

on physicians' prescriptions and—if it must be said—of making substitution respectable, of giving it, so to say, an official status. Is this putting it too strong? But it is the truth, and the language of truth, said the Romans, is simple; simple, plain and direct.

A WARNING.

And here I wish to utter a word of friendly warning to the pharmacists of this country, which warning I trust will be heeded by the readers of the *Critic and Guide*. Suppose the N. F. propaganda is successful and the doctors begin to prescribe N. F. preparations instead of standard long-established products. Then the druggist must be *sure*—and this is my warning—that the preparations he dispenses are really of high merit physically (taste, odor, etc.), pharmaceutically and therapeutically. Otherwise, he will only hurt himself, the thing will act as a boomerang; the doctor's confidence in the retail druggist's ability will be shaken still further, and he will be still further strengthened in his belief that the safest thing is to prescribe brand preparations of known composition—or he will be driven into self-dispensing. Here are two actual experiences—two out of many that I could relate. A physician was in the habit of prescribing large quantities of Hayden's Viburnum Comp. The druggist to whom most of the prescriptions used to go thought it wise to do some missionary work with the doctor, showed him circulars about nostrums, etc., and urged him to prescribe the N. F. substitute for H. V. C., which, he claimed, was superior. The doctor finally, half-persuaded, wrote a prescription for Viburnum compound N. F. The druggist prepared it extemporaneously and dispensed it. The woman complained to the doctor that the medicine did not taste like the other times, made her sick at the stomach, and didn't do her any good. The doctor, as he told me, then sent the N. F. to —, continued to prescribe as formerly, and the missionary druggist is now getting fewer prescriptions from him than formerly. The second case is one in which a druggist dispensed a muddy, ill-smelling, strongly alkaline mixture instead of pepto-mangan, which the doctor had prescribed, and as a result lost almost his entire prescription trade, for the doctor was one of those who looked at the substitution business very seriously and took pains to tell the members of his medical society that the druggist O. was a substitutor.