

upon the necessity of bleeding, not only as an antiphlogistic remedy, but as a hygienic measure, as something good *per se*; and the use of the lancet is as general as a prescription of tamarind-water or castor-oil.

Every country has, of course, its errors and superstitions; but nowhere have I met with a greater readiness on the part of the medical man to connive at them and to share them, than in this land of intellectual equality and moral and social fraternity. Both medical and hygienic superstitions flourish here, and it cannot be said that they are sufficiently controlled and checked by those who are competent to do so. Fortunately bleeding is the only heroic practice too frequently indulged in. In all other respects the Italians are rather on the side of caution and "masterly inactivity." They have a great horror of large doses, and a still greater one of heroic and poisonous drugs. Laudanum is rarely resorted to, and never used as a household remedy. The blue pill, that panacea against all the blues of splenetic England, is not even known by name here, and as to calomel and corrosive sublimate, anything beyond a quasi homœopathic dose would scandalize the pharmacist himself. I once prescribed sublimate in a case of incipient amaurosis, and as the patient, who lived in the country, could not come oftener to town to see me than once a month, I was requested by him to prescribe for a long time. I wrote accordingly, six grains of corrosive sublimate to be dissolved in one ounce of water, and of this solution fifteen drops to be taken twice a day (with a tablespoonful of syrup and gum-water). Each dose, apart from the vehicle, was, therefore, less than one-sixth of a grain; but, nevertheless, the pharmacist, who had, of course, not taken the trouble to calculate this, was frightened by the very sight of those six grains at the head of the prescription, and actually refused to make it up. "He had never been called upon to dispense such doses of sublimate." It sounds incredible, but still it is true that this unfortunate prescription was refused at three different shops, until I interfered personally and pointed out the minuteness of the dose.

This is a good trait, after all. It is erring on the safe side, and I will not complain of it. Considering, too, that the Italian pharmacist is under little or no control from the authorities; that his profession is free and open to any ignoramus who may choose to enter it; that there is not even a national pharmacopœia in existence, and, consequently, no common standard for prime materials and magisterial preparations, one can only congratulate the public on this wholesome dread of overdoses and poisons, which is, perhaps, the result of the very system that throws so little legal, and so much moral responsibility on the pharmacist. Most of the druggists do a thriving business, and yet I am told that even in the most frequented apothecaries' shops the vessels containing calomel and opium sometimes remain untouched for days.

Ammonia, that soother of headaches, that best of stimulants after a sunstroke, is utterly ignored in this sunny land, and only used externally for snake-bites; while tamarind-water, which in the tropics is hospitably offered as a refreshment to a thirsty visitor, is gravely prescribed and discussed here as a therapeutical agent. Some days ago, one of your London contemporaries remarked that of all the continental nations the Italians were most similar to Englishmen. If there be truth in that statement, which I do not deny, it certainly cannot hold good with regard to medicinal and hygienic habits; for in this respect no greater contrast can be imagined than that which exists between England and Italy. Even the Italian cookery, although apparently much more like the English than the French cuisine, is in its principles, at least, the very reverse of English cookery. Under-done meat and well-done vegetables one side; on the other, over-done meat, in fact meat boiled to rags or into poultice, under-done vegetables and all but raw paste, rice, and other amylaceous food! Now, this is not a case for saying, "All tastes are tastes and equally legitimate," for a love for half-raw macaroni shows a perversity of instinct, which is condemned alike by nature and science.

Rasori was an Italian; Brown an Englishman. Nor could it have been otherwise. England could never have sworn allegiance to contra-stimulism, while Italy could