

bargain—disgusting physic, painful applications, and other punishment. For the doctor's remuneration is based on a wrong principle, being proportioned to the length instead of the brevity of his attendance—that is, to the smallness, and not the magnitude of his services. Mr. Alderman Surfeit feels an unpleasant sensation in the great toe, which, on examining it, he perceives is swollen, somewhat red also, and rather shiny.—Alarmed at these appearances, he sends for Dr. Head, who administers a judicious dose, prescribes a proper regimen, arrests an attack of gout, and receives five shillings for medicine and attendance, or, at most, a guinea fee. Dr. Head goes to the diggings, and on the next occasion Dr. Block is summoned to attend the worthy alderman. Dr. Block tries a specific usual in such cases. It fails. He repeats the experiment with another, and another, and another specific, all employed largely in Dr. Block's extensive practice. Leeches, liniments, and lotions are also applied, and lastly, flannel and patience are recommended by the doctor. The last of these remedies proves successful in some months. Then the doctor sends his bill—if he has not been taking his guinea a day, or so, all along—and for a series of draughts, and pills, and drenches, and emollients, and refrigerants, and sedatives, and stimulants, intrinsically worth little, relatively less than nothing, together with a certain number of visits, occupying so much time of no value to anybody but the owner, Dr. Block gets his fifty or sixty pounds. No wonder that Dr. Block lolls in a carriage, whilst Dr. Head is obliged to emigrate to Bendigo."

The following scene from a play forcibly shows the interest which patients have in remunerating the doctor to his satisfaction:—

SCENE — Dr. Common-sense in bed with his wife.

Servant knocks at the door.

Dr. C. Well, John! What's the matter?

John. There are two men below, sir, one from Mr. Hanks. He says his mas-

ter has been ill all day, and he wants you immediately. He thinks he has got the cholera. The other's from Mrs. Goodman. He says his mistress has a fit of the hysterics, and wants you as soon as possible.

Dr. C. Very well, John. Tell them to wait. I'll be down directly.

(Gets up and dresses.)

Mrs. C. You'll go to Hanks first, my dear.

Dr. C. Indeed, I'll do no such thing. He never pays a bill without grumbling, and trying to make it smaller; and now he has waited all day to save the price of a visit, and sends at this time of night when in a fright; while Goodman always sends a check on receipt of his bill, which is sometimes for double the amount, and is always accompanied by his grateful thanks, &c. I'll send Hanks a dose to do him in the meantime, and see him after Mrs. G.; if he don't like it, he may send for somebody else next time; and if he dies, it is only what he deserves. I'm only glad it's himself and not his wife. I'd have gone to see her first."

Now, although the above may be a caricature, and there are probably few medical men that would be quite so hard on Hanks, still doctors are not angels; they are subject to like passions with their fellow-men, and under circumstances of danger, nearly alike in two patients, would, doubtless, attend first to him who paid best.

Much more might be written, but as the article has already attained a greater length than I had intended, I shall now conclude with the following advice (*gratis*) to patients. If you expect at all times a prompt and zealous attendance from your medical men, pay your bills promptly and cheerfully, and not only yourselves abstain from any ungenerous criticisms on his accounts, but decidedly discountenance those penurious wretches who go about endeavoring to excite discontent among the well-disposed, and injuring the cause which they pretend to support.—*Correspondence of the American Journal of Homeopathy.*