

—he cannot leave his patient, nor say, “I must first return to my library and look up Reynolds’ System or Holmes’ before I can tell you what to do,”—no! be his competency what it may, he must fall back on the resources he then has and at once do all in his power. The bleeding wound will not staunch its flow till he leaves to find out how the severed artery should be tied, nor will the deadly poison stop its destructive work till he consults his notes to be sure of the proper antidote to exhibit.

Be not content with living in the past. Medicine is progressive, and unless pace be kept with its rapid strides, those who halt or lag behind will be soon outstripped. The charge that medicine is a venerable fossil, consolidated in the stillness of by-gone ages, is contradicted by the experience of every year. Take up any of the periodical abstracts or retrospects, which I advise each of you to procure regularly, and there in the new things brought to light, abundant evidence will be found to rebut the aspersion. Turn over the leaves of comparatively modern volumes and note the improvements, many and important, that have been introduced. Note the deeper insight into the construction of the organism afforded by Histology. Note the increasing facilities for diagnosis in the invention of ingenious instruments, as the Laryngoscope. Note the contributions to the Therapeutical staff, as Chloroform or Carbolic acid. Note in treatment the tendency rather to conserve and recuperate than to pull down and impoverish. Note the operative procedures that have made familiar as household words, the names of Graeffe, Syme, Bellingham, Simpson, Teale, Sims, Bowman, Holt and others. Note these alone, and surely they are sufficient to disprove the stagnancy of our art; surely as earnest of further advances, they are sufficient to impel onward whoever would be thoroughly proficient.

Another work lies before you, different to any hitherto considered. Heretofore you have been under the nurture of professors who have directed you through the proper course of study, and in regular order spread before you repasts of the necessary subjects. Henceforth you will have to forage and cull and elaborate for yourselves. While in apron-strings you have been feeding upon the mental capital of others, but now the strings are cut you will not only have to instruct yourselves, but what is much harder you will have to learn how to apply your knowledge. Knowledge to be practically serviceable must be transmuted into power; and when employed so as to yield profitable results, implies skill or tact. That this may be shewn in the cases committed to your care, investigate rigorously their intrinsic phenomena;—by well balanced comparisons, separate their probable fallacies;—and frame exact combinations of their lead-