

tion has held its meetings in the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario. On this occasion we have the pleasure of assembling in one of the oldest cities of the Maritime Provinces; which with its noble harbour adorns the Atlantic coast of the Dominion. Perhaps the day is not distant when a session of this same Association will be held on that other shore where the waters of the Pacific wash its Western boundary.

Those among us whose heads are nearing their resting place may not see this event, much less the gatherings of our profession in those intermediate regions which must one day become the home of millions; but you who have commenced the battle of life, when the passing years will have left their impress, and you take your stand between the present and the future, will witness vast changes, and in the meetings of the "Canadian Medical Association" will find yourselves surrounded with brethren, coming from the different quarters of the Dominion—from the Pacific coast with its genial winters,—from the valleys of the Saskatchewan and Assiniboine—from the prairies of Manitoba, from the old homestead Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, from those Provinces by the sea, and you will reap the benefits which such meetings are so well calculated to confer, for they will embrace the experience of the profession under varying climates and under many conditions. And gentlemen we must not be discouraged by seeming failures. These are incidental to the commencement of all such institutions. The time will come when full success will crown our efforts, and our Association will be commensurate with our nation. We must have our evening as well as morning to constitute a perfect day. We cannot measure the result by present benefits. They will assume proportions which will surpass the anticipations of the most ardent. For no matter how extensive the experience of the individual practitioner, how close his observation, how powerful his mental capacity, he will, if confined to a locality, become cramped by its limits, and it may be his professional growth checked by an incrustation of routine so apt to settle upon us all. Throw the same person into contact with genial minds and he will enter upon new fields of thought, and receive as well as impart new suggestions, and that in proportion to the extent of country which may be

represented. This has been the case in other departments of culture, and will prove true when professional brethren meet, for each member from his contact with disease under varying circumstances will bring to light some new experience and at the same time will carry away that detailed by others, each having some special opportunities in the wider field of observation, whilst the most cultivated will be benefited even in their own special direction by the critical shrewdness of those who may be their inferiors in their specialty, yet their equals if not their superiors in other departments of the profession.

Another result will be the modifying influence which will be exercised on the extreme of the profession. The too hasty will be held in check by the naturally conservative, whilst the latter will be stimulated to new life by the impulsive energies of the former. And all will be stirred up from a sluggish routine which dislikes to have its calm disturbed, or drifts lazily away with the tide of opinion and accepts the dicta of teachers; rather than enter upon that strict investigation and careful line of thought so necessary to all progress.

By such collisions of mind may we not hope that there will arise some check to fashion, which has lessened and still lessens the influence of the profession. No one can deny the prevalence of fashion. Not merely in the past, when dogmatism prevailed in proportion to existing ignorance, but even now in our times. The evil is ever ready to come to the surface. Those now living will recollect how Broussais swayed the schools and how his facts and theories were accepted or rejected. How every departure from a healthy condition was regarded as the result of asthenic state, and how, as a matter of course, bleeding and antiphlogistics were the great agencies for dislodging the enemy. Then again, diseases were ascribed to the failure of vital powers and bloodletting was so little used that it was lately treated by one of the most eminent in the profession as a "lost art." "Building up" was a necessary consequence; and then stimulants advocated as the best means to arrest the flagging powers of life to such an extent that (with many practitioners) no condition would seem to contra-indicate their use. And again the pendulum swings, and already are there some who will not allow that