

and the overmedication of former days that gave it the start. Were any one to originate such a silly system to-day there could be no excuse for its existence, and it would either fall still-born or be laughed to death.

Study the homœopathic creed closely, and then carefully watch the practice of all those who to-day claim to practice under it, of whom you have personal knowledge, and you will soon discover that few (if any) honestly do so; and although the number of those who pretend to practice homœopathy may still be somewhat on the increase in this country, and enthusiasts here and there are still donating and bequeathing money and holding fairs for the benefit of homœopathic colleges, hospitals, dispensaries, and societies, and its disciples are boasting over their numerical increase and exulting over this *political* favor they have secured, and over that *influential* patient they have netted, and over the other fresh partisan who is praising it, just as they were in Europe thirty or thirty-five years ago; yet, pure homœopathy itself—*similia*, etc., based on provings—is rapidly disappearing, and I sincerely doubt whether there are at this time half a dozen omnibus-loads of true Hahnemannian homœopaths in our land, and for the confirmation of this assertion I refer to any qualified pharmacist or manufacturer of granules, tablets, and pills who comes in contact with the homœopathic therapeutics of to-day. The genuine homœopath never prescribes tonics, never orders mineral waters, never gives emulsions, never alternates or mixes remedies, and never uses hypodermatic injections, purgatives, mustard plasters, ointments, lotions, washes, liniments, medicated injections, cauterizations, sprays, or gargles; and whoever does so is under the bitter anathemas of Hahnemann, who said: "He who does not walk on exactly the same line with me, who diverges if it be but the breadth of a straw, to the right or to the left, is an apostate and a traitor, and with him I will have nothing to do."

"More might be said hereof to make a proof,
Yet more to say were more than is enough."

CHAPTER X.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Be just and friendly toward every worthy pharmacist. Owing to the relationship and mutual dependence between pharmacy and medical practice, the pharmacists are your natural allies, and should receive your respectful regard. Probably all physicians will agree that in the ranks of no occupation can a greater proportion of gentlemen and manly men be found than in the pharmaceutical. This, and your joint interests, should make you brothers.

It will be found an excellent rule strictly to avoid favoritisms and antagonisms, and to let all reliable pharmacists compete for your prescriptions and for the family patronage which they influence. You will make a serious mistake, and engender active enemies, too, if you go out of your way and without just cause instruct patients to obtain their medicines from any particular pharmacy; if a prescription be properly compounded it makes but little difference by whom, so the compounder is honorable and reliable.

Do not deter your patients from patronizing a pharmacist simply because he is also a graduate in medicine, unless he be uniting the two callings from mercenary motives, or habitually prescribe, or have a drug-store (with a window full of bottles of colored water and quack placards) merely as a stepping-stone to get acquaintances and an introduction preliminary to making his *début* as your antagonist or rival; or if you fold your arms and allow your prescriptions to be compounded by a drug-store physician who *prescribes* over his counter, or in office or parlor, free of charge, and makes it up on the medicine ordered, you will, unless he shows less than the usual amount of selfishness, be apt finally to regret it.

Independently of all other considerations, the joint prac-
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tice of scientific pharmacy and modern medicine is too much for the grasp of any one human intellect, and a person needs all his time to do justice to either, else one or the other is apt to be slighted; and if your prescription fall into the hands of such parties, or be left to their apprentices or assistants, both you and your patient must take a great many risks.

There is not the slightest wrong in having your name printed on your prescription blanks. But do not use a prescription paper which has any other name upon it besides your own. If it contain the name of a neighboring pharmacist, it will naturally suggest collusion or something else not complimentary; if it contain some enterprising fellow's commercial puff, it will indicate very ordinary taste for you to use it. It is probably better to write on good, plain paper; although it could do no harm to have some such truthful phrase as the following printed on the back of each prescription blank, for the benefit of the public and the protection of your own interests: "A remedy that is useful for a patient at one time may be improper for the same patient at another time, or for other persons at any time, even though suffering with a similar affection."

