

One maxim of cardinal importance is this, if you would win your patient's confidence, be honest. If his case be puzzling, better be frank and say so, "or give thy thoughts no tongue," rather than attempt to mask ignorance by jargon sounding grand in the ears of the uninitiated. Solemn pretentiousness has had its day and should cease to be. True, it requires moral courage to say "I cannot at present understand this obscure case; let me consider it for a time;" but you will gain rather than lose by such candour. I do not advocate stuffing your patients with medical lore; only what you do tell them about their complaints should be the truth, but as little as possible to avoid miscomprehension, for you cannot make the laity see with your eyes what it has taken us years to acquire. Time was when, although the lawyer was allowed to take his case *en délibéré*, and the clergyman to step from study to pulpit, the full-fledged doctor was supposed to have no need of books. Then he could consult the authors on a perplexing case in secret only, while waiting the salutary effect of a dose of castor oil. People are gaining common sense, and, while they rightly expect you to have many things at your finger ends and reserve forces of knowledge and skill, they appreciate your well-thumbed library.

As a corollary to the above, it follows that, if you are honest, you will create confidence by giving to your patient sympathetic attention, never appearing in a hurry, but by your attitude making him feel that your mind for the time at least is entirely absorbed in the study of his case. If you are straightforward with them the sick will put entire confidence in your skill. They learn that their interest is yours. They will not think you call too often nor dispute your bills. Unflinching trust in you must ever be your aim. Though a doctor does not believe in the faith cure he does believe that the faith of the patient in him is ever to be fostered, and in the value of hope inspired thereby as a curative agent. In no other class of men is an equal amount of confidence placed. The secrets of the family and the skeleton in the closet are unhesitatingly exposed to our gaze. Our profession stands alone as the repository of the doubts and fears, the woes and hidden ailments of frail humanity. The gay youth reaping the reward of folly fixes his unbounded reliance in us no less readily than the virtuous matron in the hour of her distress, when, were we unfaithful, joyful anticipation might be turned into hopeless gloom. What in this world will compare with the absolute trust reposed in the surgeon as he wields the fearful but merciful knife; when a false move, an error of head or a failure of heart might sever the frail link that binds the soul to the body. Gentlemen, prove yourselves worthy of such implicit trust.

In the homes of his patients, darkened by the shadow of death, the true physician must be not only a minister of hope, but of courage. He is not to shrink nor to shirk, yet at times watchful inaction will demand as great heroism as bold action. Your sympathy will be often appealed to, but be neither a weeping Niobe, nor a piece of steel. Do not carry a long face into the sick room; do not be funereal. "A man may say a wise thing though he says it with a laugh." You may accurately fathom a mysterious