

implicit as it would be if we had heard him on every occasion telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? If we weakly comply with the request of the friends and lie to a patient, what will these same friends think of our truthfulness when it is their turn to consult us? Even if we told them the truth, would they believe us? Certainly not, if they knew that we had lied to others in the same circumstances.

We see the effect of this mistaken policy almost every day in patients who have been under several doctors. When we go to examine them they ask us if we will hurt them; if we say "no," they exclaim, "I know you will." If we are going to hurt them it is better to tell them so before hand, and they will bear it quite bravely. It is only after the second or third visit that we will succeed in winning their confidence by telling them the truth every time; and then when we pick up the speculum they no longer jump up saying, "Is that a knife you have in your hand?" By showing them each instrument and explaining what we are going to do, they will no longer fear or doubt us. And this is how it pays to tell the truth; little by little you will build up a circle of friends who will tell their friends that they can depend upon what Dr. so-and-so tells them, and the staunchest friend of all will be the poor dying woman whom you have given a chance to prepare for death. Next to her will be the woman who has been curetted and made comfortable and endurable to her friends; and last but not least the woman will thank you for the truthfulness to which she owes her life, and by which she has been saved from a painful and loathsome death.

Not only does the reputation of, and faith in, the individual physician increase in proportion as his word can be trusted implicitly, but the faith of the public in the profession as a whole would be still greater if even in these distressing cases, no matter how good and kind the motive may be, our invariable rule with every one of us would be to leave nothing undone to make an early and accurate diagnosis, and once that has been done, not to lose a single hour in having the proper treatment carried out.