

proprietary medicine, need we wonder that people who are anxious to be gulled readily swallow both the stories and the medicine. What should be our attitude to all these? Let them alone. They will have their day and will be succeeded by fresh fads and new nostrums. With the people who deal in these fads and proprietary medicines I have no particular quarrel. They are playing upon the credulity of the people and are in this way making their living. While it is our manifest duty to refrain from the use of any preparation the exact composition of which we do not know and to warn the laity against its use whenever our opinion is asked, I do not think we are called upon to enter upon a contest with the proprietors of such preparations. These people are making their living out of these nostrums and in my opinion are not so much to be blamed as are those who constitute themselves their unpaid agents. Most of you, no doubt, have been informed in the course of your professional duties that So and So has recommended such and such a preparation. These unpaid agents are not always the illiterate or the ignorant. Let me give one instance: A pastor calling upon a lady member of his flock finds that the baby is fretful and restless as it is undergoing the painful process of cutting its teeth. He recommends the mother to give it a certain proprietary medicine and is informed that her husband and the doctor object to baby's taking any such medicine. He at once replies never you mind just give the medicine. While not questioning this pastor's faith in his favorite nostrum, I must say I doubt the propriety of a minister of the Gospel advising a wife to act contrary to the expressed wish of her husband. How would he like it if the doctor would endeavor to persuade his wife to act in this way. There is an old saying that the cobbler should stick to his last. In the same way, it seems to me, the preacher had better stick to his preaching and leave the practice of medicine to the doctor. This is but one sample of what I would call free advertising of proprietary medicines and of gratuitous interference with a profession which requires a special training. This sort of advertising I do not wish to imply is confined to the clergy. I have merely recounted this incident as a sample of what you know is going on every day. Many people know all about the practice of medicine until they become really sick themselves. I do not attempt to point out a remedy for this state of