

some ways of life in which it is common for individuals to obtain unmerited advancement by the patronage of others. But you must be your own patrons. Your knowledge, your skill, your good character, will constitute your fortunes. Your dearest friends will feel that they are not justified in entrusting the lives and comfort of themselves and their families to your care, unless they have reason to believe that it is safe and prudent for them to do so, and that they can do nothing better; and so far, you are no more under an obligation to those who consult you than a landlord is under an obligation to the tenant of his house or land. Those who are well disposed towards you cannot help you unless you first help yourselves. But let me not be mistaken. It is well to be conscious that you are to rely on yourselves alone; and that even if you were base enough to cringe and stoop for the purpose of obtaining the favour of others, you could derive no permanent advantage from it. This is the independence which I mean; and not that proud and misanthropical independence which rejects the feeling of all obligations to others. Whoever gives you his good opinion, whatever his station in life may be, is, in some measure to be considered as conferring an obligation on you, and deserves to be regarded by you with kindness in return. Mankind are bound to each other by mutually receiving and conferring benefits. You cannot live in the world, and, at the same time, live apart from it, and say, "I will owe no thanks to others; for whatever advantages I may obtain I will be indebted to myself alone." All those who do justice to your real or supposed merits have a claim on your gratitude. As others will lean upon you, so you must be content to lean upon them. On no other terms can you form a part of the great community of mankind.

There are some employments which bring those who are engaged in them in contact more especially with the bad qualities of mankind; their pride, their arrogance, their selfishness, their want of principle. It is not so with your profession. All varieties of character will be thrown open to your view; but, nevertheless, you will see on the whole the better sides of human nature; much, indeed, of its weakness, much of its failings, much of what is wrong; but more of what is good, in it. Communicating, as you will probably do, with persons of all conditions, you will be led to estimate others according to their intrinsic qualities, and not according to those circumstances which are external to themselves: you will learn, that of the various classes of which society is composed, no one is pre-eminently good, or pre-eminently bad: and that the difference is merely this, that the vices and virtues of one class are not exactly the vices and virtues of another. You will have little sympathy with those prejudices which separate different classes from each other; which cause the poor to look with suspicion on the rich, and the rich to look down upon the poor; and while you cannot fail to perceive the great advantages which education gives, you will acknowledge, that, to be well educated, is not the necessary result of having the opportunity of education; that a bad education is worse than none at all; and that what are called the uneducated classes

present many examples, not only of the highest religious and moral principles, but of superior intellect, and of minds stored with valuable knowledge.

All this is good for your own minds; but it is a still greater advantage to you, that a good moral character is not less necessary to your advancement in the medical profession than skill and knowledge. Nor is it merely a strict observance of the higher rules of morality that is required. You must feel and act as a gentleman. I can find no word so expressive of what I mean as this. But let there be no misunderstanding as to who is to be regarded as a gentleman. It is not he who is fashionable in his dress, expensive in his habits, fond of fine equipages, pushing himself into the society of those who are above himself in their worldly station, that is entitled to that appellation. It is he who sympathizes with others, and is careful not to hurt their feelings even on trifling occasions; who, in little things as well as in great, observes that simple but comprehensive maxim of our Christian faith, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you;" who, in his intercourse with society, assumes nothing which does not belong to him, and yet respects himself; this is the kind of gentleman which a medical practitioner should wish to be. Never pretend to know what cannot be known; make no promises which it is not probable that you will be able to fulfil; you will not satisfy every one at the moment, for many require of our art that which our art cannot bestow; but you may look forward with confidence to the good opinion of the public, which time will bring as your reward, and to act otherwise is to put yourself on a level with charlatans and quacks.

To obtain such competency as will place yourselves and your families above the reach of want, and enable you to enjoy such of the comforts and advantages of life as usually fall to the lot of persons in the same station with yourselves, is, undoubtedly, one of your first duties, and one of the principal objects to which your attention should be directed: but, nevertheless, let it never be forgotten that this forms but a part, and a small part, of professional success. If, indeed, money were the only object of life; if to enjoy the respect of others, and the approbation of your own conscience; to feel that you are doing some good in the world, and that your names will be held in esteem when you are gone out of it; if these things were to form no part of your ambition, then, indeed, you might possibly have your ambition gratified by pursuing a different course from that which I have pointed out. You might be unscrupulous in your promises; undertaking to heal the incurable; making much of trifling complaints for your own profit; claiming credit where none belongs to you; and you might try to advance yourself by what is often called a knowledge of mankind, or a knowledge of human nature. But how is that term misapplied! Knowledge of human nature, indeed! This is the most difficult, the most interesting, the most useful science in which the mind of man can be engaged. Shakspeare knew human nature, as it were, by instinct. It has been the favourite study of the greatest men; of Bacon, of Addison, of John-

