

lous nostrum vendors. I would advise you to summarily dismiss anyone calling on you in your office with a secret specific, or some improved patent which, for a small consideration (compared to the priceless advantage it will be over your neighbor across the street), he will give you a town or county right for its sole use. How that "sole right" does catch these men who want the earth! I would absolutely refuse to accept any preparation that I did not know its ingrediency and there relative proportions, or for which I was required to enter into a covenant not to divulge its formulæ. When I receive a circular headed something like this: "In daily use by more than all others combined. The only practical, reliable, harmless and effective anæsthetic," and so on to the end of the chapter, even though a three dollar syringe is thrown in with a ten dollar purchase of the shotgun mixtures, it has about the same effect on me as flaunting a red rag before an infuriated bull, and I want to gore somebody, and I would like it to be both the vendor and the unprofessional quack whose testimonials and advertisements flood the country. In this connection I will quote from the *Cosmos*, for May, 1893, as follows: "If we are professional at all, it is entirely inconsistent with the pretension that anyone should secure control of procedures or the use of appliances for his own exclusive benefit, and unworthy of those who are under the moral obligation to fulfil the maxim, 'Freely as ye have received, freely give.' The endeavor to impose upon the profession by dispensing for gain secret formulæ of any of the preparations or materials we use, is a still more reprehensible practice, and the use of such should be excluded from any and every society. To effectually stamp out this evil there appears only one means of action, which is for each practitioner to refuse any preparation the ingrediency and proportion of which are unknown to him." Testimonials might often tempt one to accept these nostrums, but they are too frequently unreliable. They may have been given as the result of a combination of circumstances that would not exist in your relation with your patient. Belief in the potency of the nostrums by the operator, and the soothing charm which springs from unhesitating faith the patient has in the operator and his methods, is a combination that does not always exist. I would, therefore, say, do not be over-ready to give a testimonial until you have had time and opportunity to form a clear judgment. I was waited upon by an agent with an electric appliance for painless extracting, and was shown testimonials, some from men I knew at college, and in whom one had no reason not to place confidence. I was induced to invest; paid a small amount; agreed to pay a certain sum at stated intervals, failing that to forfeit what I had paid as well as the appliance. My experience, like Mr. Taylor's, mentioned in the *Items of Interest* was that no person gave it unqualified approval. "Some spoke of it as Josh