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MONTREAL, OCTOBER, 1891.

SUBSTITUTION.

We have received about fifty marked copies of newspapers containing articles on the terrible crime of substitution. If we had only received twenty-five marked copies we would have kept silent, but silence any longer would cease to be a virtue. First let us explain what substitution means in the above articles. It does not mean that the druggist dispenses castor oil when the physician prescribes cascara, or chloral hydrate when he orders antipyrin; this would be a matter of intense interest to the profession, for our reputation very often depends upon the correct preparation of our prescriptions. If the reputation and consequent livelihood of the poor, hard-working doctor were all that was at stake we don't think we would have received even one marked copy of the article referred to. The gist of this article is as follows: Whereas certain capitalists contract with certain newspapers to take the medical attendance of the sick out of the hands of the medical profession by means of the extensive advertising of more or less worthless nostrums as cures for all diseases; and whereas the proprietors of these nostrums derive large fortunes from the sale thereof, and the newspaper proprietors also derive large for-

tunes from the said advertising; and whereas certain manufacturing druggists have analysed these nostrums and prepared an exact imitation which they can sell to the retail druggist for one-half the price of the dearly advertised article; and whereas the retail druggist is thus enabled to give medical attendance to the sick at a much less rate to the public and with much greater profit to himself, but with a loss of many millions of dollars to the millionaire proprietors of patent medicines; therefore shall the sale of the cheaper but equally as good (or bad) imitation for the genuine patent medicine be severely condemned? Now considering that the medical profession was established and is maintained for the purpose of attending the sick; and considering that these colossal fortunes amassed by patent medicine men are so much taken off the small incomes of the poor, hard working doctors in every city, town and village; and considering that the buyers of these patent nostrums are often our patients whom we send to the druggists to have our prescription prepared and who there see bottles purporting to cure them much better than we can, we deliberately say to the millionaire proprietors of patent medicines that we are very glad, for the sake of the 4,500 doctors in Canada, that their nostrums are being "substituted." Our professional blood has often boiled as we have read the cleverly written advertisements of the patent medicine men, every line of which dealt a fatal thrust at the family doctor. How he had been attending them for years at enormous expense without having ever done them any good; how some kind friend or a druggist, or a clergyman induced them to try such and such a compound and how they were speedily restored to health. The men who write these advertisements are paid large salaries by some proprietors to do nothing else but to write these insidious attacks on the regular profession, and thus wean our patients away from us. Many people now never send for a doctor as long as they have any cash for the patent medi-