son. But of those who are commonly spoken of in the world as knowing human nature, the majority are merely cunning men, who have a keen perception of the weak points of other men's characters, and thus know how to turn the failings of those who probably are superior to themselves in intellect, to their own account.

Generous feelings belong to youth, and I cannot suppose that there is a single individual present, who would not turn away with disgust from any advantages which were to be obtained by such means as these. Your future experience of the world, if you use it properly, will but confirm you in these sentiments; for you will discover that of those who strive to elevate themselves by unworthy artifices, it is only a very small proportion who obtain even that to which they are contented to aspire; and that the great majority are altogether disappointed, living to be the contempt of others, and especially so of their own profession, and, for the most part, ending their days in wretchedness and poverty.

There is only one other subject to which, in concluding this address, I think it right to claim your attention. You have duties to perform among yourselves, one to another. There is no one among us who does not exercise an influence, to a greater or less extent, over those with whom he associates, while he is influenced by them in return. In whatever orbit a man moves, he carries others with him. If the vicious have their followers, those who set a bright example of honour and integrity have their followers also. In like manner, industry in one leads to industry in another, and the mind which is imbued with the love of knowledge cannot fail to communicate some portion of that holy inspiration into the minds of others. These, which are among the higher responsibilities of life, have begun with you already. The course which you individually may pursue, does not concern yourselves alone. While you are making your own characters, you will help to make the characters of others. Let this consideration be ever present to your thoughts. It will give you an increased interest in life. It will extend your sympathies with those around you; and it will afford you an additional stimulus to persevere in those honourable exertions, for which you will, at no great distance of time, be rewarded by the respect of the world, and esteem of your own profession.

LECTURE II.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SOME IMPORTANT CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH OPERATIVE SURGERY.

THERE is no department of the healing art in which there is so much to interest or to excite both our own profession and the public, as there is in operative surgery. In the greater number of cases of disease treated by other means, it is difficult to say how much of the success obtained belongs to the remedies employed, and how much to the natural powers of the patient's constitution. But it is entirely different in those cases that are the subjects of operations. Recourse is had to this mode of treatment only when nature can go no further; and an operation, so far from being the direction of a natural process to a safe result, is, for the most part, an abrupt and rude interference with whatever nature is about. If a cure arise from an operation, it is to be attributed to that, and to that only: and thus it happens that some of the most splendid results obtained in the healing art are those which are claimed by the operating surgeon.

But an operation, while it may do good, may also be productive of evil. A man has a stone in the bladder; he is suffering torture; he has nothing but a frightful death to which he can look forward. As the least of two evils, he is contented to submit to the operation of lithotomy: and, it may be, that in the brief space of three minutes he is placed in a situation of perfect comfort, and that in forty-eight hours you are able to declare with confidence that his life is perfectly safe. A man may have a disease in the knee-joint, with carious bone and abscesses; he may be worn out by pain, by perspirations, sleepless nights, and other symptoms of hectic fever. You amputate the limb; and even on that very night he may sleep soundly; there may be no more perspirations, and in a week he may be gaining flesh, and present the aspect of health. But then, on the other hand, there are other cases, in which the patient, after lithotomy, may die within forty-eight hours, although he might have lived—in misery, it is true—had he been let alone, for a year or longer. So, in the case of amputation for a diseased knee-joint, the patient, instead of recovering, may die in the course of a few days, and very much sooner than he would have done had not an operation been resorted to.

This double result of operations adds to the interest which this part of surgery possesses, and to the responsibility which is entailed on those who practise it. But what adds still more both to the one and to the other, is this—that it is not only great operations, such as lithotomy, and the amputation of the thigh, that are attended with risk. A man died in this hospital from the consequences of the sting of a bee; and another died, in this hospital also, from those of the bite of a leech. A patient died in consequence of a wound, not an