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POTIONS, PILLS AND POISONS

Quackery in New Zealand, circa 1900-1915.

- by JENNIFER M. GRAY -

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in History at the University of Otago, 1980.
The basis for this essay has been founded on the regulations that were introduced into New Zealand in the early twentieth century to curtail the activities of quacks, with all their fallacious and therapeutic will-o-the-wisp cures. The continuing success of quackery, already rampant and entrenched in New Zealanders' lives, has called for an exploration into the prevailing attitudes that engendered the implicit faith and harsh declamations surrounding such a vital, if virulent, section of New Zealand society.

Primary sources for a topic such as quackery are full of intrigue and surprise. Of most value in appreciating the motivation of quacks and their victims, of professions and officials, have been the entertaining but often distressful examples of quackery produced in newspapers, described in a Parliamentary Select Committee and Medical Journals, and expounded upon in Parliamentary Debates.

My thanks are extended to the staff of the Medical Library, and especially to those of the Hocken Library for their enthusiasm in passing on any wierd or wonderful examples of quackery; to my supervisor Dr M.Cullen for resource suggestions; to friends and family for their support and encouragement, and my mother for the hours spent typing the dissertation.
"So then the subject (medical art) being so variable, hath made the art by consequence more conjectural; and the art being conjectural hath made so much the more place to be left for imposture... Who can tell if a patient die or recover whether it be art or accident? The therefore many times the imposter is prized, and the man of virtue taxed. Nay we see the weakness and credulity of man is such as they will often prefer a mountebank or witch before a learned physician".

- Sir Francis Bacon, quoted in Elliott, Quacks and Quackery, 1921.

Dear Auntie Flo, your note arrived with Auntie Ivy's letter, In which you state you've found a cure that's sure to make me better, While many other treatments have good points as well as faults, There's none, you think, will cure me, like a dose of "Krushen salts".

I think of all the wondrous cures of nephews and of nieces, Whom you have dosed with "Sulphur Dew" to keep from going to pieces; It must have been most wonderful, a longer cure all stuff! For it made your name quite famous from Dunedin to the Bluff.

You've saved some from the whooping cough, measles and the 'flu -And people with the tummy ache have always come to you. Even folks with broken limbs, have not despised your aid Had you only charged for your advice, your fortune had been made.

Mrs V. Wilden, family papers.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preface</th>
<th>iii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Illustrations</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Abbreviations</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1. Signs and Symptoms</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2. Fallacy and Gullibility</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3. Concern and Denunciation</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4. Diagnosis and Treatment</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5. The Chronic Condition</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix III</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix IV</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Census record of types of quack &quot;specialists&quot; practising, 1906.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Variety of quack remedies advertised, 1907.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Census record of medical practitioners and irregular medical practitioners, 1901, 1906.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>A Comparison of number of quack advertisements, 1907, 1913.</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Census record of medical practitioners and irregular medical practitioners, 1906, 1911.</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Electropathic Belt</td>
<td>Frontispiece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Muscle Roller</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mr Neil's Portrait and Shop</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Histogram of Quack Advertisements, 1906</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>&quot;Ayer's Sarsparilla&quot;</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>&quot;Doan's Backache Kidney Pills&quot;</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>&quot;Dr Sheldon's New Discovery&quot;</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Dr J.A. Sherman's Method</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.J.H.R.  New Zealand Parliament House of Representatives  
Appendix to the Journals, 1907, vol.V.

N.Z.P.D.  New Zealand Parliamentary Debates,


O.D.T.  Otago Daily Times.

T.C.  Tapanui Courier.
Chapter One:

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

"Beware of Quacks! Untruths roll glibly from their lips; they will never see their dupes again... Beware the exorbitant fee, paid for bottles of powders and dangerous medicines and for advice from those who know nothing about disease!"¹.

Professor Scott, better known as "King of Pain" was entertaining and instructing Ashburton locals in the town hall with the hawking of his secret elixir in 1880. Nearby in one of the local hotels folk marvelled while Professor Wallenburg cured blindness and deafness with a success far more spectacular than the usual surgeons.² Without a doubt, all the wiles and wares of quackery were firmly entrenched in New Zealand society: the array of tonics, contraceptives, appliances, cancer and consumption cures were avidly sought after and implicitly trusted by a gullible public.

