

Most of the State Boards to the south of us define the practice of medicine, and when we turn to these definitions we are reminded of a saying attributed to John Hunter, viz., "Definitions are the most damnable things."

These definitions of the State Boards range from about two lines to nearly a page in length. One of the most concise is that of Alabama: "Any person who treats or offers to treat diseases of human beings by any system whatsoever is considered to be practising medicine." Many of the states recognize three schools of medicine, viz., Regular, homeopathic and eclectic. So far as I am aware the term "allopath" is not used in connection with any of the state regulations. Nearly all of the states have exemptions of various kinds. In some of them midwives are exempted. The question of Christian scientists, clairvoyants, psychic and faith healers of different kinds is a very difficult one to deal with by law. As a rule they do not demand legal recognition. All they ask for is to be let alone. With the exception of Christian science not many people rely to any great extent on these means, and most people when they resort to them are probably aware they are taking chances. In some of the states these mental healers are exempted from the provisions of the Medical Act. In some others it is specifically stated that they are not exempt.

Probably the people we are most interested in at the present time are the osteopaths and chiropractors. With regard to the latter, up to a year ago Kansas was the only State to give them any legal status, and in this State, although the Governor permitted the bill to become law, it did not receive his signature.

As to osteopathy, I quote the following extracts from an article appearing in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* of March 29th, 1913:—

The classification of states naturally divides them into:

- (1) Twenty states having laws authorizing a separate osteopathic board.
- (2) Eleven states having laws adding an osteopath to the membership of existing boards.
- (3) Nine states with laws authorizing the existing board to examine and register osteopaths as such.
- (4) Seven states having no specific regulations on the subject.

Regarding the legal status of osteopathy in the courts, in fifteen States it has been declared either by statutory enactment or judicial decision to be the practice of medicine, while in twenty-one States it has been declared not to be the practice of medicine.