

are some of the objects to which we should bend our efforts? Briefly here shall a few thoughts in this direction be considered.

The future of our profession lies in the hands of its members, and of those who are chosen to fill its ranks. We should so order our system of professional education that it shall call for and receive those men and women who are best fitted to carry on its standard. Wealth and social position are valuable possessions, but character is the true test of fitness. Greatly desirable is it that all should possess the former, but it is absolutely necessary that they possess the latter. Our educational system is too much of a machine, taking in the raw material at one end and grinding graduates out at the other without due respect to individual needs and fitness. Little wonder is it that the output shows too indelibly the stamp of hopeless mediocrity. Every undesirable member is a load upon the shoulders of the others—a veritable old man of the sea, who clings and clings like a perpetual handicap on progress. Every unprogressive, sordid individual is a tax upon the efforts of ambition. Of prime moment is the discriminate choice of students. Too many are taken for their services alone, whereby the dentist saves the paltry wages of a boy or a girl in the laboratory. Eventually these students are graduated and established across the street to the very detriment of their preceptors. Indiscriminate choice of students increases competition. Undue competition drives the weaker members into unprofessional practices. Unprofessional practices are the demoralization of the profession. It were better to have half as many practitioners and each one a real dentist. Students should be chosen carefully, and with due attention to their fitness. They should show special qualifications for a profession that *par excellence* demands—powers of specialization. The best and brightest are none too good for a profession, the details of which no one man can master in a lifetime. Students should be inspired with the importance and dignity of our profession, for which no man need apologize. There is as wide a range for the exercise of mechanical ability, surgical skill and judgment in the treatment of dental disease as in any of the other specialties of medicine.

Here I would enforce the claim that dentistry is a specialty of medicine which, at the present stage of human development, is not inferior in importance to any other department. The teeth and mouth are the organs upon which the conditions of civilization are exerting their most powerful influence. It is to the treatment of their tendencies and diseases that we must look to supplement the great strides of preventive medicine and sanitary science, as well as to their importance as predisposing and exciting conditions to be reckoned with in the general treatment of disease. A knowledge of as wide a range as possible of general pathological conditions is