Beware of confidants, and never become so partial to patients, or others, as to make them the repository of your professional or personal secrets. With our imperfect therapeutical means we cannot always attain perfect results or give complete satisfaction, and some of those whom you have served most faithfully, and regard as unlikely ever to change, will surprise and shock you by turning round and loudly decrying you. Bear the possibility of this ever in mind, and, while seeking to make your relations with your friends and patients cordial, frank, and free, take care to avoid telling secrets and making confessions that might be spitefully revealed, or put you in their power, if a rupture of friendship should ever occur.

When urgent necessity or great danger requires, you need not hesitate to do the most menial work for a suffering patient; but, unless these exist, pulling off your coat or collar, administering injections, giving baths, swaddling newborn babes, nursing the sick, dressing or undressing invalids, or moving about the room, rummaging drawers or ransacking cupboards in search of towels, muslin for bandages, spoons, goblets, etc., in the presence of other help, as a servant would, does not comport with professional dignity, and may be quoted as evidence that you are too familiar and lack proper self-respect. It is much better to ask for things you need and to let them be brought to you.

To be overassiduous in paying visits when no sufficient cause is apparent, or to be too deferential and superserviceable to those who think themselves extra good patients, is very injudicious, for as soon as one conceives himself to be your best patron, or that you are cultivating his good opinion too earnestly, or are calling oftener than he needs, he is almost sure to undervalue you and is apt to quit you.

A patient who is improving will generally be satisfied with a much shorter visit, a slighter examination, and less perfect attention in general than one who is not doing well, and especially if he is doing so well that, on taking your leave, you can express your emphatic satisfaction with his progress.

When a case is obscure, or in its initial stage, be cautious in expressing any positive or unguarded opinion; but in cases where you can safely do so, give free, honest expression to your diagnosis and prognosis. The habit of stating your views thoughtfully and candidly will compel you to search for the underlying cause and to analyze and weigh details closely; will also discipline your judgment and force you to study your cases, and to make a definite, clear, and discriminating diagnosis in any case coming before you, instead of rushing in and examining without thermometer, stethoscope, or other aids, lumping everything under the term "biliousness" (?) or "heavy cold," "heart trouble," "effects of malaria," "a complication of diseases," or some other ambiguous name, and prescribing, on the blunderbus principle,—that

"Mixed diseases must have mixed remedies,"—

after a moment's stare at the face, glance at the tongue, and touch of the wrist, and an equally hasty catechising of the patient concerning his most prominent symptoms, scarcely stopping to notice or study the minor ones, or waiting for a reply or maturing an opinion, and being off again in a moment,—as is too often done by careless routinists.

A careless or superficial examination of patients, or inattention to the history of tedious cases, neglecting to give a definite name to a disease, or calling it by a wrong one, or making light of it at the outset, has caused regret and loss of practice to many a physician.

It may be important for you to remember that, contrary to the popular belief, the art of medicine does not enable you, or any one else, to diagnose positively any of the eruptive fevers until their local manifestations appear. Where obscurity exists state it, for if you give a positive opinion and it turns out to be incorrect your reputation will suffer.

Frequently, when a case is grave, and you are being importuned to know whether you cannot do more, it is expedient casually to mention the things you deem contra-indicated,—

leeching, cupping, mustard, rubbing, baths, poultices, mopping the throat, electricity, etc.,—and tell why you have not had recourse to them, so that they may realize the fact that you are wide awake and have thought of them, but have good reasons for not using them.

Never pronounce any one's sickness feigned or trifling unless absolutely positive that it is so, and, moreover, never make fun of people sending for you, or being alarmed at what may to you appear trifling ailments or simple growths that will get well of themselves or that require no treatment, etc.; indeed, you should never joke, talk frivolously, or laugh about your patients or their sicknesses, either in their presence or elsewhere, nor taunt them about the trifling nature of their diseases. Some people will laugh off your treating their slight ailments slightingly, while secretly they will feel deeply hurt and resolve never to have you again, but see another physician, or perhaps resort to quack medicines for fear he might also laugh. Still another reason is that trifling ailments sometimes develop into serious diseases, and simple tumors may assume a malignant form, and their becoming so *through fatal loss of time* in recognizing the true nature of the disease is very apt to be ever after blamed on the jesting physician.

