

large quantities manufactured in this country, the principal part of the patent medicines consumed here are prepared in the United States. It is believed that they are more largely used, proportionately, in the United States and Canada than in any other country. In Germany their use is greatly restricted. The gross profits on the mixtures are enormous, but a large proportion of these are spent in advertising; otherwise they would not sell. The costs of material, labour and all other expenses of production are estimated at less than one fourth of the selling price.

A writer in the *American Pharmacist* of recent date states that statistics "clearly show that the process of manufacture and the ingredients employed are, to the patent medicine manufacturer, of but secondary importance as compared with that all-important article, printer's ink." I once, he said, "asked a young friend, who was employed in the laboratory (?) of a certain patent medicine firm, how their preparation was made, and he replied: 'Well, I'll tell you confidentially, we do not have any regular working formula, but are always careful to get in plenty of Aqua Pura.' [The water probably not always very pure.] I firmly believe that this is a fair example of the careless method pursued by the majority of the large number of similar concerns whose products are flooding the market, and I earnestly call upon you, as editor of a journal devoted to the interests of pharmacists, to urgently request your many subscribers to stick to their colors, as members of a scientific profession, and unite in discouraging the sale of these nostrums by declining; as far as possible, to handle any preparation the constituents of which are unknown to them." It has been said, I think, that the

man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client. Will not the same principle hold good in medicine? Has not he who "doctors" himself a fool for a patient? We have before now drawn attention to the dangers of people doctoring themselves. There are two especially difficult points in the science and practise of medicine. These are, first (perhaps the most difficult of all), the correct diagnosing of the disease—the finding out the special nature of it, of the particular pathological condition; and, second, the selection of the remedy or remedies. Now, one who is ill and takes a preparatory or patent medicine as a remedy, has, as a rule, decided for himself or herself upon these two important points, which often baffle the skill of the most able and experienced physician. Symptoms are very deceiving, and no two people are exactly alike; what would be a remedy for one would be poison for another. From taking medicine in this way, however good the medicine in itself may be, serious consequences may arise, and doubtless often do arise, which are never recognized as having such a cause. Herein is one of the evils of the common use of these nostrums.

Another serious evil is the loss of time arising through such improper medication. A man feels unwell, and sees in some advertisement of a preparatory medicine symptoms enumerated apparently precisely like those experienced by himself, perhaps of "indigestion" or "liver complaint," or "general debility," and in which a sure cure is promised. The medicine is taken "according to directions," and after weeks of disappointment the unfortunate sufferer applies to a physician and is found to be suffering from incipient consumption, with large deposits of tubercles in the lungs, almost, if not