A glance round the stalls of the 1899 New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition would have provided confirmation of the popularity and esteem in which men and women held alternatives to orthodox medicine. There Mr Neil, the herbalist of George Street, Dunedin, set up his display of medicines, fitting his counter with the patent rotary pill

¹. Herald of Health, February 1, 1901, p.35
². Communication from Jill Moller (librarian, Alexander Turnbull Library), March 20, 1980.
machine for making and coating pills. Customers flocked to buy his pills, powders and lotions, confident in the efficacy of Neil's statement that he had "remedies for nearly all, if not absolutely all, the ills that flesh is heir to".\(^3\)

From the various gradations and types of quackery being practised in New Zealand around the turn of the nineteenth century, a picture emerges of a society deluged by the faithless promises of miracle cures, and fooled by the advertisements of medicines concocted from formulas dreamed up by charlatans. Quackery of all descriptions spread rampantly, influencing people's attitude to health and disease, surreptitiously suggesting that professionally trained doctors had failed, and outrightly declaring that pain and disease was at an end.

"Quackery" itself is a loose term covering the activities of that genre of medical imposters who sold their remedies or advocated special secret cures. A twofold division is helpful here in defining the boundaries of quackery.

Within the first broad classification falls the patent medicine vendors who advertised and sold miracle formulas, diagnosing and treating their patients without seeing them. Some of the medicines they sold were harmless and may even have done some good, the formulas having been stolen or bought from a chemist. Here cod-liver oil emulsions may have proved efficacious for some conditions. But just as common were the

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3. O.D.T., Supplement, March 26, 1890.
hosts of preparations containing drugs and alcohol of indiscriminate amounts, innocently advertised as "tonics". These patent medicine quacks could not always be easily identified or traced, since most often the medicines arrived through an Australian address or British catalogue. However, in the country districts especially, locals often became the middlemen in the patent nostrum business. In Tapanui for instance, Robert Buchanan, the general merchant, supplied Dr Sheldon's formulas, and the obscure William Anderson was the chief source of Chamberlain's colic remedies. 5.

The second classification focuses on the specialists who had set up their own private practice in a local town, advertising themselves widely to promote their particular method or appliance. Some obviously felt that just one speciality was insufficient, preferring an eclectic approach such as one "eminent hydro-electropathic and consulting herbal practitioner", but usually the public appeared to be more prone to fix their faith on a sole curative method. There were fine dividing lines within the specialist group themselves and registered doctors generally differentiated between those quacks who styled themselves as doctors, deluding the public into thinking they were qualified practitioners, and those who (while in all possible ways proclaiming the transcendent merits of their treatment) did not go as far as to assume a title suggesting

they were qualified. The variety of "specialists" abroad in New Zealand in 1906 is demonstrated in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'Specialist'</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irregular medical practitioner</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbalist</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeopathist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydropathist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygienist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypnotist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masseur, masseuse</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metaphysician 8.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patients enjoyed direct communication with these men, visiting them in their city chambers at an appointed time. Dunedin could boast of several imposing chambers: Dr. Williams the homeopath was established in Filleul Street,\(^9\). Dr. Sherman's treatment for rupture could be demonstrated at 14, High Street, while the masseur and hair specialist Chas. Turner was located in the Bank of New Zealand buildings on Princes Street.\(^{10}\). The foreign accents added a certain awe to the visit and diagnosing procedure; and they were not always used in

8. The contemporary term for a spiritualist healer, one who worked by suggestion and, according to NZMJ, November, 1911, p.28 "professes to cure anything, or everything, and really cures nothing at all".
10. O.D.T. regular advertisement, 1907
pretence, considering that the specialists had often set up practice in New Zealand as a last outpost having been exposed for fraud in Britain, America and Europe.

"Appliances" as wielded by specialists held a fascination for people, whether sick or not. Popular in the treatment of muscles, wrinkles, circulation, hernias or appendix was the "muscle roller" or "beater" used in massage techniques. In the treatment of the abdominal organs, this roller would be applied over the stomach, liver and colon by pressing the outer wheels against the organs, "pushing the instrument upwards for several inches with a quick digging motion".¹¹

Rather than "appliances", alternative "methods" of specialists also flourished, and here herbalism, hydopathypathy and homeopathy were enthusiastically discussed and supported. Herbalism, or the "Botanic Eclectic System of Medicine" dominated the specialist scene, and folk adhered faithfully to the medicinal use of even New Zealand native plants. Others held to the theory of hydopathypathy, in that the human system should be totally cleansed from impurities; thus water drinking and steaming would cure tuberculosis and the "natural flushing" of the colon would restore "natural equilibrium".¹² Homeopathy was also growing in popularity: a system of therapeutics in which diseases are treated by drugs which are capable of producing in healthy persons symptoms like those of the diseases to be

¹¹. Forest, B.S., Health the New Method, p. 88. See fig. 1, p. 6. ¹². Ibid., p. 44.
Fig. 1. Using the muscle roller, or "health roller" in "massotherapy", all the force of the roller was expended in deep pressure on muscles, nerves, and tissues.


