

you specially admire; academical prizes, professional relics, keepsakes, mementoes, medals, or anything else that tells of your mental or physical prowess in earlier days, or is specially associated with your medical studies and career. But, unless it be a few artistic ornaments or works of art, it is better to limit such articles to those having relation to you as a student or physician.

In buying your office outfit see that the walls and floors are tastefully covered. Articles of furniture should be few in number, but good, including a small, and if means will admit, handsome book-case, with writing-table and chairs to correspond. Have comfortable chairs for your patients' use, so arranged that they may sit in a good light during examination, but beware of stocking yourself with novelties and instruments that will probably go out of fashion or rust or spoil before you will need them. It is prudent not to invest heavily at first, and to wait and buy none but the usual every-day instruments, which the urgency of certain cases will not give you time to go for, when occasion arises for their use, until you have a use for others. Bear in mind that soft-rubber goods, and soft goods generally, deteriorate and finally become worthless in keeping.

A neat case of well-labeled and well-corked medicines, or a cabinet of minerals, is of use and not unornamental; so also are dictionaries, encyclopædias, and lexicons for ready reference; also, a non-striking time-piece to quietly notify the time to physician and patient by its tick-tick-tick; but display no miniature museum of sharks' heads, stuffed alligators, tortoise-shells, impaled butterflies, bugs, ships, steam-boats, mummies, snakes, fossils, stuffed birds, lizards, crocodiles, beetles, tape-worms, devil-fish, ostrich-eggs, hornets' nests, or anything else that will advertise you in any other light than that of a physician. It will, to the thinking portion of the public, seem very much more appropriate for you, as a physician, to be jubilant over a restored patient or a useful medical discovery than to be ecstatic over a stuffed flying-fish, an Egyptian mummy, or a rare shell.

If you have a natural love for such incongruous things, or are a bird- or dog- fancier, or a bug-hunter, at least keep the fact private and keep your specimens out of sight of the public, and endeavor to lead every one to think of you only as a physician.

It is your duty, as well as your interest, to display no political or religious emblems, portraits, etc., about your office, because these relate to your personal sentiments; being emphatically a public man, and your office a public place, not for any special class, but for every faith and party, no matter what shade of partisan or sectarian pictures you may display, they will surely be repugnant to some,—

“On life's stormy ocean diversely we sail,”—

and in this and other matters fairly open to criticism it is a wise maxim to respect public opinion. Difference in religion or politics has often either prevented the employment of physicians or caused their dismissal, and the obtrusion of unpopular political or religious views has marred the prospects of many a physician; besides, what is popular to-day may be unpopular to-morrow; therefore, keep your heart and your office open to all denominations and to all parties. This will recommend you equally to all.

Establish a regular professional and business policy at the beginning of your career. Be at your post as punctually as possible, and have your office lighted regularly every evening at the proper hour, your door-bell answered promptly, professional messages entered on the slate by the person in charge, and in all other respects show punctuality and system. You will find that absence from your office when needed, particularly if away for sport or pleasure, is a fruitful source of loss of practice; if, on the contrary, you are at your post, people will credit you with seriousness in your profession, which will advertise you and bring you patronage.

Do not allow the ladies of the family to lounge about your office, or read your books, answer the office-bell, etc., lest it repel certain kinds of desirable patients. Both messengers and patients would rather meet you or your servant than ladies.

You should respect public opinion in this and in all other matters justly open to criticism.

Still more important to success will be the morals of the companions you make in your early career; in fact, all through life a physician is judged by the company he keeps. Avoid associating with aimless idlers and those who bear a merited stigma, or are notoriously deficient, or whose hopes and ambitions have been blighted or wrecked by intemperance; or their good names otherwise tarnished by their own misconduct. On the contrary, let your associations be, as far as possible, with professional brethren and people of genuine worth. Prefer to spend your unoccupied moments in your office with your standard works and medical journals, or in rational conversation with high-minded friends, or other physicians, or at medical meetings, or at the medical library, to lounging around drug-stores, hotel-bars, saloons, club-rooms, cigar-stores, billiard-parlors, barber-shops, or corner-groceries, with lazy fellows, who love doing nothing, frivolity, and dissipation; or to taking such persons out riding in your carriage, or to the horse-races, or to join the throng at the base-ball game. No ordinary man ever conceives a more exalted opinion of a professional man by fraternizing with him at such places, or in seeing him in such company.

