

seriously curtailed. He loses his patients while he is in his laboratory. To ask him to give away his discovery to men who neither helped nor appreciated him is unreasonable; it is uncharitable. A rival who invents a new mowing machine is perfectly "proper," though he may never contribute an idea or an implement to his profession. There are scores of petty "inventions" which have no merit, and whose authors cannot pretend to be placed side by side with a Barnum or a Land. But when a dentist devises or discovers something which is generally recognized as valuable, and which his confreres are glad to obtain; when societies ask him and pay him to give clinics, and, in spite of arrogant sneer, he demonstrates its value, his effort merits open and fair encouragement. If the framers of the code intended it otherwise, why was a resolution offered in 1867, to give a prize of \$5,000 to any experimenter who produced a permanent white plastic filling? In 1870, at the Nashville meeting, Prof. Buckingham offered an amendment to the constitution, as follows: "No person shall be a member of this Association who holds a dental patent, or is or shall be interested in one." The motion was lost. At the same meeting \$1,000 was voted to the late Dr. Barnum for his discovery of the rubber dam. Dr. Barnum died poor. If we are to expect our discoverers to spend their lives and money for our profit, we must devise some better way of remunerating them than paltry testimonials and votes of thanks. The story of Dr. Barnum is not an isolated one. Some of the most critical and arrogant disparagers of patentees never did an unselfish thing for the profession. When an inventor is solicited and paid to exhibit his new ideas, he should at least not be treated like a malefactor, whose genius we are hungry to use, but whose "methods" may not square with our convictions. If poverty is to be even the chance reward of genius, codes of ethics are tyrannical. Members of societies who depart from the code, have no right to complain if they are forced to conform to them, or forced to retire. But it seems to us, that an inventive genius merits some substantial reward for the labors of a lifetime. How shall we encourage this, and yet keep such men in our societies?