

sentatives, have so often been hired by contestants with a view to use their dialectic powers to frame or elicit favorable testimony, or the reverse, as the case may require, in will, life-insurance, criminal cases, etc., that the public are led to freely jest about the differing opinions of physicians, and not unnaturally to believe, from our lamentable professional contradictions and divergence of opinion, that there is no case so disreputable, no claim so monstrous, that it cannot be bolstered up by medical evidence; and that our boasted science of medicine is merely a tissue of guess-work, and that a certain class of pseudo-experts can make things appear to be either black, white, or lead-colored, and are willing to sell testimony to the highest bidder, on any side of any question.

So-called "medical experts" often excite disgust and indignation at the contemptible attitudes they assume when they act against their better knowledge, and join hands with mercenary and venal people to attempt to mulct a physician, or to free a criminal from legal responsibility, perhaps to let go a murderer whom all the world knows is guilty, or to condone other scoundrelism on the plea of "insanity," "hypnotism," or immoral pretext gotten up to make money, defeat justice, or obtain notoriety—

"And help to blind both judge and jury, not to give them eyes."

Never forget that every principle of honor and duty requires us to stand by and defend each other in everything that is reasonable and just, and forbids us to think of lending ourself as "medical cat's-paws," either to go on the witness-stand or to prompt council in their efforts to bandy and break down medical witnesses on cross-examination, in rascally or speculative malpractice suits against reputable physicians who have conscientiously discharged their duty in cases of sickness, accident, or surgical operation. Fractures about the wrist or elbow furnish a large proportion of these cases; eye cases, also, furnish another large share.

These slanderous suits against physicians are generally trumped up and entered either at the instance of designing physicians intent on the ruin of rival practitioners, or by unprincipled, case-hunting, Champerty lawyers,—

"The words of their mouths are smoother than butter,
But guile is in their hearts,"—

not with the hope that they may come to trial on their merits, but that the accused physician, through natural dread of the expense and annoyance, will pay a snug sum as *hush* money.

The court records make it appear that the poorer a patient, and the more that charity has been exercised, the more likely he is to enter suit and otherwise show the basest ingratitude. If ever a worthless, lying loafer gets a chance at your pocket-book, look out for him.

Probably there is no department of professional duty in which physicians are asked to *stretch* their consciences so much as that of giving certificates that the disability of persons seeking to get soldiers' invalid pensions was contracted in the army.

It is also possible that you may be cajoled by friends, or blandished or flattered by interested strangers, or even tempted by gold, to give an opinion that old Jinglecash, who was mentally unfit to make a will, was unclouded in mind and fully competent to do so, or that Mr. Drinkhard or Mrs. Halfgone, with one foot in the grave, the result of intemperance or disease, is sound or temperate, and thereby to swindle an insurance company; or that Mr. Badbody or Mrs. Dysoon, with a bias toward a certain disease or with an incipient organic affection, is in perfect health. Or Highflyer or other pleasure-loving officials may seek to cover their absence from duty by your certificate that their non-attendance was due to sickness; or Mr. Mak-out may attempt through your aid to escape military or jury duty, or attendance at court as a witness, or for trial, or try to get from you a prescription for a "Sunday drink of liquor" for the thirsty, under the old pretense of "very sick."

Repel all such attempts promptly and decidedly, and em-

phatically refuse to be seduced from the path of honor and integrity, or to deviate from your honest conviction, for any one.

With professional honesty for your pilot, be firm and unwavering in your determination to steer clear of practices and alliances in which your part would not bear legal scrutiny or detailing in the community; and you will not only safely pass the various rocks of shame and whirlpools of bitterness which have wrecked so many of our profession, but you will have the full approval of your own conscience. Perish all that conflicts with the attainment of this.

CHAPTER III.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

WHEN you are importuned to produce abortion, on the plea of hiding from the world the yet-undiscovered guilt and saving the poor girl's character, or preventing her sister's heart from being broken, or her father from discovering her misfortune and committing murder or suicide, or him who has taken criminal advantage of her from being (*sic*) disgraced, or to avert the shame that would fall on the family, or the church scandal about one of the weak brethren; or, in cases where there is no previous guilt, to limit the number of children for married people who already have as many as they want, or who are just married and do not want the inconvenience of them so soon, or to accommodate ladies who assert that they are too sickly to have children, or that their suckling child is too young to be weaned, or that they have been pregnant only a short time, or to avoid other anticipated evils, etc., etc., even though it be only the size of a mustard seed, you should not stop to discuss the subject lengthily with a "h'm" and a "haw," but should meet all such entreaties and solicitations with a refusal prompt, strong, and positive, and never let yourself appear to entertain the proposition. If they are too importunate, express your sentiments in unmistakable language, and with plain, American frankness, bow them out, but remember that these are terrible secrets, and seal your lips doubly tight.

It is always safe to do right, and never safe to do wrong. How could any one but an idiot, or an utterly unprincipled man, be induced to stain his hands and his heart by committing a crimson crime; to violate both his moral conscience and the criminal law; to risk exposure, social disgrace, and professional ruin for himself and family, and even the penitentiary itself, by taking the guilty burden from others' shoulders to his own,