

methods of economy in this direction; and I am fully convinced that, if the profession adopted a system such as is here presented, vast sums would be saved to the people. But I further claim that the initials of my patient on each label is a source of protection to life, by enabling the nurse or attendants to keep medicine for different patients from being mixed, except by carelessness on their own part, and without the possibility of a shadow of reflection upon the physician or druggist. Frequently, in each of our practice, we are called to a family where two or more patients of different ages are sick at the same time, and I have known powders and mixtures being prescribed and obtained from the doctor or druggist, for an adult and for a child—the medicine in similar form, but of the most terrible and deadly difference of power—and the person administering them having nothing to guide them from a fearful error, except their memory, as to the position of the medicine upon the table or shelf; and, gentlemen, I and many of you have known of the child receiving the poison mixture or powder, and the nurse, or administerer, condemned; but I have always felt and believe that the physician or druggist who failed to mark the initials or name on the label was in part culpable with the unfortunate administerer of the dose.

4th. *As a check between the Physician and Druggist, preventing recrimination as to the contents of prescriptions.* I have frequently heard the complaint made by druggists, and have known physicians to pretend to duplicate a prescription (where the label had been defaced or the bottles mixed with others, and no means of selecting them marked thereon), when the patient returned to the physician, stating, "this mixture is not like the other you gave me." He (the physician) would commence a tirade on the druggist, asserting the incompetence of the "Knight of the Mortar," and advises the patient to avoid that store, &c., &c.; whereas the mixture was correctly compounded, but the doctor had forgotten his previous prescription, and the last one was entirely dissimilar to the first. You can readily see that, if we have our duplicates of prescriptions, such prevarication and misrepresentation is positively avoided.

And in conclusion, by combining the case book and prescription book, in the manner described, it produces concentration of thought, exactness of method, and confidence on the part of an intelligent patient, which the author has found more than repays the trouble to every honest and earnest student in the pursuit of knowledge. This I cannot conceive obtainable by the system of abbreviations which I find prepared by publishing houses in book form, and which consists in giving each patient a line, and each day its column, making a dot for a visit to be made and crossing it when made. Will any gentleman assert that he can, after a few months (not to say years), give therefrom any correct, exact, or truthful account of services rendered? You tell me this method has too much labour. All I can say is that while it has more labour than those plans whose demerits I have tried to show by contrast, yet in every other department and profession of life, we, with the people, demand a similar correctness. As a proof hereof, let us compare ours with the other learned professions. Take the Theologian and see his manuscript work, or the Attorney with his carefully prepared brief. What if we should say to the former, Why don't you, as a graduate in your profession, dispense with so much work of preparation? and to the latter, Can you not find a method of abbreviation whereby you may avoid the trouble of writing so much about your case? Why, the mere statement of such a proposition would be ridiculous; and yet in the most serious profession to the human family, that which deals with its most weighty affairs, namely, life and death, we find objectors to a little labour, and those who with the stroke of a pencil signify all they deem important to themselves or the patient. Does this satisfy and enlarge the mind, and produce full approbation of conscience? I leave you individually to answer. If my method is such as to meet your approval—and I certainly trust that it may merit some attention and prove of benefit to many present in their future practice—I shall be amply repaid for preparing this thesis, and giving it to this Society.

SEVEN medical students have died of diphtheria contracted in the Hospital des Enfants-Malades, Paris, during the past year.