As a further but minor aid to successful progress, be courteous to all kinds of patients with whom necessity or duty brings you into contact; but while you treat all men as brothers, and all women as sisters, beware of talking too freely, and do not handshake and harmonize and associate with the coarse, ignorant, and unappreciative indiscriminately, for undue familiarity shears many juniors of influence and prestige. Also, never become so familiar as to lay formality aside and enter a patient's house or room without announcing yourself by a gentle rap or ring at the door.

Avoid companionship with quacks and irregulars, as it would detract from both you and rational medicine which you

represent and give countenance to delusions and pretenders. Shun this and every other contaminating alliance that would confound them with us before the public.

What shall be said regarding self-mutilation with harlots and association with varnished concubines? Of drinking and of gambling? Of the dethroning fields of Venus and Bacchus! Oh! physician, if you have entered either of these DANGEROUS roads, follow the dictates of common sense, and turn from it this day, this hour! for they both lead rapidly downward, and either of them will deform and warp all your finer sensibilities, prove fatal to every ambition, and speedily put a death-blight on all your prospects. And if indulging any one of these habits singly will be like sowing dragon's teeth for yourself, what will be the combined effects of them all? It will insure social and moral death! Professional suicide,—short, quick, and sure! while your relatives and friends will weep in all the bitterness of disappointed hope for your dishonorable downfall.

"Too late to grieve when the chance is past."

An unspotted, honorable name is the only thing that will render your life happy and enable you successfully to withstand the critics, for neither you nor any other physician can successfully lead a double life, or afford to despise public opinion.

"A pebble in the streamlet scant
Has turn'd the course of many a river."

Unfortunate acquaintances have been the downfall and ruin of many a promising young physician; therefore, select your associates with great care, and do not let your office be a lounging place or a smoking-room for horse-jockeys, dog-fanciers, base-ballers, politicians, chatty blockheads, or others whose time hangs heavily on their hands. The public look upon physicians as public characters,—earnest, sober, studious men, with scientific tastes and temperate habits, who have been singled out and set apart for a lofty purpose, and as socially, mentally, and morally worthy of an esteem not accorded to such people, or

even to ordinary citizens engaged in the private business of life. The idle jokes, childish amusements, boyish gambols, commonplace gabble, and tone of thought common to light-minded people do not harmonize with the studies, tastes, and desires of worthy physicians, and, moreover, tend to weaken or destroy the faith of the public, which is so essential in our work, for on no profession does faith have such influence as on ours. You as a physician are public property, and the public, and especially the female portion of it, with eyes like a microscope, will take cognizance of your associations and of a thousand other little facts regarding you.

"Things small in themselves have often a far-reaching significance."

In fact, every circumstance in your appearance—dress, manners, actions, walk, speech, conversation, habits, where you are to be found when not professionally engaged, etc.—will be closely observed and criticised in order to arrive at a true verdict, more especially in the early years of your career. The question will never be asked whether you were graduated at the new or the old college, or whether from the "college of wigs, or abroad," but it will be, "Is he a good physician?"

Put not a feather's weight upon the honorable ambition of any one, or a straw in the pathway of his worthy aspirations, but be very cautious how you involve yourself by inducing persons to study medicine, as there are already three physicians where one is required. Besides, their failure in the profession, or their misconduct, or their unfair rivalry may, in time to come, work great injury to you.

"Out of a white egg often comes a black chicken."

Besides, it is neither profitable nor advisable for you, a private practitioner, to take aspirants for Æsculapian honors as office students, as they will necessarily be in the way and divert your mind from other duties; but, if you do take any, charge them a fair price for the privilege, and remember that in taking students you stand as a guardian at one of the outer gates of the profes-

sion, and listen only to such applicants, rich or poor, as have a pure, high-souled, and just appreciation of the profession, well-balanced, good sense, sobriety, mental and physical vigor, good habits, intellectual capacity, natural aptitude, and a strictly honorable ambition or enthusiasm to be a worthy physician.

