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D. THOMAS & CO., Publishers
THE LAND WE LIVE IN,
Sherbrooke, Que.

THE SUBSTITUTE SWINDLE.

Mr. A. Frank Richardson of New York has done the public good service by calling attention in his recent address before the National Editorial Association at St. Paul to the petty but extensive frauds practiced upon customers through what is known as the substitute swindle. The modus operandi of these dishonest deals may be briefly explained. There are many standard articles, such, for instance, as Pear's Soap, Scott's Emulsion, Carter's Little Liver Pills, Hood's Sarsaparilla, Morgan's Sapolio, Wolf's Aeme Blacking, St. Jacob's Oil, Pond's Extract, Syrup of Figs, and others which have attained to a large sale and widespread reputation by their legitimate merits and the liberal advertising of their proprietors. Certain unprincipled druggists and small dealers have taken advantage of these circumstances to counterfeit these goods by imitating them just closely enough to keep themselves out of the clutches of the law. At Detroit and in other cities there are houses whose entire business consists in manufacturing imitations of these articles or "substitutes," which are made so as to closely resemble the originals in materials used, in the name, and in the general appearance of the boxes, bottles or wrappers. As an inducement to these small dealers and the better to enable them to carry out the swindle, their names are frequently printed on the packages by the manufacturers, and the false caption, "our own

make" is often added. It is easy to see how the swindle is worked. A customer goes into a store and asks for Scott's Emulsion, for instance. The dealer says that he has it, which is probably a lie, but recommends the customer to buy a preparation put up by himself, which he claims to be equally good, and which, he says he can recommend be-

cause he pretends he has "compounded it himself" and it is his "own make," and besides, while Scott's Emulsion may be 50 cents a bottle, he can sell his own preparation at 25 cents. Nine times out of ten the customer, relying on the statement of the druggist, will be induced by motives of economy to take the substitute, which, of course, is worthless and may be dangerous. The dealer is enabled to do this, because he buys very cheaply from the manufacturer, and thus the two get the benefit of the advertising of the genuine material and divide large profits. Thus an unsuspecting public is swindled.

It is needless to say that the druggist or dealer who will descend to this contemptible business merely because he can make a larger profit upon the substitute than he can upon the genuine article, is a common swindler, and none the less a swindler because the trick is devised so cunningly as to save him from prosecution and deserved punishment. It is a fraud upon manufacturers who are making a legitimate article and who have spent thousands of dollars to bring it before the public, and a fraud upon customers who are tricked into buying a bogus article which is worthless, if not something worse. It is time that this contemptible business was stopped, and it can be if the press of the country will ventilate and expose it and if the public will refuse to patronize druggists who palm off these nostrums upon it. Customers should demand the article they have every reason to believe is the best, and if a dealer begins the old story recommending a preparation he has made himself, which he knows to be pure because he made it, which has his name on the wrapper, etc., it should be sufficient cause to refuse it promptly and go elsewhere for their goods. It is the lowest and meanest form of common thievery, and if the public will join hands with the press it can be broken up. It is certainly for the interests of the former to do so, as it is the principle sufferer.

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