

money and time now expended on dispensary cases is wholly insufficient.

As I have already said, we have recognized all this as true as regards two diseases, phthisis and the gastro-intestinal maladies of infancy. We have recognized that we are dealing with community problems, which demand, first, education, then personal supervision, and throughout financial and moral support. In our best dispensaries in New York and Boston we carry on an educational campaign with the mothers of sick babies and with our phthical patients; we supervise through nurses and visitors the application of the lessons in practice, and we try to see that the patient does not suffer because his poverty deprives him of proper food and proper air.

All this marks the beginning of an efficient treatment of these diseases. But it is just as applicable, just as essential, in many other groups of cases as in these. In our joint cases, our rheumatic, and cardiac cases, our dyspeptics, neurasthenics, diabetics, our treatment remains inefficient; remains where the treatment of phthisis was when we gave our patients only drugs and printed directions.

The very term "dispensary" is one of the surviving relics of an outworn idea—the idea of a place where medicines are dispensed—and enlarged and elaborated apothecary shop. As we come to see that, valuable as drugs are, they have little place in the treatment of a large proportion of dispensary cases, we reach the second stage of evolution, in which the dispensary becomes a place for diagnosis and for the securing of material for teaching, while therapeutics consist largely of advice, spoken or written, and of placebos. This is the stage in which most of the dispensaries known to me more or less uneasily rest.

But with the application of "efficiency tests"* this second stage of dispensary therapeutics is beginning to be outgrown. We are outgrowing:

- (1) The era of wholesale drugging.
- (2) The tractarian or ritualistic era, when we go through

* W. H. Allen, *Efficient Democracy*, 1907.