

at my stomach." Does this look as if the physician was likely to create a habit? Is this patient liable to repeat the dose for the transcendent effects produced?

The physician does everything in his power to protect the patient, yet the latter may be aware of the nature of the medicine used, and it can only be in those cases, in which he is aware of it, that any danger may be expected, and this will be, not from its stimulant action, but, as stated before, from the knowledge of its dulling action on the nervous system, and from the oblivion it produces which enables the victim to fly so readily from those evils he has, to an after malaise and ruined constitution, which he does not consider.

If we allow this, is not the physician still to blame? He gives a prescription for morphine sufficient only for the present time and case, and the patient knows that, from such a bottle, with such a number, from such a druggist, he can obtain the oblivion he seeks; what is more natural than that he should go to the druggist and have it refilled?

Where is the physician's responsibility in this? He has used a medicine provided by a beneficent Creator for the relief of human suffering; he has endeavoured in every way to prevent repetitions of prescriptions without a written order; for many more drugs which may be used harmfully are sold constantly by druggists without warrant.

The State, of course, has regulated the sale of certain of the more active drugs from a legal or toxicological point of view, but what is the difference between a man suiciding in a day from strychnine or morphine or prolonging the death struggle for a year? merely one of degree; and the druggist who repeats a prescription for morphine without a written order commits a crime for which he should be held responsible. For, though he were to sell strychnine, he might not know that it would be used for suicidal purposes and not for foxes, but in selling opium he is perfectly aware that a habit is being formed which, although a trade gain to him, will eventually kill the purchaser, so that his crime comes in the category of murder. In this the physicians are powerless, and by a late