

THE DRUG PANIC

a hierarchical principle; men are to be tested in every respect, and those who succeed are entrusted with power, while the weakest must go to the wall, as Nature intends and insists that they shall. But now, apparently with the charitable design of ensuring that none but the weakest, physically and morally, shall propagate their kind, we send our best men into a type of warfare where neither courage nor intelligence can be of the slightest avail; we make politics impossible for men of high principle or decent feeling; and we end by telling those who have risked their lives time and again in the pursuit of that knowledge which will enable us to prepare a stronger and cleaner race of men for the future that they are not to be trusted to prescribe for their own patients!

We are patient, we physicians, we warriors in an age-long battle against disease, ninety-five per cent. of which is the direct result of ignorance, vice, and stupidity; that is perhaps why we remain quiet under the foul and senseless insult of the Dangerous Drugs Act.

But the inhibition acts in another way. Already, just as the best representatives of English life refuse to go into politics, we see that the best qualified men and women refuse to be subjected to the ignominy inseparable from the profession of teaching.

Those who are already in the mire prefer to stay there, or feel that there is no way out. But they warn the newcomer against entering.

Similarly, if the prestige of the pharmacist is to go, he will be forced to earn his living as he does in America by opening ice-cream-soda fountains and similar undignified methods of compensating himself for the self-respect which insane legislation has torn from him; and the medical profession will be filled by men who have no true love of knowledge or pity for humanity, but are in a hurry to put up a brass plate, and push their way to the front.

A story to end! The *reductio ad absurdum*—pray pardon the undemocratic phrase—is given by the case of the University of —, one of our six most prominent Universities.

This body ran out of its supply of cocaine; a small quantity was urgently required for research work. Application was made in due form.