Again, never guarantee a cure, or certain success, or a sure recovery, for anything,—even a mosquito-bite; guarantee nothing, except that you know your duty and will do it; that if your patients will do their best you will do your best, and leave the result to God. Medicine is not a perfect science, nor is life a definite quantity. When pressed by persons who want the consolation of certainty to say that this, that, or the other case of sickness is not dangerous, it may in some instances be well to reply promptly, "Of course, no one can say there is no danger, *because* there is danger in everything, and any sickness, even a fly-bite or a pin-scratch, may prove fatal;" that thousands of lives have been lost when the danger did not seem greater, and tens of thousands have been rescued from danger that

seemed more imminent, and that even a well person has no guarantee of life from one day to another. Also, remind the questioner that you, the physician, are but a mortal man, and that you do not possess supernatural wisdom, and do not hold in your hands the keys of life and death, and have not life-giving power; that your will and God's will may differ; and that, since medicine is not a life-insuring science, you cannot guarantee that any case of sickness may not develop some new symptom and become dangerous or have an unfavorable issue, or even end in death; then state what you think will be the probable issue of the case in question. Remember, too, that while every case presents a group of probabilities it is surrounded by a chain of possibilities,—a fact that you should not fail to mention,—and thus leave yourself a reasonable margin for uncertainties.

In giving death-certificates in mania-a-potû, syphilis, abortion, etc., never yield to importunities, or a false tenderness for family affliction, and substitute other pleasant-sounding terms that may possibly put you in a false position.

The laws everywhere confer on physicians honors, immunities, and judicial powers that are withheld from other classes. You are exempted from military and jury duty, and made an officer of the law over other citizens regarding insanity, vaccination, etc., and your certificates with reference to births, deaths, inability to attend court, serve on juries, do military duty, etc., are everywhere respected, and it is most certainly your civil and moral duty as a good citizen to comply cheerfully and promptly with all necessary restrictions and legal requirements,—to aid, rather than impede, enforcement of the laws.

Further, in giving certificates, it is best to certify, "In my opinion," etc. Indeed, not only is it more prudent, but far less pretentious, in expressing an opinion, written or oral, always to state simply, "I believe thus and so," or "In my opinion," etc. The fact that it is your opinion or belief no one can dispute, even though it should prove erroneous.

Be exceedingly cautious in giving certificates of insanity, with a view to consign patients to an insane asylum, and never yield to the importunity of mistaken or designing persons, and be guilty of the cruelty of depriving a fellow-creature of his rights, liberty, and property because he has temporary insanity, is harmlessly eccentric, or entertains some harmless crotchet, as, for instance, that he is a grandee, or that his legs are of glass, or that some lady of high rank is in love with him, while in all other respects he is sane and demeans himself and manages his property rationally. Be careful to distinguish between the really insane as contemplated by law, and those who are only seemingly so. Dissatisfied friends of such people sometimes give great trouble to accommodating physicians in these cases. Refuse to give certificates in all but clear cases, and keep a memorandum of all the facts in each.

Keep memoranda also, and be very guarded when called as a witness in will cases, suits for divorce, etc., with a view to protect yourself and, maybe, others against traitorous friends or designing enemies.

Rancorous feuds and venomous contests among those interested in wills and estates will occasionally arise and show you how selfish, and bitter, and mean, and unscrupulous mankind can be over dead people's old clothes and the dirty dollar. In all such disputes and family wars carefully avoid entanglement.

"Gold begets in brethren hate,
And gold doth friendships separate."

