would willingly find fault without occasion, nor say of the profession, that "it is without its measure of enjoyment. He who follows it '*con amore*,' finds foods in its exercise for high mental satisfaction; his benevolent heart is gratified with every successful case; and his mind is enriched with stores of wisdom which impart to his spirit, complacency and delight." But the question assumes another form; while he has life, health, and practice, the measure of his enjoyment is not small, but reverse the picture, and how frightful is the detail. Behold him stretched upon the bed of sickness, the finger of death pressing upon his eyelids, the wife of his bosom, the fond partner of his joys and his cares, hovering round him with pallid cheeks and anxious heart, his little ones—but who can paint such a picture? His eyes wander from object to object, while the conviction of his bereaved family's ultimate destitution sits upon his heart like a fearful incubus. Alas! "the iron enters his soul." What can this widow, and these orphans do? The lady, perchance, has been well educated, she is versed in those accomplishments which make loveliness more lovely. She designs to convert her talents into usefulness and by labour to earn bread for her children. It is a laudable undertaking and worthy her spirit. But who shall answer for the success of any speculation? And who shall count the weary days and nights, the many anxious moments she must pass, before a remunerating measure of employment shall be hers. Her feelings have been refined by that very education which she makes the source of her emolument. Her thoughts are dignified, her sensibilities exquisite, the asperities which beset her in life's journey are mountains in her path; well may she sit, and weep and mourn. Oh! let this picture, so correct in its character, so true in all its delineation; I say, let this picture come with proper force upon the hearts of every a medical practitioner, and help the efforts of Dr. Smallwood, and other noble and philanthropic minds to avert such calamities, as have been already exhibited to me, during a long professional career. It has been truly observed, that the peculiarity of our profession is, that it cannot be delegated to others, it is not