(reproduced with permission of Hocken Library, Dunedin)
treated, the drug being administered in minute doses. People eagerly sought out the practitioners of this method, believing its claim that "Homeopathy is the only grand step of progress that ever has been made in the medical art". 13

Despite the various categories into which quacks settled, they all had the same effect of infusing a new hope into the public's consciousness as news spread of the "abundant testimony" of cures. No more need the torture of the surgeon's knife be feared when a lump had been diagnosed as cancer; at last release from the encroaching shininess due to thinning hair could be found. By trusting a "master physician" or a completely fresh and secret elixir of life, a new lease of life was waiting.

But in the early years of the nineteen hundreds, there appeared a movement abroad in sectors of New Zealand society reacting not only to the existence of, but also to the apparent virulent extension of quackery. 14 Rather than pettering out as medical science advanced and concern for public health increased, quackery continued to fascinate the public with its claims and promises, helping to meet a psychological need within folk suffering from ill health or the suspicion of it. Most vocal in protest against quackery were trained, fully qualified doctors and community "elders" who realized that "to hand over our bodies

to inexperienced people to experiment with for their own advantage and gain is one of the eccentricities of which civilization is guilty".15. Gentlemen such as Downie Stewart, intent upon upholding the integrity and morality of the Anglo Saxon race, had inveighed against the pernicious infiltration (even into ladies' schools it was rumoured!) of literature referring to sexual debility and the generative organs.16.

Doctors, in their daily treatment of patients and confrontation with interfering quacks, had been in a position to see the full extent and effects of medical fraud. Some of the problems doctors were contending with were expressed by one young country doctor in 1893 as he bewailed the local quack's "pretensions to medical knowledge founded on the many 'infallible cures' he possessed" which were "believed implicitly by the unthinking". This quack with "cool impudence and pretentious boasting" had retaliated against the encroachments of the new doctor by advertising his wares with the heading "Why Pay Heavy Doctor's Bills, when you can have etc". With increasing vehemence it was believed that:

Plainly it is high time the profession took steps to prevent this. I am aware that strong endeavours have been made to induce Parliament to act, but some sapient legislator... has hitherto invariably "sat upon" any Medical Bill.17.

By 1900 doctors were choosing to protest through the two

channels of the Department of Health under the leadership of Dr Mason (a gentleman keenly aware of the public's health and forceful in his efforts to improve it), and the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association, as they sought to ameliorate the danger and degradation to which the public was exposed. Through the denunciation of quackery (using Dr Mason and Members of Parliament affiliated personally to the medical profession as mouthpieces) the Government became more aware of the invidious position many sectors of the community were being entrapped into, and hence set about legal action to mitigate the evil of quackery.
Chapter Two:

FALLACY AND GULLIBILITY

"There is a class of minds much more ready to believe that which is at first sight incredible, and because it is incredible, than what is generally thought reasonable".1

A discussion of the quackery that was practised unrestrainedly in New Zealand extends to imposters themselves, raising questions of why the shrewd and pretentious men chose to delve into alternative medicine, and of why they were so successful in capturing the public's implicit faith, if not devotion.

First and foremost quackery was a welcome and easy method of bilking the public of money, enabling anyone who was imaginative and cunning enough to amass a tidy fortune. People, as always, were loath to deplete their pockets of pence, until it came to wonder cures, and here "they are ready to fly to almost anything that holds out anything in the shape of relief".2 The medical profession was battered by criticisms from the public for their excessive charges, especially when the patient received nothing from the doctor's medicine case; the doctor often preferring to allow the natural resistance of the body to fight illness alone. Too often it appeared that "the sufferer has been through the doctor's hands and been charged simply to have his trouble aggravated".3 The patient, still having to pay for the doctor's

1. Oliver W. Holmes, 1842, quoted in Young, J.H., Medical Messiahs p. 273.
3. O.D.T., August 30, 1907, p.8.
visit felt cheated when the doctor would not prescribe the drugs that he, the patient, expected. The patient then turned to the quack who with his happy knack was usually able to provide some remedy to placate him. It appeared that the quack was positively assisting the ailing in regaining health and, when the public received something material for their ills, they were only too willing to pay.

