

Trying to do modern practice with an archaic outfit, or to do modern practice in offices unattractive, inconvenient, miserably equipped, dirty, disagreeable, and depressing, are causes tending strongly towards failure.

Let me ask a plain question: Is a man honest with himself or with those who trust him, when he attempts serious surgical work with outfit and preparation inviting disaster? If stinginess, not poverty, has limited the equipment, how grave is the responsibility. Look, if you will, into the ordinary obstetric satchel! Is it ready for the conducting of an aseptic confinement, and for meeting all emergencies of child-birth? Let each one of us, when he sits alone with his conscience, and seeks for the cause of a sepsis, answer this question.

Three or four other points occur to me as being elements in failure: want of thoroughness, want of decision, want of energy, and want of tact. The first of these runs through the work of many a man, and is a terrible handicap. Want of decision comes often from unduly considering the effect of what should be done upon one's immediate prospects in practice. It may prevent the right thing being done for a patient at the right time. Arnold said of Sophocles: "He saw life steadily, and saw it whole." I think the physician's attitude should be: determine what is right, and then go ahead regardless of immediate consequences, and looking to the whole life rather than to the present hour. The wise counsel given to the hero Sigurd in the Norse epic may be recalled:

"Wilt thou do the deed, and repent it?
Thou hadst better never been born.
Wilt thou do the deed and exalt it?
Then thy fame shall be outworn.
Thou shalt do the deed and abide it
And sit in thy place on high,
And look on to-day and to-morrow
As those that never die."

Want of energy—in other words, laziness—is often constitutional and incurable. The world, Emerson tells us, belongs to the energetic; certainly, no lasting success is to be won except by hustling, hard work. But the energy—the push—must be rightly directed. It is the hits that count—not the shots fired. When a small boy, in trying to get through a crowd, I found if I proceeded straight ahead I could make but little progress, but if I put one shoulder forward, and used it as a wedge, I got to the front and saw the circus. In war and in peace, in medicine and in surgery, if one studies the lines of least resistance and follows