

Dominion Dental Journal

Vol. X.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1898.

No. 2.

Original Communications.

THE SCIENTIFIC SPIRIT.

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BY B.
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What, after all, has given dentistry a claim as one of the learned professions? Has it been the thought and investigation of its scientists, or the ingenuity of its practical inventors? To be just to both, we must give both some meed of praise; but without the scientific spirit, which has been born within the memory of most of us, dentistry, with all its practical inventions, would be nothing more than a mechanical trade.

One of the difficulties with which teachers in this country, as well as in the United States, have to contend, is the feverish anxiety of students to anticipate all the first principles and scientific routine of study, by a premature rush into practice. It has been commonly attributed to the climate. Some critics are disposed to place the onus upon the teachers. Indeed, if professors had no will of their own, there would be no scientific spirit in the rostrum, and the time would be occupied only in the shallow and short-sighted instruction which has nothing in it but the purely mechanical. Men who can neither read nor write could be taught along such lines with equal success, were the purely practical the only thing in the curriculum. It is just such an infatuation which moves the policy of the Patron party in our policy. It is this which governs the aim and ambition of our quacks. To them the scientific spirit is a theoretical and scholastic intrusion upon the "purely practical" spirit, which "pays."

The "purely practical" is attainable at any period of life. To keep up with the practical progress of the times is a daily necessity. But the scientific spirit which inspires one to study and comprehend first principles is, as a rule, the prerogative of