Remember that you cannot polish a fungus or make a sponge shine, and that good gas makes a good light and bad gas a poor one; that a good battery generates good electricity, and that a bad one necessarily makes a poor kind; so, also, that a good brain, a good mental soil, creates better ideas and bears better fruit than an ordinary one. A high-thinking, practical-minded youth from the corn-field or a log-cabin, with scarcely enough clothes to hide his nakedness, and the aimless son of a millionaire may each apply. If you take either, be not long in choosing. Brains and common sense are a rare gift from heaven; and a diploma from every medical college on the face of the earth, each bedizened with ribbons—red, white, and blue—and each stowed away in a gold case set with diamonds, cannot give them to those who lack them. Bear this in mind, and dissuade and refuse every one who has been seduced from his true calling in humble life to embrace medicine, from a belief that its study is merely a pleasurable pastime, or that it is simply a trade, or that it is less laborious than the business he is following; or Jacks-at-all-trades, who are tempted to add M.D. to their list, by the ease with which a "sheepskin" can be obtained; or by the false notion that to be a physician is a gay and pleasant life, or a smooth and rosy road to money-making; or simply to please a fond grandmother, or a doting papa; or from a false dream of an easy life. Also, turn your back on the callous, the tough, and the ox-hearted, rough-fisted fellow, who boasts that he is stony, can stand anything, and wants to be a surgeon, because he feels an anxiety to see the shedding of human blood, or any other applicant so unworthy.

The popular opinion that now the untilled, thoughtless, brainless bumpkin, who has hardly mastered the multiplication

table, and knows not the difference between an angle and a triangle, can stop following the plough, or driving the jack-plane, or drop the yard-stick, or pen, or teacher's rod; or desert his lap-stone and bad shoemaking to-day and in a few months be metamorphosed into an M.D.,—

“While all who know him wonder how he passed,”—

and that an ornamental sign or a fancy door-plate with a name (and the prefix Doctor) on it, with a buggy at the door, is about all that is necessary, is now causing thousands of young men to quit their proper avocations in life and study medicine, only to fail in its pursuit.

In getting your office signs or door-plates, remember that a physician has them not as advertisements, but simply to show his office to those looking for him. Your signs should be neither too large nor too numerous. One of black smalt with gold letters is the neatest and most attractive of all; one such sign on the front wall for the day-time, and a glass one with black letters in the window, to be seen at night, when your office is lighted, are sufficient. The letters on the former should be round and well shaped, and not more than two inches high, with corresponding width. A polished brass sign, engraved with your name, and the letters filled in with black, and mounted on a finished, hard-wood board, is also neat and stylish.

All signs should be neatly made and correctly lettered, for even one's sign makes an impression, either good or bad, on the public, and first impressions are very enduring.

In this country it is better to put Dr. . . . on your sign or door-plate than to put . . . , M.D. “Doctor” looks better, and is understood by all; but to speak of yourself as a physician rather than a doctor, or to refer to your professional brethren as physicians rather than doctors, sounds more distinctive and falls better on the ear.

To put “Physician and Surgeon” or “Physician and Accoucheur,” or other compound addition, on your sign would seem unnecessary in this region, since all physicians (except

the specialists) are supposed to be surgeons, accoucheurs, etc. The practice of medicine on the human body now allows no such This-or-That division of learning, and all are blended by the law; the medical case of to-day may be the surgical or obstetrical case of to-morrow; almost as well might the confectioner's sign say “Cold Ice-Cream.”

Unless your name is likely to be confounded with that of some other physician, it will be well to omit your given name or initials from your signs or door-plate; but it should be on your cards. Of course, if your name is “Smith,” or “Jones,” or “Brown,” it would be necessary to put your given name on your signs; but if your name is uncommon, it is not. People will not speak of Doctor John W. Garfield, but of Doctor Garfield.

Do not allow other people's signs of tooth-drawing, cupping and leeching, millinery, dressmaking, painting and glazing, boarding, etc., in company with yours.

The lettering on your window-glass may be protected from being scratched, or otherwise defaced, by having a pane of common glass placed behind the lettered one.

It is deemed unprofessional to state where you graduated and how long you have practiced, upon your cards and signs, or in the newspapers.

Adopt regular office hours early in your career, and post them conspicuously in your office; also, have them on your cards.

It may be a question whether it is advantageous to have a sign designating your office hours on your office window, or on the house front, to be seen by the outside public. Your situation in business should influence your decision on this point. A young physician, or one who has much spare time at home, in addition to his stated hours, will be more apt to catch the overflow, emergencies, cases of accident, calls from those who are strangers in the city, and other anxious seekers for “any one, so he is a physician,” and who have perhaps searched and