

a calling like dentistry he should not be a thinker "for revenue only." The specious plea made by some of our inventive genii that they are able to think out a problem for themselves but are unable to describe the process on paper, so that the profession may get the benefit of it, should not long obtain in this age. Too much literature of all kinds is appearing every day to leave a man long in ignorance of proper modes of expression, and even if a first, or second, or third attempt fails in a clear statement of his idea, this should not discourage him from repeated effort till he gains his point. It would probably surprise the literary novice to be told how many times the MS. of some of our ablest authors of general literature is rewritten. The fact that an article reads smoothly is no indication that it was written easily—the fact is usually to the contrary. Persistent effort of this kind will prove beneficial to the writer in more ways than one. No man can write out an idea without having that idea made clearer in his mind—he cannot describe a method or an appliance without forcing the details more firmly into his brain, on account of having given concise and accurate expression to them. In no department of our work is the saying "practice makes perfect" more true than in this.

After being assured that he has something of interest to tell the profession, the next point for the practitioner to consider is the proper method of saying it. Here we approach a subject upon which it is difficult to give definite instruction. No man can tell another how to write within the limits of one short paper, and in truth it is not altogether clear just how far one individual can impart this knowledge to another, if given the amplest opportunity. The most that can be done is to offer suggestions and point out defects.

In writing a paper, the first thing to do after having the subject well in hand is to arrange the matter in a systematic manner, so that the line of thought will be carried in the mind of the reader in a logical sequence from title to colophon. In order to do this it will sometimes be necessary to make notes, consisting of a series of headings, before any writing is done on the paper proper. For this purpose it is well to have always at hand a slip of paper for some time before the essay is started, while the general idea of the subject-matter is taking form in the mind, so that any heading may be jotted down as it occurs. Often an idea will suggest itself while working at the chair, or in the laboratory, or riding in the street car, or lying in bed vainly dallying with the sometimes fickle god, Morpheus. If the idea is not caught and trapped on the instant, it is quite likely to slip away never to return, or perhaps to return too late. Armed with adequate notes, the writer may properly arrange the headings in orderly sequence, and when this is done it is safe to say that half the labor of writing that paper is accomplished.