

an abundant crop of those which are devoted to a single limited branch. A name frequently adopted, and in such a case peculiarly appropriate, is "Literary and Philosophical Society," which at once points to the wide extent of the subjects open for discussion; and where the simpler form of "Philosophical Society" has been preferred, the members are allowed freely to roam through literature and learning, antiquities and arts, as well as mathematical and philosophical sciences. I myself can never forget many delightful evenings spent at the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, with Roscoe and Traill, Rathbone, Curry and the Yateses, and a host of others, eminent as physicians, lawyers, divines, or merchants, and well prepared to discuss matters of science, learning, literature, taste or social interest, in a manner at once agreeable and improving. Nor less do I recur with the truest enjoyment to evenings spent at the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, where Mr. Vernon Harcourt, Professor Phillips, Mr. Allis, the comparative anatomist, my learned colleagues in the college with which I was then connected, Mr. Wellbeloved, who has thrown such light on the antiquities of York, and Mr. Kenrick, the acute and refined scholar and critic, with other able men, gave a never-flagging interest to the Society's meetings. On the other hand, I can testify from my own experience, that a Society confining itself to a particular branch, which all its members are supposed to be more or less cultivating, does by no means secure the uniform interest of its meetings, and may frequently be a direct cause of their being dull and unattractive.

If we try to reason on the subject, it will be evident that the Society whose plan is most comprehensive is most likely to afford something peculiarly interesting occasionally to every intelligent person, and to diffuse a taste for that varied culture which is at once ornamental and useful in a community, whilst a common organization saves the expense of many separate establishments. A common publication brings before the world what is judged most important in all the departments; and what is wanted in the way of special studies in any one science, is easily supplied by the votaries of that science holding additional special meetings as often as they deem useful, like the Sections of the French Institute, and availing themselves freely of the rooms and books of the general Society; whilst, if they find it necessary for purposes of their own, they can provide themselves with funds by a small additional subscription from the members of the particular section. The working of our Medical section shows the practicability and the convenience of