Never conceal the presence of a contagious disease from those around who are liable to contract it, or misrepresent small-pox as "measles," or cholera as "intestinal catarrh," or yellow fever as "the bilious," etc., as has been done, or you may very justly encounter the condemnation of the community at large. When your decisions concerning the presence of, or danger from, cases of infectious diseases (small-pox, scarlatina, typhus fever, etc.), and of their origin here, there, or in the other

place, from local or domestic causes, militate against the wishes or supposed interests of hotel-keepers, store-keepers, boarding-house mistresses, etc., your views will, in all probability, be met by strong opposition. In such event, do not allow yourself to be brow-beaten into allowing any one to violate the laws relating to the public health. Your duty to the healthy is quite as great as to the diseased. Indeed, the protection of the public health is of far greater importance than the well-being of any individual. When, therefore, these or other dilemmas present themselves, adopt Davy Crockett's wise motto:—

"Be sure you are right, then go ahead."

Be careful to prevent children, in whose family contagious disease exists, from infecting others by attending school, or otherwise mingling with those liable to contract it from them, and at the same time insist upon visitors being excluded. Take care, also, that its presence in hotels, stores, etc., is not kept secret at the public risk.

Never let people know that you are just from a case of small-pox, scarlet fever, measles, etc., or even that you are attending any contagious disease, for, in the event of any case occurring among those to whom you have made it known, blame will certainly be attached to you as having been the cause. If your practice is so full of such cases that you must tell it to somebody, tell the health authorities; indeed, the public good requires that you inform them anyhow.

After visiting contagious diseases, take care to disinfect your clothes by walking or riding in the open air; also, wash your hands with very hot water, or, if that be not at hand, hold them over the fire; disinfecting lotions, etc., may likewise be used with advantage; and further, if necessary, take a warm bath, or even a Turkish bath.

Oppose the conveyance of diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles, small-pox, cholera, yellow fever, typhus fever, and other contagious diseases in hacks, cars, and other public vehicles, and, if

private ones are used, give specific instructions for their subsequent disinfection. Protest, also, against the attendance of friends at the funerals of persons who have died of such diseases, and insist on the imperative moral obligation that infecting particles from the dead must not be allowed to imperil the living. Make it your duty to enlighten the public on this melancholy subject!

Never keep a tongue-depressor for indiscriminate use, for, irrespective of the disgust that patients would naturally feel at having an instrument put into their mouths that had served a like purpose in many others, it might actually convey the virus of syphilis, diphtheria, etc., from one patient to another, and render you liable to very grave censure. When you wish to examine a throat at the patient's home, it is better to ask the nurse for a clean spoon, than to take a tongue-depressor from your pocket, or spatula from your case, and excite the patient's aversion and a lively curiosity among those present to know upon what kind of a case it was last used. At your office a clean, white, ivory paper-folder, kept lying on your desk, not only serves its usual purpose, but also answers very well for ordinary examinations; it is not at all disgusting, and is easily cleaned.

It is both right and proper that you should cheerfully lend a helping hand to aid a professional friend or great scientific superior, when he has any kind of case requiring it, and unite your friendly assistance with any member of the profession where humanity requires, or in any case that will either give you knowledge that you specially desire, or increase your reputation in a specialty in which you are interested; but be careful how you lend yourself as a jump-jack to bungling practitioners who would use you as a handicraftsman for their own benefit and repute, or run about assuming half (or all) of the responsibility in cases of fracture, wounds, luxations, etc., for third—or fourth—rate Sir Astley Coopers, or administer the chloroform, hold instruments, thread needles, use sponges, etc.,

for Dr. Rainbowe or Dr. Blockhead in their ambidextrous hacking and hewing, cutting and slashing exploits,—

> "In every act such mind the motto old:
> 'Be bold! Be bold! and everywhere, Be bold!'"—

unless you are properly compensated for the work you do and for the responsibility entailed.

Obsequiousness and subserviency should be heedfully avoided, for, not only will they never be of any solid benefit to your reputation, either in the eyes of the public or of the profession, but bad results in cases to which you are carried to assist the hero tend to depreciate you and to do you harm. It is much better for you, as an aspirant, to come out and stand before the world on your own foundation.

