

There being no other business, it was moved that the Council adjourn.

The Council adjourned at 5.15 p.m.

GEORGE HODGETTS,
Registrar.

Original and Selected Papers.

ON A METHOD OF REDUCING THE SALE OF PATENT MEDICINES.

BY E. GREGORY.

The enormous sale of so-called Patent Medicines is a fact well known to all members of the kindred professions of Medicine and Pharmacy, and is much deplored by every one who has at heart the best interests of mankind. The reason for such sales is difficult satisfactorily to assign, and still more difficult is it to propose a remedy that shall be at once effectual and popular. I propose to devote a little time, first, to a consideration of what I conceive to be the true reasons; and secondly, to propose a remedy which shall aim at lessening this evil.

First, as to the reason of such large sales. It has been the fashion to ascribe the whole success of patent medicines to the unscrupulous cupidity of makers and sellers of such articles, and to the verdant simplicity of buyers. But this, I think, is only part of the truth. Many makers and vendors of patent medicines are high-minded and honorable men, and many buyers and users are anything but simple. The makers claim that the intrinsic utility of the articles sold is the secret of their success; whilst their adversaries urge that impudence and lavish advertising are the main elements by which it is reached. I think both are partially right. There is a degree of utility in many such medicines; and no less is it true that advertising and unblushing lies have much to do with their sale. I have come to the conclusion that the popularity of quack medicines, and their consequent sale, proceeds from many causes, and not from one alone.