

system is often compared to a machine. Now it is well known that if a cog or a wheel, or any other essential part of a machine, becomes deranged, the whole is sure to suffer. So it is with the human system: if any organ or organs become deranged, the whole is likely to be affected. And when we consider that at the present time it is only an exception to find a person whose dental organs are in a healthy condition, we must arrive at the conclusion, considering the primary causes and ultimate effects of such a state of things, that our people are degenerating physically. These reflections, and the fact that it is our especial province to point out and ameliorate what is wrong, is sufficient to convince any sensible person that we have an important duty to perform, and that as a profession, we are indispensable; unlike our noble sister profession, the medical, we, perhaps, never have directly to step in between life and death, and therefore, in that respect, are not so important. But it is a question with me, if our sphere of operation does not afford us power and opportunities to promote the health and comfort of the people to as great an extent as theirs do, and if we can be the means of rectifying the present degenerated condition of the organs which we profess to treat, and prevent human suffering, we will be worthy of the title of Licentiates of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons. The opinion of a gallant knight, to the contrary, notwithstanding.

Dentistry, to a considerable extent, is a mechanical profession. But to be a useful and efficient dentist implies a great deal more than to be able to perform well the necessary manipulations, although that requires a great deal of knowledge, tact, and experience. Dentists, to be useful, and to command respect and influence, should possess general intelligence, and a liberal education, and be fitted to act the part of gentlemen with the public and their patients. This is necessary not only for the credit and interest of the profession, but also for the people. A large portion of dentists' patients are persons of intelligence, taste, and refinement, and if the dentist does not possess these qualities, which command respect from such, he will not obtain that full confidence in his professional capacity which is necessary for the successful practitioner; besides their professional acquirements, which ought to embrace all the collateral sciences, which are indispensably necessary for the efficient practitioner, viz., Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Therapeutics, Chemistry, and Metallurgy. It may be asked by some who look upon dentistry as a purely mechanical calling, why we need a knowledge of all these sciences. I would answer, that a knowledge of the structure and function of organs lies at the very foundation of our ability to prevent disease, and cure them when out of order. So it is with Pathology, if we do not comprehend the nature