

venting it, because by this means the exhalation of carbon dioxide from the viscera so treated is greatly facilitated. He emphasizes his assertion by experimentally producing a high grade of shock by this means. Similarly, subjecting the viscera, even while still in the abdomen, to a mild current of warm moist air, with practically no trauma, rapidly produces congestion and loss of tonus and motility. Here again the results obtained are probably due to an excessive elimination of carbon dioxide from the viscera; for when this gas is restored to the body by injections of saturated solution intravenously into the peritoneal cavity or directly into the lumen of the bowel, or by immersion of the bowel in warm saline solution saturated with carbon dioxide, an effective relief from all except the extreme stages is accomplished.

Finally, by no means the least important feature of the work is a description of a hitherto unknown "venopressor" mechanism. It is failure of this mechanism, rather than of the vasomotor apparatus, which, according to Henderson, is responsible for the phenomena, observed by Crile and others, of lowered arterial pressure and venous dilatation.

NOSTRUM ADVERTISING—LAY AND MEDICAL

Hardly a day passes that we do not receive letters from physicians protesting against the utter lack of honesty shown by some newspapers in carrying fraudulent "patent medicine" and quack advertisements. That every right-thinking man—physician or layman—has good cause for indignation in this matter, no one can deny. Many of the advertisements of nostrums and of quacks are fraudulent to a degree and as vicious as they are fraudulent. But the newspapers are not alone in these defections. Before we physicians criticize the lay press too harshly, let us be sure that we are not giving moral and financial support to medical journals which, in their own special field, are just as recreant to the trust reposed in them as any nostrum-reeking newspaper.

The "patent medicine" advertisements in the newspapers are more likely to arouse our scorn because, as physicians, we know the hollowness of the lies that characterize the claims made for these nostrums. But the difference between the falsehoods of the "patent medicine" faker and the prevarication of many exploiters of "ethical proprietaries"—heaven save the mark!—is one of degree, not of kind. The former utters the "lie direct"; the latter, the "lie with circumstance." The former frames his untruths in bald and crude Anglo-Saxon; the latter serves his fiction in the more polished Norman-French. The former defrauds and injures the public direct; the latter accomplishes the same end by the, unwitting, aid of the physician.

It is inconsistent and absurd for a physician to exhibit a spasm of indignation because some news-

papers carry fraudulent medical advertising, so long as that physician is subscribing for, and supporting, a medical journal whose advertising ethics are just as low as those of the newspapers he condemns. We hold no brief for the lay press and we realize to the fullest the gross deceit, fraud and hypocrisy exhibited by some newspapers in their attitude on the subject of nostrum and quack advertising. It is a fact, nevertheless, that there are many newspapers and still more weekly and monthly magazines, whose advertising standards are infinitely higher than those adopted by a large number of medical journals. Of course it is detrimental to public health for fraudulent "patent medicines" to be advertised in the newspapers and sold to the laity. But, let us remember, it is also detrimental to the public's well-being for secret, and frequently fraudulent, mixtures to be advertised in medical journals and used by physicians on the laity. To deplore the former while we continue to tolerate the latter is neither good sense nor good morals.

THE PRESENT PLAGUE SITUATION

As has been noted in our news columns, alarming newspaper notices have recently appeared regarding the occurrence of plague in Manchuria, and these are substantially corroborated by official reports,¹ which indicate that the disease is especially severe, and that it threatens all north China.

The outbreak began Oct. 25, 1910, and from that date until Dec. 11, 1910, there had been reported 493 cases with 491 deaths, most of them having been discovered at Manchuria Station and other points near Harbin in the concession of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Cases had also occurred, however, in towns outside the railway concession, and it was recognized that the continuance of cases in these latter localities would be a constant menace even though the authorities within the conceded railroad zone were able to prevent the spread of the epidemic from already infected stations. Since the beginning of the outbreak in the vicinity of Harbin, the infection has spread to Fuchiatien, Mukden, Chang Chun, Kirin, Tientsin, Paoting-Fu, Chefoo, and Peking. While Harbin and Mukden are the points most affected and while the mortality is largely among natives, yet in the former place eighteen Russians and one French physician have died. The infection is unusually virulent, and appears to be spreading rapidly, so that all of north China may be regarded as being threatened.

Great importance attaches to the occurrence of plague in this part of China, since it is near the seat of government, and an epidemic here may have an important bearing on international relations with that country. It is understood also that the gravity of the situation is appreciated by our government, which recognizes the great danger to life and the threatened injury to the

1. Public Health Reports, Jan. 27, 1911, p. 97.