

branch of commerce, in every trade and handicraft, in every liberal art, in every learned profession, the lines which divide the work to be done by each are, for the most part, clearly and distinctly traced, the ceaseless agitation of life is marvellous, and would seem to favour the view long ago expressed by De Quincey that solitude was, even in his time, becoming a visionary idea in this country; Yet to me, a visitor, it appears life here is calm, quiet, placid when compared with that on the western continent. Here there is time for easy and familiar intercourse; there it is grudgingly given. Here you leisurely perform the functions necessary for the repair of wasted tissue, and the reception of food, recreation and sleep have each their due time allotted to them; there they are unduly curtailed as things which might be realized and converted into currency. This state of unrest everywhere—but especially in the western world—is not favourable to the surgeon, the full capabilities of whose intellect are not unfolded without sufficient occasional leisure and thought and retirement, all of which are, in some measure, denied to him in our new and over-active world. With you, as with us—but, as it seems to me, not so much with you as with us—the average surgeon of to-day is less a man of thought than a man of action. He is constantly liable to disturbance, either from the particular character of his calling, or from the agitation of all around him, of which he soon partakes. He is made to eschew the more meditative habits which would the better fit him to weigh well and to adopt or reject what should be adopted or rejected, without reference to authority, or without being swayed by the influence, not always safe and reliable, of superiority of position or of condition.

Perhaps at no time in the history of our art have the facilities been greater everywhere than they are at present of arriving at conclusions which may not be sound, and of being misled by representations which may not be strictly true. In the few intellectual centres, in ancient times, opinion was gradually formed in solitude. It advanced in regular progression, and from mouth to mouth, as it were. To-day, with steam and electricity and the wondrous and unceasing development therefrom of vast physical agencies, men are brought nearer to each other. Truth to-day, travels with the speed of lightning; but error also, and with like rapidity. Opinion, formed in