

their adoption tried," on the other hand he would encourage him in a keenly skeptical attitude toward the Pharmacopœia as a whole, ever remembering Benjamin Franklin's shrewd remark that "he is the best doctor who knows the worthlessness of most medicines." We may well say this is a heavy contract and one which it is impossible to carry out. Perhaps it is with our present arrangements, but this is the sort of work which the medical student has a right to expect, and this is what we shall be able to give him when in his senior years we give up lecturing him to death, and when we stop trying to teach him too many subjects.—Abstract from *Therapeutic Gazette*.—B. M. J.

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In his last book, "La Chemise," Anatole France has some sly hits at the medical profession. King Christophe V. complained of loss of appetite, pains in the loins, weight in the stomach, shortness of breath and palpitations of the heart, headache, giddiness, cramp—in short, of all the ailments catalogued in quack advertisements and Christian Science "testimonies of healing." Naturally, his two chief physicians, Dr. Saumon and Professor Machellier, made the diagnosis of "neurasthenia." The condition is described by one learned leech with judicious vagueness as an "imperfectly defined morbid entity." The other discourses on it in more eloquent, if not more enlightening, fashion, as a "veritable pathological Proteus, who, like the Old Man of the Sea, transforms itself ceaselessly in the grasp of the practitioner and assumes the most grotesque and terrifying appearances: by turns the vampire of a gastric ulcer or the snake of a nephritis, suddenly it displays the yellow face of jaundice, shows the hectic cheeks of tuberculosis, or twines strangling hands which would make one believe that it has hypertrophied the heart; at last it presents the spectre of all the ills that afflict the human body, till, yielding to medical art and owning itself beaten, it flies away in its proper figure of ape of diseases." Saumon was handsome and popular with women; he recognized aristocracy even in a cæcum and a peritoneum, and was careful in his regard of the social distances which separated one uterus from another. Machellier, short and stout, was copious in speech. He and his professional brother hated each other; but having noticed that in fighting they destroyed each other, they affected a perfect understanding and a full agreement in opinion; one had no sooner expressed an opinion than the other made it his own. Although having a