Plain white-paper clippings suitable for prescription blanks can be purchased cheaply at any printing-office or book-bindery, or you can buy a ream of suitable paper from wholesale paper dealers, who will cut it into any size you wish.

It would be wrong, *very wrong*, to work hand-in-hand with a pharmacist, and receive from him a percentage on your prescriptions for sending them to his store, and for this reason: were you to accept part, it would be robbing either the pharmacist or the patient. Were the former to allow you so much for each prescription, and re-imburse himself by adding the extra amount to the sum charged the patient for the remedy, it could not be looked upon in any other light than that you had combined to *fleece* an extra amount from every unfortunate who trusted to your honor, just as one would look upon a lawyer who took fees from both sides. On the other hand, if the phar-

macist possessed more honesty than you and allowed you to reduce his legitimate profit, because compelled to do so or lose your influence, it would place you in a most contemptible position, and you would live in constant danger of exposure and a public condemnation that the strength of Hercules could not, and the God of Justice would not, silence.

Honesty is the true keystone, without which the whole arch of honor falls.

"If I lose my honor I lose myself!"

You must live, and must have fees to enable you to do so, but, unless you obtain every dollar and every dime honestly and honorably, you cannot escape the finger of scorn; therefore, watch zealously that the public do not imbibe a belief that you are a part owner of or are interested in the loaves and fishes of the drug-store which compounds the largest number of your prescriptions. If such a suspicion be expressed by any one, or if any one insinuate that you seem to prescribe for the purse of the pharmacist rather than for the health of the patient, take care to inform him that you have no such interest.

If any pharmacist volunteer to supply a physician and his immediate family with medicines either free or at a nominal price, or with such proprietary or other articles as he needs, at cost, the favor can be conscientiously accepted, but it would be unjust to allow him to supply uncles, aunts, and cousins on similar terms. Bear in mind that such a course naturally entails more or less obligation or reciprocal professional attendance on the pharmacist and his family, and should be taken into consideration when accepting favors.

Duty, alike to yourself, your patients, and the profession, forbids you to supply one or several pharmacists with private marks, technical terms, or hieroglyphic symbols that other pharmacists cannot understand, as it would at once suggest trickery and corrupt motives. A still meaner (swindling) device would be to have a secret or cabalistic code, for use between physician and pharmacist, intelligible to them alone. Surely, neither you

nor any other honest person needs warning against such abuses as these, for any one who would resort to private codes or cipher prescriptions for money-getting is neither honorable nor honest, and might very properly be classed with the vulture who rejoices at sickness, and the wretch who desires the epidemic. The trail of the serpent is over them all; knaves—

“Whom none can love, whom none can thank,
Creation's blot, creation's blank.”

Your prescription is intended simply to tell the pharmacist what medicine you wish the patient to receive. When sent to the pharmacist it is an order for a certain medicine prepared in a certain way. The law has decided that this prescription or order belongs to the patient; the pharmacist, after compounding it, has, however, a natural right to retain it as his voucher, but he has no right to refill your order without your consent.

The unauthorized refilling of prescriptions by pharmacists has often produced the opium, alcohol, cocaine, chloral, and other enslaving habits. We also well know that it is often unsafe for a person to take a medicine ordered for another, or even the same medicine at different times. Furthermore, how can the pharmacist conscientiously label the second quantity, “Take as directed by Dr. Faraway,” when Dr. Faraway is not even aware of the refilling?

In consequence of the present unfair habit of many pharmacists, the unauthorized refilled prescriptions probably outnumber those of the authorized, five to one.

Drug-stores have become so numerous of late, and the area from which each must derive its patronage and support is so limited, that their proprietors, in order to keep their heads above water, have either to charge very high for the medicines prescribed or *substitute* inferior drugs; the result is that drug-bills have gradually grown greater and greater, till of late they almost eclipse the charges for medical attendance. Many people, to avoid what appear to them *exorbitant* prices, now actually buy this, that, or the other quack medicine, make home mix-

tures, wend their way to no-drug irregulars or some over-the-counter-prescribing druggist, or trust entirely to nature, instead of paying physicians for prescriptions and then having to pay heavily to have them compounded.