For somewhat similar reasons, if sickness, accident, or other providential contingency compel a neighboring physician to ask you to attend his patients for a short while, whatever you earn should be tendered to him; but if one incline to neglect his business for dissipation, or to pursue pleasure, he cannot expect you gratuitously to attend for him either long or often.

Preaching morals to dissolute patients seldom effects any practical good or makes the vicious virtuous, as moral distempers are usually too deeply rooted to be overcome by an appeal to the feelings; but you often can, by earnest, truthful advice and proper cautions, reconcile the estranged and calm the angry, and possibly turn the drunkard from his path. You can also exert the greatest influence upon patients who are being injured by indulging to excess in chewing, smoking, tippling, feasting, dancing, late hours, carousing, venery, the use of cosmetics, and other things that provoke or render them liable to disease. Your injunctions, indeed, in regard to these weaknesses, follies, and errors, if properly given, will be respectfully and attentively listened to, and will frequently be strictly obeyed.

When tipplers tell you that they intend to "swear off" for a definite period, advise them, instead of swearing off, to pledge their word neither to treat any one nor allow any one to

treat them to liquor during the prescribed period. Such a pledge will be more manly and more apt to be observed.

"Eggs and oaths are easily broken."

Treating and the treater make seven drunkards in every ten.

The various quack bitters advertised and guaranteed to be "a wonderful discovery" are almost invariably some vile compound of bad rum or bad whisky, and are the origin of much drunkenness; you should point out the dangers and condemn their use. If a person *will* take alcoholic stimulants, advise him to take them "bare-footed"; then he will know what kind and how much he is taking.

A word about photographs may fitly close the chapter. If you adopt the habit of presenting your photograph to every one enamored of your professional skill, or of your manners, good looks, style of dress, etc., it will be the cause of many awkward dilemmas. Many patients who would swear by you one week will curse about you the next, perhaps charge that you have maltreated them, killed their children, crippled their wives, or done something else equally horrible. You will learn by melancholy experience that the minds of men (and of women too) are subject to rapid changes. Many who would regard your picture with highest esteem this month or this year would tear it down or give it to the hangman the next. Trifles light as air will sometimes serve to detach families from you; a whim, a word, a look, or a nod will sometimes break links that have been forming for years; indeed, even old patients whom you have served through cold and heat, darkness and light, rain and sunshine, will drop or dismiss you when they get ready, with less ceremony and less regret than you would an office-boy or an hostler.

CHAPTER V.

"A mind fraught with integrity is the most august possession."

HAVE due and proper respect for religion. Your profession will frequently bring you into contact with the clergymen of various denominations. Do right, and you will not only find in them firm friends, but also your chief supporters in many of your most trying cases. The ministrations of a cheerful, discreet, and pious clergyman,—the Messenger and Servant of the Most High God,—

"With a face like a benediction,"—

who confines himself to his true vocation, *i.e.*, healing the maladies of the soul, applying salutary balms to the wounded conscience, binding up the broken-hearted, and comforting those who mourn, with remedies prescribed by the Great Physician, are sometimes more useful to a worn-out and irritated patient than medicine; and even in cases in which death is near and inevitable, calm resignation often takes the place of despondent fear and apprehension when the invalid is skillfully informed of the probability of death. In fact, when cheered and sustained by religion, and impressed with the belief that whatever may occur they are in God's hands, many of the careworn and sick show as little regret, upon being gently apprised of the probable near approach of death, as a traveler does when about to start on a pleasant journey.

"And hope, like the rainbow of summer,
Gives a promise of Lethe at last."

When summoned to attend cases of angina pectoris, aneurism, organic heart disease, desperate wounds, paralysis, or other serious injuries and diseases that create liability to sudden death, prudence may require you to conceal from the patient the danger of death, lest he at once lose all hope and be overcome by despair and tumultuous grief, which may exercise a grave and