

PRINCIPLES OF MEDICAL ETHICS.

CHAPTER I.

The Duties of Physicians to their Patients.

1. THE PHYSICIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY.

A physician should ever be ready to obey the calls of the sick and injured, and should be mindful of the high character of his mission and of the responsibility he incurs in the discharge of his momentous duties. In his ministrations he should never forget that the comfort, the health and the lives of those intrusted to his care depend on his skill, attention and fidelity. In deportment he should unite tenderness, cheerfulness and firmness, and thus inspire patients and their friends with confidence, respect and gratitude. These obligations are the more sacred because there is no tribunal, other than his own conscience, to adjudge penalties for unkindness, carelessness or neglect.

2. HUMANITY, DELICACY AND SECRECY NEEDED.

Every patient committed to the charge of a physician should be treated with attention, steadiness and humanity, and reasonable indulgence should be granted to the caprices of the sick. Secrecy and delicacy should be strictly observed; and the familiar and confidential intercourse to which physicians are admitted, in their professional visits, should be used with discretion and guarded with the most scrupulous fidelity and honor.