

man's outlook upon his own affairs. He who would walk in another's steps must needs walk delicately. As a small instance, I may cite the proposition that blunt outspoken truth is always commendable. Theoretically the proposition is sound; in practice it may lead to confusion. If the bald truth were always uttered the gentle fabric of social life would crumble to the ground in a day. Indeed, what we are disposed to term pleasant manners, or even good manners, are largely concerned with a discreet dallying with the truth. The much-extolled proclaiming of plain facts may, on occasion, be coarse as well as needlessly cruel. I remember once in South Africa being asked by a civilian surgeon—a most able and kindly man—to see a soldier who had been shot in the leg. The surgeon concluded his account of the case by placing his hand on the patient's thigh with the observation that it was at that spot that he proposed to amputate the limb. The proposal was wise, but it was in this fashion that the man learnt, for the first time, that he was to lose his leg, and I think the announcement was ill-made. Let the mariner know the worst of the wind that is to blow, but that same wind may well be tempered to the shorn lamb. The soundest sympathy—as far as medicine is concerned—is based upon what chemists call a process of substitution, where, in the compound the atom of the physician replaces the atom of the man.

HONESTY THE ONLY POLICY.

Finally, in this calling, as in others, there is no possibility of sure success without honesty. I would not use the term the strictest honesty, for there is only one degree of honesty. It is not a quality with grades and convenient modulations. It either is, or it is not. Into the hands of the physician is placed a candid and unquestioning trust, into his ears are poured solemn as well as sordid secrets, while in the revelations of men's lives there is no confessional which can claim the pitiable candor of the doctor's room. No professional career is more full of minor difficulties, of minor temptations, and of small pitfalls than is the career of medicine, and in the handling of these there is but one line of conduct open to whomsoever would do well. In the business relations also of a doctor's life it is beyond doubt that—from the very lowest commercial standpoint—honesty is not only the best policy but the only policy. The dangerous axiom that "nothing succeeds like success" is no article of faith in the true religio medici. Success in this particular career can never be gauged, and has indeed never been measured, by the mere acquiring of wealth. Those who have made the profession of medicine great have made no pretence that riches were among their gains. If this be reckoned as a loss at least the consolation endures that, by the earning of gratitude, the humblest practitioner can claim to be among the few who ever lay hold of that wealth, which is—in a peculiar sense—"beyond the dream of avarice."