In amassing their fortunes illegal practitioners usually demanded a down payment before any treatment, charging anything from £10 to £30 for the first appointment and a little less for the following ones if the patient was lucky. Quacks were most adept at bargaining with their clients if the latter were too impoverished to pay the high price asked, indeed it was known that practitioners might ultimately accept a third or a fifth of the original price.

In the patent medicine trade, shrewd business heads could rake in the money. The ingredients were very cheap and it cost the quack little to brew up a remedy. For instance where the quack spent 5½d on the drugs for one bottle of Warner's "Safe Cure", he sold the bottle for 2s.9d. One trick of nostrum advertisements was never to state the amount bought for a certain price; thus even when the price might appear reasonable one never knew how many pills or fluid ounces would be purchased. Once trapped into buying a cheap remedy, a patient

was encouraged to keep on using it in the belief that he was in the process of being cured so that the money spent steadily mounted, as in the intriguing example of Pink Pills: "Price 3s. a box, six boxes 16s. 6d, post free". Here one might query the suggestion of sending for six boxes, since surely after one box the symptoms should be cured?

At other times, quack cures were advertised at exorbitant prices but, rather than discouraging ailing folk from buying, such a medicine attracted them: the more expensive the remedy the more certain it was to heal them. Such an attitude was gently implied by one Dunedin lady quoting Dr Batchelor of Otago Medical School:

He said, "If Epsom Salts was £2 a packet everyone would use it and be much better off, instead of that it was only 2d, so nobody would use it."

In the end, whatever methods the quacks used, they found their business highly lucrative as they traded on the public's quenchless desire for cure-alls.

Building up ones wealth was an important avenue of upward social mobility, and here quacks were using their trade to improve their status in New Zealand society. According to Olssen the ideology of mobility may have been most firmly held by the semi-professional strata of society, and it was groups like the 115,000 immigrants arriving at the turn of the century that most eagerly sought upward mobility. It was into this "class" or

7. O.D.T., April 5, 1907, p.2.
"strata" that quacks usually fell - such as the general merchants or frauds escaping European law. Quacks were men striving for independence, security and respectability within a society that measured status by wealth and occupation. What better way to achieve this upward mobility than by their business which offered not only wealth, but just as importantly it implied specialized knowledge and educational qualifications. Their miracle cures and dignified practices, where the title of "Dr" was adopted, were thus seminal in enabling the quacks to rise in social status.

With important material benefits to be gained by exploiting a susceptible public with their "nefarious trade", quacks employed various techniques of contacting folk of all ages in the community.

An effective method of quacks on the local New Zealand scene was to travel around hawking their medicines. The vendor "who goes round in a cart and carries certain cure-alls to the doors of people, prescribing for their various complaints"\(^\text{10}\) was a sight common to those in both rural and suburban areas where the hospitable or gullible might eagerly inspect the colourful array of potions and intriguing set of appliances. Such easily assailable types of potential clients fell prey to the quack's vivid descriptions of a wonder cure, rather than the more strong willed who took pride in adding a steely edge to their "Get out!" as the quacks were "shown the front gate".\(^\text{11}\).

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11. Interview (Harry Miller of Central Otago), May 23, 1980.
Travelling quacks could not always afford time to distribute their knowledge and wares door to door, but lectures were about as profitable in achieving this end since direct personal contact could still be made with the populace in the rapidly growing urban areas. Notification of when quack's lectures were to be held would be published in the local newspapers, as were the "Viavi Treatment" lectures which appeared frequently on the front page of the Otago Daily Times. 12.

Direct consultation with their clients was the most valuable means for quacks to influence public opinion and in this they were assisted by those who, convinced they themselves had been cured by a quack's appliance, medicine, or technique passed on the good news to their suffering neighbours. Word of mouth was a strong force to be reckoned with when efforts were later made in stamping out quackery, for no legislation could be passed to silence these quack enthusiasts. The New Zealand Exhibition of 1906 - 1907 gave an example of such proselytization when a gas engineer in charge of the Christchurch Gas Company's stand successfully experimented in amateur metaphysical healing. His patient who, after treatment and a night's sleep, was "miraculously" cured of a severe cold, was "far from keeping it a secret, and brought quite a number of her friends to be relieved of toothache, earache, neuralgia etc." 13.

12. The "Viavi Company" was a quack establishment of American origin, dealing in remedies for female ailments. It engaged women who travelled about delivering "health lectures", learnt by heart, persuading women they were in serious danger unless they submitted themselves to treatment of "Viavi" remedies and agents. A.J.H.R., 1907, p.37.

Where clients could not be personally contacted, the secondary channel of communication was used: that of written material. