

the specialist for every ill peculiar to themselves. Without saying a word to the family doctor, the oculist is consulted for the least complaint affecting the eyes. So the ears, skin, nervous diseases, etc. The general practitioner now rarely has any surgery to do. All the surgical work goes to some one who poses with a scalpel in his hand. All this has come to stay. It is more than likely that the income of the general practitioner is reduced as much by the competition of the specialist as by that of his fellow general practitioner.

Another cause for great reduction in the fees of the general practitioner is, the rapid progress made along the lines of preventive medicine. No one objects to the marked improvement that has taken place in this direction. None have done more to promote this improvement than physicians themselves. But while this is true, it must be admitted that every advance along this line tends to lessen the volume of work for medical men.

Victor Horsely a short time ago expressed the opinion that there ought to be a population of 1,200 to every practitioner. We would have a veritable gold mine if this condition of things existed here. There are about 500 or 600 persons in Canada and the States to each doctor. When you add to the doctors the patent medicine men, the druggists, the electrician, the herbalist, the faith-curer, the Christian Scientist, etc., etc., it is safe to say that there is a healer of some kind or other for every 300 persons. It may be said that these do not come into competition with legitimate practice. This is not correct. They do come into competition, and in a very effective way. Thousands and thousands of times a cough mixture is purchased at the nearest druggist for a cold, or Roche's Embrocation for whooping cough, or a salve for a burn, or some nostrum for eczema, or a blood medicine for pimples, or some pill for anæmia, or the person goes to some fakir to be treated by water, or fruit, or meat, or electricity, or the laying on of hands, or the rubbing with oil, or the use of muscle in badly directed massage. But they all count against the honest and educated doctor.

The only remedy that we can see is that fewer should study medicine. There is no need for additions to the ranks of the healing art for years to come. Of the ventures that a young man might betake himself to, one could hardly think of one at the present moment with poorer prospects than medicine.