

scholar and the sobriety of the critic, formed the singularity and almost the anomaly of his personal character. These contrasts were tempered by the discipline of experience, and his life, both as a man and a Christian, seemed to become more rich, genial, and harmonious as it approached its close."

It is mournful and unfortunate that this Society and the profession of the Province, should, within a few months, have lost three such distinguished members. The consoling reflection is this, that they lived honorable and useful lives, leaving names of which their families have reason to feel proud, and reflecting honour upon the profession of which they were ornaments. It was my privilege to know all these gentlemen intimately, and the loss of their friendship is one which I feel every day and constantly recurring, but there are hundreds of others to whom these gentlemen stood in a similar relation. To their families and relatives, whose sorrow and bereavement are so much greater than ours, let us extend our heartfelt sympathy.

It is now seven years since the first meeting of this Society at Fredericton, and it is worth while to ask if it has attained to any degree the object for which it was formed. These objects were principally, I think, to protect the practice of medicine and surgery from ignorant and unreliable persons without any or sufficient training and practical knowledge of the science and art of medicine, but who gave themselves out as having such; also to bring together the members of the profession from all parts of the Province, for the discussion of any matter of general interest, and the exchange of ideas and information for mutual benefit.

Have these objects been attained? I verily believe they have to some degree, but not to the extent to which they might have been. Certainly the public has been largely protected from unqualified practitioners. The standing of members has been raised, and none now pretend to practice without a diploma from a College where a fair medical education may be obtained. The number who now obtain their diplomas in our own country, at an institution which insists on a curriculum of four years, and the degree from which stands high anywhere, is a proof of the beneficial results of the movement which seven years ago produced the Medical Act of this Province, and formed this Society. The success of the annual meetings has, perhaps, not been so marked, yet I believe that good results have been obtained from them. Members have been induced to come forward with papers which have shown careful preparation, much observation and reading; the discussions following them have stimulated thought and presented points in an instructive light to others. For myself, I owe an indebtedness to these papers and discussions in many instances, and I have never attended a meeting of the Society without learning something that I was glad to know.

The value of such meetings has been felt everywhere. In Great Britain and the United States such

organizations exist in every county and town, and are carried on with great interest and spirit. These form larger societies, until now we see that a meeting is held at a stated interval at which delegates from all civilized countries are present, who interchange personally the latest theories and practical observations of the day. If no good resulted from such organizations, men of the highest standing in the different branches of learning would not travel so far to meet together. Such a meeting took place last autumn on this side of the Atlantic, at which there were nearly 3000 present, among them members from this city and province.

But the meetings of this Society have not hitherto been so well attended, or excited so much interest as one would expect, when it is recollected how easy and quick communication from any part of this province to another may be had. There are many members of the profession, both in this city and throughout the Province, who have not contributed by their presence to these meetings, but whose influence might be felt for good in them.

If means could be devised to draw these gentlemen more into the Society, I think we would be benefitted to a perceptible degree. If a practitioner draws himself into himself all the time, and does not meet his fellows to know and learn what they think and do under circumstances similar to those in which he has found himself, he will be too likely to fall into a groove or routine practice, or see things from only one point of view. Reading alone will not take the place of many-sided observations and discussions. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the wonderfully clever and quick-witted writer and teacher of the profession, says:—"There never was and never will be two cases exactly alike in all respects. If a doctor has science without common sense, he treats say a fever, but not *this* man's fever; if he has common sense without science, he treats this man's fever without knowing the general laws which govern all fevers and vital movements. The men who have science only, begin too far back, and before they get as far as the case in hand, the patient has likely gone to visit his deceased relatives."

It seems to me there is a *necessity* for conference, criticism, and mutual help, and the recording and reporting of accurately observed facts. It is the glory of our profession that it holds that no scientific observer or teacher has a vested pecuniary interest in the benefits arising from discovery or knowledge, at least as applied in the practice or teaching of medicine. He feels that the property is not his alone, but belongs to all men, and that to conceal and utilize it for his use alone, is a miserable selfishness and a crime. It was not always so, for it is not many generations back when a practitioner who had an instrument or a medicine which he thought of service, kept it to himself and tried to enhance his own reputation and profit. Consequently quackery, charlatanism and superstition abounded and flourished; even in the ranks of the profession itself to some extent.