

a crude and isolated condition. A vast amount of severe and properly directed toil must be expended upon this chaotic mass ere it shall assume definite and systematic proportions. And it is folly to await, with folded arms, the advent of some medical Heracles, who shall perform for us at a stroke the labors which destiny seems to have apportioned off among the profession at large. How much of the work has been allotted to us we know not, but, at all events, we do well to prepare ourselves for adding our quota, be it great or small, to the general store. And who dares assert that even our Society, obscure as it is, may not, one day, play a prominent part in placing our noble science before the world, a model of symmetry, order, and beauty?

Leaving the question of intellectual profit and loss, I ask your attention to another point that ought to be considered in estimating the advantages arising from this Society. I refer to that peculiar softening of the manners, that unity of sentiment, that kindliness of regard, which are the natural results of social intercourse. Perhaps in no walk of life are there so many circumstances calculated to produce the opposite of these conditions as in the medical profession. The old are apt to place value almost exclusively on the lessons of experience, and to regard with a species of pity the empty pretensions of the young. The young pride themselves on their acquaintance with the latest theories of the day, and feel disposed to deride the old gentleman who administers his calomel or blue pill for no better reason than that he has found it beneficial in similar cases, and who cannot enter with his medicine at the mouth or other port of entry, follow it in all its turnings and windings through the system, note its successive actions and reactions, its thousand sympathies and antipathies, and finally emerge with it through its favorite emunctory; and all this in exact accordance with the most approved hypothesis on the subject. Among those who stand on an equal footing, and who are battling for the same object, a certain degree of professional, if not personal, rivalry cannot but exist. Again, in a profession such as ours it is natural for an

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