The cost of medicines may be slightly reduced by instructing your patient to save the cost of the bottle by carrying one *with* the prescription; doing so cannot be objectionable to pharmacists, as they charge only *cost price* for bottles. A good and legitimate way to lessen the cost of certain prescriptions is to omit inert and unessential ingredients; for example, if you prescribe a mixture of wine of colchicum-root, tincture of digitalis, and sulphate of morphia for a patient, do not increase what would naturally be a one-ounce mixture, that would cost about thirty-five cents, into six or eight ounces, by adding syrup, water, or other vehicle, thus swelling the dose to a tablespoonful and the cost to a dollar. Prescribe the essential ingredients only, and let the directions specify how many drops to take and how and when.

A dose of medicine in powder or pill form is usually more expensive than the same in fluid form; besides, poisons and very active remedies can be more accurately divided when in solution.

Another evil resulting from there being too many pharmacists for all to live by legitimate business is, that not a few, not content with the great “*apothecaries' profit*” derived from the sale of medicines, encroach on the domain of medical practice, and prescribe, by the smattering of knowledge they pick up from the prescriptions of competent physicians, for every foolish applicant whose case does not appear to be formidable; even selling, by guess-work, this, that, or the other thing for *home cases* which they have not even seen, because asked to do so by the foolish; and thus build up a large office (or store) practice. How many, how very many, simple, functional cases are thus given medicines which do no good, but great harm, by taking the place of others which might have been of great benefit if

given at the proper time, and are in this way, during the first few hours or days, converted into incurable or organic ones by such "medicine-men"; and how many new ailments are induced by Mr. Emetic's, Mr. Gargle's, and Mr. Jackall's haphazard prescribing heaven only knows. Fully one-half of all cases of venereal disease, biliousness, debility, cough, and the like, are now seen and treated by pharmacists (and their clerks and greenhorn apprentices) before calling on physicians. Four out of five of those whose complaints prove simple are, of course, cured like magic by the *four little pills* which the pharmacist recommends, or by the great liniment he sells, or by *his* noted fever-and-ague mixture or equally famous tonic, or his universal elixir, *that is simple and can't do any harm*, etc.; and they, thinking that he has turned some dire disease aside, laud the pharmacist to the skies and advise all to go—

"Fools go in throngs"—

to HIM for their livers, and kidneys, and lungs, and brains, and stomachs, instead of consulting a legitimate physician, with assurances that HE is as good as any doctor, and a great deal cheaper.

Hear Shelley in his scenes from the "Chalderon Dialogue":—

"Cy. Have you studied much?"

"De. No: and yet I know enough not to be wholly ignorant.

"Cy. Pray, Sir, what sciences may you know?"

"De. Many.

"Cy. Alas! much pains must we expend on *one* alone, and even then attain it not; but you have the presumption to assert that you know many without study.

"De. And with truth, for in the country whence I come sciences require no learning; they are known.

"Cy. Oh! would I were of that bright country! for in this the more we study we the more discover our great ignorance."

No person who is incompetent to examine a patient is competent to prescribe for him; and I would ask what sensible pharmacist would trust himself, or his wife, or his child to the examination and "subscriptions" of a neighboring pharmacist?

Another, although lesser, evil is this: If a patient's better sense carries him, in the first place, to a physician for advice, instead of to a pharmacist, ten to one he will be presented at the drug-store with one or two quack almanacs filled with infamous and alarming falsehoods, or a handful of advertising pictures, or that the bottle of medicine will be wrapped in Foolembad's or some other pushing fellow's handbill. The co-operation of the pharmacist as retailing agent for quack medicines is indispensable to quackery; and without it seven-eighths of the harm that patent-medicine literature is doing would cease, the vain promises that keep the public rushing from one lying wonder to another would no longer entice, and at least two-thirds of the quack and humbugging proprietary trash that now curses our land would slink from sight.

"Oh, where is the still, small voice of conscience?"

