

our talents to the mere getting of money. The interests of our patients and the honor of a noble profession have first claims on us, and in so far as we depart from this line of professional rectitude we depart from the true genius of our profession which is to relieve pain, to save life, and to practice charity.

5. MISCONCEPTIONS.

So far we have been considering some of the defects in our own ranks that contribute to that lack of cordial appreciation of our services which we have a right to expect from a generous public.

For these blemishes on the escutcheon of an honorable profession the members of that profession are directly responsible. But there are other causes operating to bring us into contempt; causes for which we as a profession are not directly responsible. These causes emanate from the people themselves who misconstrue the true aims and motives of the profession. It is a strange thing, but true, that every community, every society, every church, every profession, is judged not by the many true and loyal members but by the few unworthy ones that are to be found in all these. That there are defects and serious defects to be found in all of us and in the best of us is beyond dispute. But that the profession as a whole is actuated by unworthy motives is a charge to which we plead "Not guilty."

There are other things we count dearer than fame or money or comfort. We have characters to maintain untarnished; we have reputations to build up and guard; we have the honor of a noble profession to uphold. These are heritages that money cannot buy—that selfishness and unmanly bickerings cannot give us. The true physician would rather die a poor man with an approving conscience and the benediction of some fond mother whose son or daughter he had helped through a critical illness than die rich in filthy lucre despised by those whom he had despoiled—whose last dollar he had taken for services of doubtful value rendered only with a view to his own personal interests.

Even when we come to these society meetings our motives are misconstrued. Some people say we meet to devise ways and means for the betterment of our material interests—to discuss fees and finances. Although we might very properly devote a part of our time at these meetings to a discussion of these and kindred topics—although we would be within our rights in safeguarding ourselves against ungrateful and unscrupulous patients who sometimes try to defraud those who had been instrumental in rescuing them from the perils of their own indiscretion; without. I say, relinquishing any rights which we may have in protecting ourselves against rogues and robbers, I am proud to be able to say that these are not the themes that occupy our minds on occasions like the present.