

functions overwhelmed, he can do nothing else. The danger of hypnotics are immediate (death) or remote (interference with nutrition). The possibility of habit is always to be borne in mind. Druggists are responsible for a large share of the abuse of hypnotics. They openly prescribe hypnotics in doses far exceeding those considered safe and further repeat prescriptions containing hypnotic drugs even when the prescription distinctly forbids this. In England, sulphonal is sold as openly and carelessly as are the ordinary necessities of life. With equal ease coffee can be purchased for breakfast and sulphonal for bedtime. The same is true in this country. So long as druggists prescribe and sell without authority, so long will hypnotics be abused. And druggists are beyond control.

The only remedy lies with the physician. Let him study his materia medica, learn his therapeutics, and apply intelligently what he has learned. Then, and only then, may we get the best results with the fewest disadvantageous symptoms, do the most for our patients, and after all rest with a consciousness of duty well performed.—*The Post-Graduate*, May, 1898.

SURGERY.

IN CHARGE OF

GEORGE FISK, M.D.,

Instructor in Surgery University of Bishop's College; Assistant Surgeon Western Hospital.

A RETRACTOR FOR THE INTESTINES.

Karl Roser (*Centralbl. f. Chir.*, Berlin, 1898, XI, pp. 297-300) describes an instrument devised for the purpose of holding the intestines back out of the way during abdominal operations. The apparatus is made by soldering together the end of a steel wire sixty-two centimeters long and two millimeters thick, so that it forms a ring. The wire should be of such a temper as to allow of its being bent to fit the individual needs, at the same time being of sufficient elasticity to keep its shape and maintain enough pressure on the surrounding structures to hold the required position. The deleterious effects following pressure on the tissues may be overcome by covering the wire with rubber. Either gauze or lint is stretched over the ring. This instrument is of especial advantage in operations in the pelvis when the Trendelenberg position is contra-indicated, and also in operations in the region of the gall-bladder, and it is useful in all abdominal operations where it is essential to keep the intestines out of the way.—*American Medico-Surgical Bulletin*, May, 25, 1898.