

as cocaine, codeine, and morphine. Such 'nostrums and drugs infernal' have created untold evils in families by introducing the drink and drug habits under an unsuspected shape, and brought physical and moral ruin to women and even children in many a helpless and too trusting family.

Eight years ago we pressed upon the notice of our legislators—with specific warning instances—the need of legislation to protect a too confiding public from these harpies, and to prevent the press of the Colony from being made (as it is to so large an extent) the sounding-board of a peculiarly odious and heartless form of fraud. Legislative action has at last been taken. Mr. Hornsby's Quackery and Other Frauds Prevention Bill is now before the House. Its main provisions are such as make it worth while waiting for. Its defects (and it has its defects) will, we trust, get rubbed off in its passage through Parliament. It has the support of the Ministry, and altogether it seems as if New Zealand will soon cease to be a happy hunting-ground for the ignorant cure-alls and of the blatant charlatans whose claim of occult power is put forward with as calm assurance in the advertising columns of the secular press as it was from the stage in Elizabeth's days by voluble adventurers of the type of 'Doctor' Dee. Here is a summary of Mr. Hornsby's drastic measure as given by our local evening contemporary:—

'The Bill makes it unlawful for any person to sell any medicament (other than those prescribed and supplied by a duly qualified registered medical practitioner or by a registered chemist) without first obtaining the consent and the certificate of the Chief Health Officer; and any bottle or package containing such medicament must bear the certificate of the Chief Health Officer on it when sold. Provision is made for chemists who desire to apply for authorisation to sell any medicament, and it is further provided that any unregistered practitioner within the Colony may make application to the Health Officer for the right to advertise any medicament or treatment for any disease or complaint; and the Chief Health Officer may, if reasonably satisfied as to the efficacy of such treatment or medicament and the bona fides of such unregistered practitioner, issue his certificate for any such treatment or use of medicaments. In cases where authorisation is refused applicants are entitled to be heard in the Supreme Court. The provisions of the Bill relating to the publication of advertisements concerning quack nostrums are particularly drastic. Clause 7 sets out that "any person who publishes any advertisement or other notification relating to any quack nostrum, and any unregistered practitioner who publishes any advertisement or notification offering advice to sufferers or patients, or to cure diseases or complaints either with or without fee, and the publishers and proprietors of any publication in which such advertisement or notification appears" shall be guilty of an offence under the Act. Similarly proprietors or publishers of newspapers, books, magazines, etc., whether within or without the Colony, are prohibited from publishing advertisements relating to alleged free packets or jewellery or other like "gifts" in return for the sale of "scented packets, medical remedies, or unauthorised medicaments." For a first breach of these provisions a fine not exceeding £5 is stipulated; for a second, one month's imprisonment may be inflicted; and for any subsequent offence not less than six nor more than twelve months' imprisonment.'

By the time the Bill has passed through Committee it will, we opine, be amended so as to take the grave responsibility of examination and decision regarding medicaments from the Chief Health Officer to a Board, under the Health Department, consisting of skilled analysts and medical men.

The schoolmaster is very much abroad in our day and country. Nevertheless, a sufficient portion of our adult population are still, in regard to the claims of the quack, in a state of baptismal innocence and infantile credulity that demand the protection of the law. Despite the known impossibility of 'guaranteed cures' in large numbers of cases, brazen impostors

who trade upon these fraudulent promises are always sure of a plentiful clientele. 'Twas ever thus. Bartholin professed to cure all manner of disorders, and especially epilepsy, by repeating rhymes—and very poor rhymes they were, too. Paracelsus—or, to give him his full procession of names: Aurelius Philippus Paracelsus Theophrastus Bombastus de Hohenheim—set people crazy through the power he claimed of making them immortal by dosing them with liquid gold. He belied his cure by dying at forty-seven. And did not Kenelm Digby set all England by the ears with his new system of curing all human disorders with a shake of his 'sympathetic powder'? We have our Bartholins and our Paracelsuses, and our Kenelm Digbys in our own day and at our own door. There is merely a difference of names and methods and extent of imposition. Ages of diminished religious faith have ever been (as Lecky, himself a rationalist, pointed out) ages of greatest superstition and credulity. Our materialising time is the golden age of quackery. The legislator can do much to protect the victim from the impostor—the lark from the hawk. But the preacher's voice is, ultimately, the mightiest power for the suppression of this odious form of parasitism that has grown to such dimensions upon our social life.

Notes

'Young Pagans'

The Rev. W. M. Greer, of Trinity Church (Protestant), New York, does not seem to have a very exalted idea of the system which trains children to pass a considerable part of their most impressionable years without any thought of, or reference to, God or the moral order. So much, at least, we may gather from the following extract from a recent sermon of his:—

'We are bringing up all over this broad land a lusty set of young pagans who, sooner or later—they or their children—will make havoc of our institutions.'

We in New Zealand are in the same boat. Had we not better be warned in time? And would not the non-Catholic creeds in New Zealand be better employed in establishing (as Catholics have done) systems of religious education than in propounding to each other the worn-out conundrum: Why don't people go to church?

The New Chivalry

The new crusade, organised by the Archbishop of Melbourne, is well timed. It is an order of modern Christian knights, organised, not to fight for the rescue of the Holy Places of Palestine from Saracen hands, but for the defence of the holiest things of domestic and social life against the onset of the hard and unselfish materialism of our day. But the spirit is that of the crusaders of old, in the glow of their best period. 'The Crusaders,' says the learned Protestant historian, Dr. Stubbs, 'are not, in my mind, either the popular delusions that our cheap literature has determined them to be, nor papal conspiracies against kings and peoples, as they appear to the Protestant controversialist. . . . They were the first great effort of mediaeval life to go beyond the pursuit of selfish and isolated ambition; they were the trial feat of the young world essaying to use, to the glory of God and the benefit of man, the arms of its new knighthood. . . . That in the end they were a benefit to the world, no one that reads can doubt; and that in their course they brought out a love for all that is heroic in human nature—the love of freedom, the honor of prowess, sympathy with sorrow, perseverance to the last, and patient endurance without hope—the chronicles of the

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