

scientific system of therapeutics. We act like the "creepers" that fasten their tendrils around the first object they meet. Our faith is pinned to one after another of these nostrums or "proprietarys" until the chilling blasts of experience prove how worthless they are. Go into any drug store and see the array of bottles and packages, from which only one or two prescriptions have been filled. We cast aside what was prescribed yesterday, either because of its worthlessness or harmfulness, or else we are more attracted by the newer fads of to-day. What a contrast between our methods in therapeutics and our methods in every other branch of our work? Take in surgery, for example. A new modification of some operation is suggested by a competent surgeon, but before it is accepted it is submitted to the most critical tests that our knowledge, experience and judgment can devise. In therapeutics we use no such tests; we simply accept the statements of the agent or his literature. From twenty to eighty per cent. of the prescriptions written by all classes—from the erudite university professor, down through the rank and file to the medical employee, of the lodge, factory, or departmental store—call for compounds, the composition and manufacture of which are the secrets of mercenary concerns, or exploiters. Have not materia medica, pharmacy and therapeutics become the "submerged tenth" in medicine?

Not only have commercial interests demoralized our therapeutics, but they have usurped the throne of professional ethics in our drug stores. Twenty or thirty years ago the drug store was practically a medical laboratory, and the druggist—or chemist, as he was frequently called—belonged to the learned professions. His gold rimmed spectacles, frock coat, and refined manner, gave dignity to his calling. He looked upon the dispensing or compounding of drugs as a special attainment and gave it almost his sole attention. The sale of goods was the work of the apprentice. What a change to modern druggist and drug store! In the up-to-date drug store the proprietor or manager must be a man of business aptitude and training. His style of dress, manner and speech, become a member of the "Board of Trade" rather than one of a learned calling. The dispensing of prescriptions is only an incidental part of the commercial enterprise. One or many clerks may be employed and his, or their, qualifications are absolutely unique. In other shops, clerks have as a rule certain lines of goods to handle, but the drug clerk must be able to decipher the most illegible writing, and to translate unclassical and ungrammatical Latin. He must know the names of all drugs and their doses, as well as keep the shelves supplied with nostrums, proprietary and quack medicines in order to be able to meet the demand of any applicant for the quickest and surest cure for his or her ailment. In addition to all this there is the business side. Dur-