

afraid to acknowledge it, when we cannot do a class of work and do it right. We should be frank and honest with our patients, and if they wish for a class of work we do not or cannot do, tell them so, and assist them to get what they want by sending them to some reliable dentist, who does that class of work; in doing this we simply act the part of honest men, and do not degrade ourselves in the class of work we do. There should be such an interchange of courtesies and acquaintances that we can send patients to reliable honest men for such work.

DENTAL ETHICS.*

By DR. E. E. MCGOVERN, Vergennes, Vermont.

Several years ago, when I was appointed one of a committee to revise our By-laws and Code of Ethics, I had no idea that I should again be called upon to discuss the subject, and certainly would not do so now were it not for an urgent request from the Chairman of your Executive Committee, to whose instruction I owe my earliest ideas of dental ethics.

Were I to enter into a discussion of the particulars of our every day practice, I should weary you in repeating what you already know; therefore, I shall confine myself to a general view of the subject. In arranging a code, your committee were filled with the enthusiasm of a new undertaking, and endeavored to fix a standard sufficiently high to dignify a profession still young in years, and with sufficient latitude to please the most liberal. Whatever our measure of success, your convention accepted our work, and the code, as then adopted, has been our standard since.

While I would not take the position of a carping critic, it seems to me pertinent, in this twenty-first year of our organization, to ask, Have we maintained that standard? Have we exceeded that latitude? A brief review may be in order here. That code seems to me to consider our duty to ourselves, our duty to each other, our duty to our patients. Our duty to ourselves demands that we make the most of our environment. The varying circumstances surrounding each one must make individual and personal, rather than general, rules necessary. We must all agree that a most important factor in our success, and the first duty we owe ourselves is the securing of a good general education. Unfortunately, until within a few years, this has not been considered strictly necessary to the making of a good dentist. Even some of our best colleges matriculated after very superficial examinations. It is gratifying

*Read before Vermont State Dental Society.