

indeed it will not be optional with them but rather a matter of sheer compulsion, if I know aright the instincts that prompt the gentlemen who constitute the Committee of Entertainment.

In order that such a meeting as this should fulfil its purpose it is imperative that each contribute his share in elucidating the various topics that may be presented. Even at the risk of verging on the sacrilegious, I would say :

“ Let not fitness make you linger,  
Nor of fitness fondly dream.”

Modesty should be the handmaid of true ability, not its tyrant; prominence of location is not always a reliable criterion of intense personality or mental cultivation; the city doctor, to be sure, derives benefit from frequent converse with his fellows; but his solitary brother from the cross-roads has at least one advantage over him, in that his environment, perforce, evokes the cultivation of self-reliance and the faculty of keen observation. I hope that none will hesitate; we are here for the rapid interchange of ideas that will stimulate afresh our enthusiasm and perseverance.

I scarcely think it needful to exhort the home members on this line, a very large majority of whom belong to the local societies; and, as a natural consequence, a *rara avis* among them would be he who required snipping of the lingual frænum. Let discussion be prompt and spirited, even approaching the line of disputation, if you will; we are assembled to elicit truth and relinquish error; and, although good-natured blows may mar the symmetry of some airy castle, its builder will not take umbrage; for, locked in the embrace of a common brotherhood, our ultimate object is not self aggrandisement but the attainment of knowledge for the alleviation of suffering and the good of mankind.

This brings me to the subject to which, for a few minutes, I wish to direct your attention, viz., the present relationship of the profession to the public at large; and, as a pre-eminent factor thereof, the standing of the profession itself, viewed, as much as in me lies, from an impartial standpoint.

Not self-constituted as such, but in the very nature of things, he who enters upon a medical career is compelled by the peculiarities of his calling to recognize himself as a guardian of the common weal, prompted by instincts the loftiest and motives superior to mere selfishness or ardent longing for the accumulation of wealth. The people claim, and rightly so, the devotion of his unflagging energy to the physical welfare of those to whose necessities he is called upon to minister. Not this alone, but his avocation stands upon a still higher plane than the relationship to the individual; the world at large is the scientific physician's parish, and its defects the supreme object of his best thought; never satisfied with what has already been accomplished by others, his leisure moments are occupied in striving to solve the problem of nature; often unsuccessful, but never without that reward which invariably follows the pursuit of the true and abiding. A Jenner, a Simpson, a Koch or a Lister once in awhile towers aloft as some snow-capped Alp in the light of the rising sun invested with all the majesty of a noble creation. These intellectual giants few can ever hope to emulate; but, from the history of their life work, the lowliest and most obscure may draw such inspiration as glorifies labor with high ideals and fills the heart with burning desire for the good of others. Community of interest so intimately links the profession and the laity that it seems not unbecoming for me to dwell for a little on some features of human life—family, social and educational—as we see them in this Province of Ontario; and, in so doing, if I should indulge in a little criticism, do not for a moment imagine that I am