

fashionable Rome comes in carriages, and visits are made from one carriage to another. There is a great crowd of people promenading under the trees, and on the terrace, and gathered around the Kiosk where the band plays.

The scene is very much enlivened by strolling groups of students with gay-colored gowns and caps. These students are all young priests from the College of Propaganda in Rome—a tremendously large, wealthy, and powerful institution, with thousands of pupils in attendance. The color of the gown varies according to the seminary to which the students belong. The Austrians are the most conspicuous, and can be seen from afar off, as their robes are bright scarlet. They have been nicknamed the "boiled prawns." They certainly do add to the brilliancy of the Pincio as they promenade under the shade of the dark ilex trees.

Artists fairly haunt the Pincio at sunset-time, and the Via Sistina which leads to it is banked on both sides with the results. You can buy a gorgeous "Sunset from the Pincio," in any color or size you like. It is one of the popular pictures of Rome which postal-card fiends buy by the dozen and send back to America to their left-behind friends and relations.

I was so delighted to hear that you and Jack were thinking of coming to Europe this summer. Please don't take it all out in thinking, but buy your tickets and start—and start soon. I'm just crazy to see you both again, and awfully anxious to hear Jack orate on Woman Suffrage. He used to be violently opposed to it, you know, but that was before he knew much about the subject. I expect to make a thorough convert of him yet.

Good-bye—and get your tickets soon.

LAURA.

## The New Public Health.

The Farmer's Advocate Bureau of Public Health Information.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND COMMENTS.

Conducted by Institute of Public Health, London, Ont.

[Questions should be addressed: "New Public Health, care of 'The Farmer's Advocate,' London, Ont." Private questions, accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope, will receive private answers. Medical treatment for individual cases cannot be prescribed.]

### PATENT MEDICINES.

1. How is a layman to distinguish between patent medicines that are as represented, and those that are fakes? I understand doctors use proprietary medicines.

E. B.

Ans.—Patent medicines are not made better or worse in their action on the body by the patenting process. By this I mean that a spoonful of a patent medicine containing such and such, and a spoonful of a non-patented prescription containing the same things in the same proportions, would have just the same, as much, or as little, effect.

The objections to patent medicines are that their use is based on a total misconception of every fact connected with disease, except the fact that people who are, or think themselves, sick, demand some kind of "cure," and are ready to try anything that they can be persuaded to think may have an effect. A great many people seem to believe that there is a lung disease, a kidney disease, a

liver complaint, etc. They say "he has the fever; or "the constipation." There are simply hundreds of totally different common disease: at least five kinds of pneumonia, perhaps thirty kinds of colds, eight or ten kinds of kidney disease, etc., and all have various degrees of severity; moreover the body compensates more or less for all defects or shortcomings which the organs suffer; if it did not, almost every disease would be immediately fatal. Fancy the reckless ignorance of the innocent who goes to the store and buys some patent medicine because he thinks he has kidney disease.(!) How does he know his kidneys are affected at all? If so, how can he tell which of a dozen different things his kidneys are suffering from? If he knew this also, above all how does he know what the cause is? If he does not know the cause, how can he guess at how to remove the cause?

So little do the public know about symptoms of disease that it is very nearly always true that no person really suffers from the disease he himself thinks he has, unless it be a toothache or a corn or something like that, and even then he very rarely knows the cause or what to do for it.

Suppose the kitchen clock is losing time or striking wrong; suppose without having it examined to find out why, you reach into your tool chest in the dark, pull out any tool that your hand catches hold of, thrust that tool into the clock works, and stir it round and round! There you have an exact representation of what the average citizen does when he buys patent medicines for diseases he thinks he has. Sometimes he has nothing wrong with him at all; almost always it is something quite different from what he thinks is wrong.

Now, in this illustration, you selected the tool at random and used it at

random, but at least you would know what tool it was you had, screw-driver, plane, saw, or hammer, etc., and even though you used it foolishly on the clock, still you had some idea of what the proper use of that particular tool would be.

