

question of fees has received a solution. The tariff adopted in 1845 was, it was felt, no longer suited to the vastly increased, and still rapidly increasing rate or cost of living. A tariff more in keeping with the new circumstances has been adopted, not binding 'tis true upon, but suggestive rather to, the members of the profession, to proportion their charges to the importance of, and trouble in, the case, and to the circumstances of the patient; yet leaving them free to exercise, each in his own way, that tender regard for the interests of others, which characterizes the members of our calling. Let no one indulge the calumny that those efforts have been directed with a view to an earlier future of ease or comfort, or hope of pleasure, where difficulties and dangers and abnegations are the chief allurements that act on the true physician and kindle his inner genial life with a flame, as Carlyle says, that burns up all lower considerations.

Nor will those aspirations be clouded or repressed by the quasi commercial measure subsequently adopted. It has long been observed that many persons of extravagant, luxurious, or indolent habits, or of dishonest propensities, while most exacting with their medical attendant—demanding his services at hours to suit their convenience, not his—are accustomed to deny the usual honorarium. The secretary, early in the present year, was ordered by the Society to keep a book in which should be inscribed the names of persons who *habitually* act in this manner. I have not seen the register, gentlemen, nor am I aware what names, if any, are there inscribed; but of this I am sure, that, speaking with a knowledge which a personal acquaintance with every member of this Society gives me, a due regard will ever be paid to those amenities which the members of our profession so well understand: and that the penalty will only be suffered to strike, if strike it should, those grosser forms of habitual dishonesty and deceit.

The year terminates with eight additions to the list of membership; and one departure for other fields of usefulness.

The Angel of death has hovered near and seemed, betimes, threatening to swoop upon some who are endeared to us. Still his hand has been stayed, and for the first time since the re-organization of this Society there is no death to record.

Taking a retrospective glance at the labors of the year just ended, I cannot perceive any signs of more than usual activity. The attendance at the meetings is not large. To what is it due? Is it that members, fatigued with the labors of the day, seek in the

evening that *dolce far niente*, so welcome to the weary? Or is it, as has been suggested that, fatigued with each other, as Tully says: "qui aut tempus quid postulet non videt, aut plura loquitur, aut se ostentat, aut eorum, quibuscum est, rationem non habet is ineptus esse dicitur?" Or, is it that the novelty is over, "est natura hominum."—Pliny might have written medicorum—"novitatis avida."

It is usual on occasions of this kind to take a rapid survey of the advances made in the several departments of the healing art; but that has been done in medicine so recently by my immediate predecessor in the presidential chair, and in surgery by myself in New Brunswick, that I prefer glancing at certain phases of modern thought, indicated by the writings of those who assume to be its creators. And I crave your indulgence while endeavoring to follow the principal among them through a few, and a few only, of their mental gyrations and gymnics.

First, let me observe, gentlemen, that the objects of scientific thought may be, as claimed by a great modern luminary, "the passionless, emotionless laws of *external* nature withdrawn from the region of the feelings, and pursued by the cold, dry light of the intellect alone," but the *subject*, man, carries with him into all his works, a heart, humble or proud—an eye, clear or jaundiced—an intellect warped or unprejudiced; and thus the moral and the emotional soon become associated with the intellectual, if they were ever, for a moment, separated: The contemplation of nature, and his own relation to her, is somewhat calculated to produce in the philosopher a kind of spiritual exaltation. Religious feeling (or an inward emotion akin to it) and philosophy cannot be kept apart (why should they?) but overflow, the one into the other.

Of late years, certain men of science, craving for public notice, would seem to have departed from that passionless, emotionless contemplation of nature's laws, and, instead of methodically arranging and digesting that which is known, or may be known, seem, by the aid of their imagination, to have endeavored to furnish explanations of untranslatable phenomena, and that, too, in a phraseology as difficult to be understood as, nay, more difficult than, the phenomena themselves; and with a boldness that may challenge admiration, if not imitation. The true function of the natural philosopher is the consideration, the elucidation, of facts. But facts seem no longer to satisfy the mind, and thus we are made to travel from fact to principle, or to conjecture, or to supposition—away, perhaps, from the fact, to the mind's appreciation of that fact; and fact or re-