

criticized some of the cases as being too radical, an arthrectomy being the operation that was indicated. Dr. Phelps said that arthrectomy had been introduced with a hope of curing the disease, and at the same time getting a more able joint. The best surgeons were now agreed that it was better never to try to get movement after operation at the knee, and when operation in the adult was indicated, excision should be performed after Fenwick's method, rounding the femoral segment and hollowing out the tibial so as to get accurate coaptation, avoiding the insertion of nails, if possible, as a means of securing fixation. Under ten years, excision should be performed. If operation is demanded, better amputate.

Progress of Science.

TAX ON QUACKS.

The recent suggestion of the Secretary of the Treasury, that the tax on alcohol be increased fifty cents per gallon, in order to raise more money for the increasing expenses of the Government, seems to have met with a favorable response in some quarters, and the question of tariff and taxation will no doubt be considerably discussed by Congress in the near future.

In this connection the wisdom of putting a heavy and permanent tax on all forms of nostrums and quackery will at once commend itself to all wise legislators who are working for the public good. A stamp tax of this kind, say twenty-five per cent., on every form of secret or proprietary medicinal preparation of any kind, whether sold by the retailer, proprietor, manufacturer, or by advertising quack specialists, would be no hardship to the public, as it would in no wise affect the retail price of these articles. All such manufacturers could easily afford to give the Government twenty-five per cent. of the retail price and still have a very handsome profit left, as their net profit is rarely less than five hundred per cent., and often very much more.

Legitimate preparations of the Pharmacopœia and other standard preparations where the complete working formula is public property should be exempt. But as the success of quackery depends on secrecy and mystery, and as these two conditions enable unscrupulous persons to get a dollar for a few cents' worth of a simple remedy, it will be seen that there would be no injustice to anyone if a good fair tax were put on the business.

If the Government went still further and required all nostrum and secret medicine manufacturers to pay a big license, and place on

record open to public inspection a sworn statement of the exact composition, together with a complete working formula of each preparation, much good would result. And if, like insurance companies, they were also required to furnish heavy bonds or make a special deposit, which could be forfeited under proper restrictions, provided their medicine did not do all that was claimed for it, the public would be still better protected both in health and pocket, and no injustice would be done to the honest manufacturer of articles of real merit.

There is no good reason why the Government should not place the nostrum business on the same basis in its Internal Revenue Department as the manufacture of whiskey and tobacco. Analyses of these preparations should be made from time to time, and heavy penalties imposed if they vary from the sworn formula on record; or if any dangerous drug like morphine is being used.

England, which is said to be a free trade country, taxes the nostrum business heavily, and derives a large and growing revenue from that source.

EPISTAXIS, AN EASY AND EFFECTUAL METHOD OF PLUGGING.

Undoubtedly plugging the nares by aid of Bellocq's cannula is an excellent method; but occasionally, especially in country practice, a Bellocq's cannula is not at hand, and some method easy, effectual and effected by material always within reach must be resorted to. Such a method I have found in the following: A piece of old, soft thin cotton or silk, or oiled silk, about six inches square (a piece of an old handkerchief will answer), is taken, and, by means of a probe, metal thermometer case, or penholder, or anything handy, is pushed centre first, "umbrella fashion" into the nostril, the direction of pressure when the patient is sitting erect being backward and slightly downward. It is pushed on in this fashion until it is felt that the point of the "umbrella" is well into the cavity of the naso-pharynx. The thermometer case or probe, or whatever has been employed, is now pushed on in an upward direction and then towards the sides, so as to pull more of the "umbrella" into the naso-pharynx. The thermometer case is now withdrawn. We have now a sac lying in the nares, its closed end protruding well into the pharynx behind, and its open end protruding at the anterior opening of the nares. If it be thought necessary, and is convenient, the inside of the sac may be brushed with some household astringent, such as alum solution, turpentine, etc. A considerable quantity of cotton-wool is now, by means of the thermometer case, pushed well back to the bottom of the sack. Then the thermometer case being