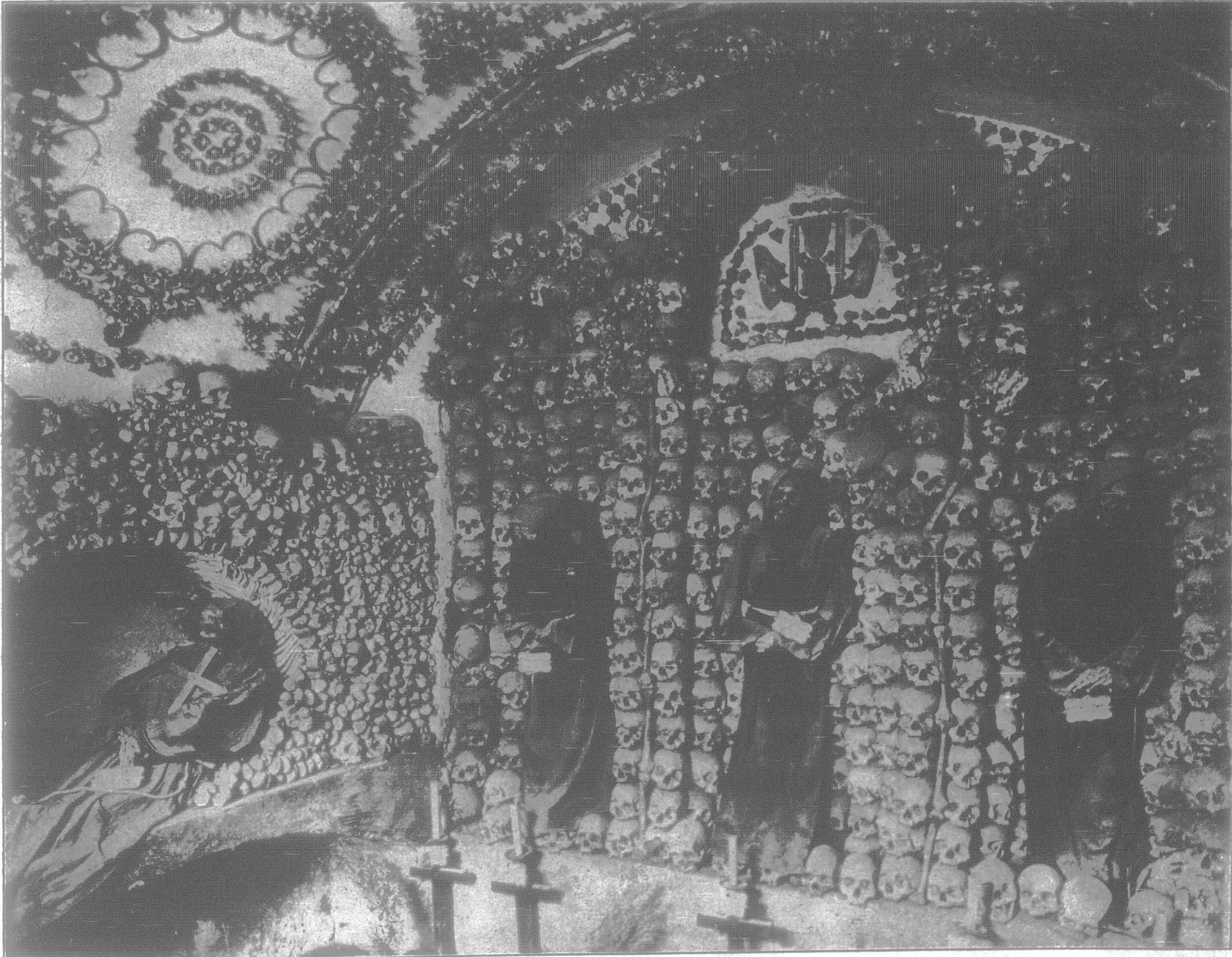
But in buying patent medicines, you do not even know what you are buying, and if you did know, you have not the least idea what its use is or how or when to use it.

You say, the directions on the bottle tell how to use it. True, but the only directions that are on the bottle "boil down" to this—"push it into your works, and let it rip!"

You would not buy a jack-knife or a hat without knowing a little something about it. You would not plough half an acre without some idea of why you plough, or what the effect will be. But because you do not know anything of disease, you will buy something you know nothing of, to mix in with the troubles you already have!

Proprietary medicines possess this difference from patent medicines; the physician is informed what drugs, and how much are in them; he is supposed to know how those drugs act; finally and most important, he knows, or if he doesn't, he ought to know, what is really the matter with the patient, and what action from what drug may affect the disease favorably.

But with all these important advantages which the physician has over the average citizen, in using proprietary drugs, still it is risky, for how is the physician to know that the proprietary medicine really contains the drugs that it is said to contain? Or that the amounts of each drug really are as stated? Or that the combination will really do what the proprietors claim? Proprietary medicines, even when used



Capuchin Cemetery, Rome.