

preparations) that the combined intelligence of the profession is insufficient to prescribe for the cases which come under the care of dentists. Too much cannot be said against the use of secret decoctions, and we cannot learn too soon to despise ourselves for employing them.

We will now give our attention to a consideration of our duties to our patients. "The personal relation of the dentist to his patients is usually closer than is agreeable to the sensibilities of cultivated and refined people, and, while tolerated on both sides because of the necessities of the occasion, the approach should be made with a delicate regard to the natural feelings of repugnance to the contact of another person." To render this necessary contact as tolerable as possible to the patient (we are not now discussing the duties of the patient to the dentist) one of the first requisites is a due attention to our personal appearance and personal cleanliness. This is an attention that will be duly appreciated by our patients; and by fulfilling this obligation we, not only as individuals, but as a profession, are held in greater esteem by them. After this our attention is required to the appearance of our office, which of course includes our instruments, some of which are of necessity exhibited to our patients. It is not a matter of surprise that the refined dentist succeeds sooner or later. These duties are so closely connected with our duties to the profession that in performing them we are doing much to raise the standard of the profession. All those who are anxious to have dentistry highly esteemed should give their serious attention to these studies.

The education of the people is a subject of vital importance to the dentist. The education to which reference is made is the imparting of that knowledge which has a direct bearing upon the subject of dentistry as it is related to the patient. We should teach our patients not only *how* to take care of the teeth, but also *why* this care is necessary. This instruction should be given without ostentation, and in season. When the people learn the real object of dentistry, it will not be difficult for a competent man to gain their confidence. It is almost incredible, but unfortunately true, that much teaching is yet necessary before a certain large class of people learn that dentists have aspirations beyond the ability to extract teeth and replace them with artificial ones. Our patients must have confidence in us, and not until such confidence is established can we fulfil our capabilities and give our patients the full benefit of our ability. To make this desired state of knowledge an actuality much effort is required on our part; and the effort required is greater in proportion to the greater number of incompetent and dishonest men in the profession.

Sometimes our duties are not altogether agreeable, and we would