

profession, in its aims, in its methods, and its great importance to humanity, and also that the day is not far distant when the public recognition will be full and unreserved.

This is what is or should be the status of dentistry, but this is not all. It is necessary that we should know just where we are in the estimation of the public and what means should be used to attain our ideal position.

It is also necessary to be forewarned and forearmed in order to guard against the development of unseemly features in our professional existence.

At present the dentist is recognized as the professional equal of the physician and lawyer by those only who understand somewhat of his acquirements, and who have come into contact with intelligent members of his profession.

To the general public the dentist is simply a "tooth-puller." It is wonderful how many fairly well informed persons there are who imagine that a dentist's chief occupation is the extraction of offending teeth. The fact is that the majority of dentists extract but very few teeth, hardly a greater proportion than of physicians who saw off legs. Amputation of a diseased member, whether a limb or a tooth, is the final resort of the intelligent practitioner.

There are various reasons for the present position of our profession.

Dentistry, as a profession, is young and has not that antiquity which seems to give respectability. The physician is the descendant of the barber, and the dentist of the blacksmith, but the physician sometimes looks down upon the dentist because the barber is more remote than the blacksmith. Law looks down upon both because its origin is still more remote, though just as lowly.

This relative position of things is a necessary and inevitable feature of the evolution of society. It is just one of those peculiar natural laws that go to make life bearable. Jack cannot be as good as his master until he can show his master's attainments and if need be fill his place. Dentistry is a noble profession, full of grand opportunities and glorious possibilities; it is worthy of and shall attain a future as grand as that of any other profession, but the attainment of that future lies in the industry, intelligence and usefulness of its members.

The dentist must make himself the equal in attainment, refinement and intelligence of his sister practitioner, and the recognition will be accorded without the asking. If there rests any onus upon dentistry the blame lies at the door of the man who is retrogressive, churlish, selfish, money grubbing and who stubbornly refuses to put his shoulder to the wheel for the general good.

"Every man is a debtor to his profession," says Bacon, the great philosopher, who preached so much better than he practised.