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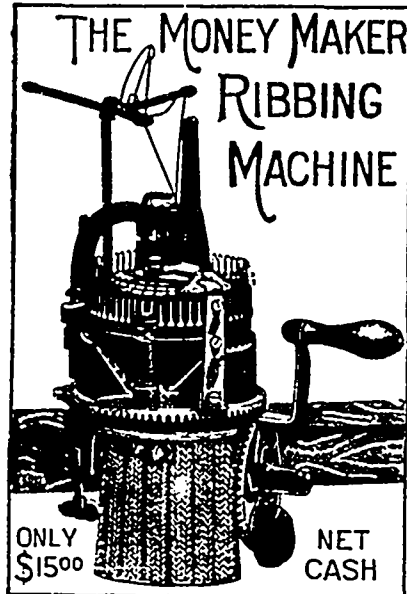
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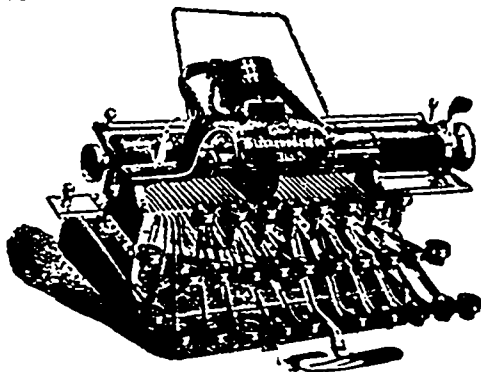
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**Medicine in Tablets.**

From the New York Sun of February 5, 1894.

**Increased Use of Drugs in This Form Instead of Compounding by Prescription.**

A comparatively recent invention, vastly extended in its application within three or four years, has wrought a curious change in the practice of medicine. Country physicians, 100 years ago, when there were few druggists outside of considerable towns, carried in their saddle bags or medicine chests a variety of drugs, pills, powders, potions, lotions and what not. Such physicians made up their own prescriptions and furnished their patients with medicines. The use of medicines in the form of tablets tends more and more toward a return of modern physicians to the methods of their predecessors. Physicians everywhere now write fewer prescriptions than they wrote ten years ago or even two years ago, and the use of medicine in the form of tablets is extending every day.

It is only ten or fifteen years since compressed tablets of chlorate of potash began to be used. Other simple drugs were then put up in tablet form, and gradually the variety of drugs and prescriptions thus prepared was extended until now it includes thousands of compounds. Any physician may now have almost any prescription of his own made up into tablets. The usual requirement is that at least 5,000 tablets shall be ordered. Many well-known prescriptions of famous physicians have attained a world wide celebrity in the medical world through their use in tablet form. Hundreds of liquid prescriptions are thus used by saturating inert material with the mixture just as homeopathic remedies are prepared in the form of sugar pellets. The tablet factories are constantly experimenting with a view to reducing further drugs and prescriptions to tablet form. They are ready to vary known prescriptions in accordance with the fancy of individual physicians, and to combine one or more prescriptions in a single tablet. The general use of tablets instead of prescriptions has greatly simplified the practice of medicine. The physician, instead of writing a prescription and instructing his patient to have it compounded by a druggist, leaves the necessary number of tablets with instructions as to the time and manner of taking. Nearly every physician is provided with some such tablets, and many use them in great quantities. Tons of drugs are now put up in this form. It is the wholesale method of modern life applied to the preparation of medicines. Apothecaries have felt the effects of the change in practice through the lessening in the number of prescriptions to be compounded. For the patient, it has cheapened the cost of doctoring, for the physician obtains the tablets at so low a rate that he usually makes no charge for those supplied to his patients.

New as the use of tablets is, the form of the tablet has been greatly improved since their introduction into medical practice. Tablets are smaller and more compressed than they were a few years ago. The machinery for making them originally was, and perhaps still is, controlled by a single wholesale drug store of this city, but there are many manufacturers of tablets here and elsewhere. When the patentees first began to call their products to the attention of physicians the tablets very slowly made their way, because the patentees were not widely known to the medical profession. Then they associated themselves with a famous drug house, and the tablets soon began to go.

Only the simpler drugs and remedies put up in tablet form are accessible to the general public. The compounds are not even known by name outside the medical profession. As they are not patent medicines, they are not advertised in other than medical newspapers. They come to physicians with a label that proclaims the ingredients and their proportions. Physicians have the good repute of the manufacturers as guarantee that tablets are made of pure drugs and carefully compounded. The best tablet manufacturers employ skilled and careful apothecaries and buy their drugs in large quantities directly from manufacturers.

**INTERESTING SECRET HISTORY OF AN OLD-TIME REMEDY.**

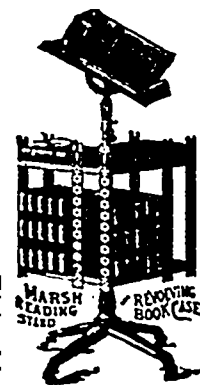
A certain well-known preparation is so largely prescribed by physicians that its use by them may be said to be universal. Conversationally it is spoken of among themselves as the "R. & S. Compo." If you are ill and

call the doctor, no matter what else you get, you are moderately certain to get some one of the forms of the "R. & S." prescription. Its use has been growing more general for a hundred years, and has been vastly increased of late by slight improvements found to be important in effects. The prescription, especially in rural districts, is usually prepared in fluid form, sometimes in powders; but of late years it has been found possible to prepare it in tablets, the form now so popular with physicians for all standard medicines. So enormous is the demand, from physicians solely, for the various forms of this preparation that a single manufacturing chemist in New York City made and sold 350,000 pounds of these tablets in the year 1893—and this, be it borne in mind, was to physicians alone, or to fill orders from dealers from whom physicians obtain their supplies. Every physician of eminence has his "R. & S." formula, varying more or less from the original, but substantially the same—that is, depending upon the basis indicated by the letters R. & S.

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