You will do well to avoid, as far as possible, all pharmacists whose presumption leads them to assume the rôle of a physician. The recommendation does *not*, of course, refer to *emergencies*, in which a pharmacist acts as a humanitarian. The manufacture of steel is one thing, and applying watch-springs is another. Medicines are the physician's two-edged tools; a pharmacist may prepare them and handle them for a life-time and be an excellent compounder, and yet, as his studies are pharmaceutical and not therapeutical, he may know no more about prescribing for the sick properly than the mechanic who makes needles or scissors does about dressmaking; or the instrument-maker does about operative surgery; or the manufacturer of trowels and plows and chisels about bricklaying, farming, or carpentering.

If a sick person ask a pharmacist for a plaster, a dose of cathartic pills, or an ounce of tincture of iron, there is no

reason why he should refuse to sell them; but if he ask him what is the best remedy for this, that, or his other affliction, with a view to purchase whatever he designates, that is another, a *therapeutical* matter, and is beyond his sphere.

"Michael, Michael, you have no bees, and yet you sell honey."

Be also on your guard against instrument-makers and dealers who meddle with surgical cases, and manufacturers of appliances for deformities, examining or prescribing opticians, masseurs, etc., who presume to treat cases that should be referred to the physician or surgeon. In fact, avoid encouraging any one who encroaches on the physician's province.

Every patient should be warned that it is dangerous to wear spectacles, trusses, supporters, braces, pessaries, and the like, that have not been prescribed by a physician.

Make it a point never to style a pharmacist, an optician, a preacher, or any one else, "Doctor," or "Professor," unless he *be* one. Heaven knows the much-abused titles are cheap and promiscuous enough without bestowing them on ignorant spectacle-pedlers, and others who have not even applied for them.

Avoid overpraising any prescribing pharmacist to your patients, or people will, on your word, overestimate him, and begin to rely on his gratuitous advice, instead of on the physician's, in all cases considered moderate.

Beware of pharmacists who indiscreetly talk too freely, or converse, joke, etc., while compounding prescriptions, or knowingly insinuate to those who carry them prescriptions that they know what they are for, and have extra impudence when cubebs, ergot, etc., are ordered; or suggest to purchasers that the dose prescribed is too large or too small; also, the blundering blockheads who misread prescriptions or miscopy directions, or put wrong directions or the wrong physician's name on bottles, or surprise and alarm people by charging a different price every time a prescription is renewed, as if they had no system, or as if the medicines were put up wrong; who make the impression that it takes them half their time to correct the

blunders and mistakes of the other half; who leave prescriptions partly compounded to wait on other customers, or to unscrew soda-water for sports who are in a hurry; or who in other ways allow interruption, or show abstraction or careless compounding. For such people be especially careful how you abbreviate, and how you make your 3's and 3's, and carefully dot every *i* and cross every *t* in your prescriptions, so as to afford them no shelter if a mistake occur, and, above all, to prevent a coroner's jury; or to clear yourself if a death-certificate is made necessary.

Mistakes in writing and in compounding prescriptions occur more often from improper haste, and by trying to do two or three things at once, than from incompetency.

Prescriptions written with ink instead of pencil have the decided advantage that they are not easily defaced and do not admit of easy erasure, etc.

A very good and safe rule in prescription-writing is to put down all the ingredients first; next write the directions to the pharmacist and the directions for use; then the number of doses should be decided on, and, lastly, the quantity of each ingredient should be carefully calculated and carefully written, followed by your name or initials.

Look on the back of every prescription paper you use to see that there is nothing of a mistake-causing nature accidentally written on it.

If you believe on good authority that any pharmacist so far forgets himself as to make disparaging comments upon you, or your professional ability, or your remedies, doses, or apparent inconsistencies; or to exhibit and decry your prescriptions to Irregulars, laymen, or other physicians, or to predict that they will not prove useful; or to make unauthorized substitutions, give under-weight of expensive ingredients, or omit them altogether,—

"Who knows the right, and yet the wrong pursues,"—

or to join with our enemies in reviling our profession and its