

lowed almost as unvaryingly by some of the depressants—antimony, for example; but to-day the demand is for stimulation and general supporting measures. It would now be difficult to point out a practitioner who dares practise blood-letting except perhaps in some rare and special instance. The old-time calomel, while it still holds place in the *armamentarium therapeuticum*, no longer serves the purpose of a cholagogue, for which action it was originally extolled. In a case in which cholecystotomy was performed by a medical friend it was found the flow of bile (which was collected for several days) was actually decreased by the administration of mercurous chloride; also that it was greatly stimulated under the use of bismuth salicylate, a drug for which hitherto no such specific action had ever been claimed.

When we look back upon the myriad of new remedies that within less than a decade have become candidates for place in the *materia medica*, only to shine for a month perhaps and then flicker and die, is it any wonder that doubt succeeds doubt, and that the beliefs inculcated at the inception of the medical career are constantly being weakened? Look at the coal-tar derivatives and imitations in their numberless forms and striking nomenclatures! Each and every one has been claimed as a specific, true and absolute, in some form of febrile or nervous disease; and yet all, when put to the test, proved to be either flat failures or of so uncertain and dangerous a character that they can be employed only in conjunction with some powerful heart and nerve restorative. In the near future—

indeed, the reaction has already set in—we will be compelled to fall back upon less persuasive but much more safe and satisfactory drugs, such as obtained before these new medicaments made their *début* in the medical world and set all rational therapeutics at naught. Another potent reason for discarding these synthetics and pseudo-synthetics is the prevalent practice of indiscriminate prescribing by the counter chemist—a practice that is so demoralizing and so fraught with danger to the public as to demand special legislation; it is well known these products can only be safely prescribed by a qualified physician, and even then their action requires to be critically watched, yet the percentage marketed through legitimate dispensing methods is known to be but a tithe of the great total of sales.

The arguments employed, *pro* and *con*, regarding the use of alcohol in medicine, are enough to befog the brain of the most faithful student; yet how few medical men can be found who, after a few years of practical experience, would undertake the duties of their calling without the aid of this drug! When we reflect on this and many other questions of like nature that confront us at every turn of life, it must be concluded that, leaving anatomy aside, there are very few medical facts.

On turning to pathology it is discovered that there is an even more marked division as to cause and effect than in therapeutics; and when was added the pathogenic microbe, confusion seemed to have reached its maximum. Perhaps at no time in medical history could this fact be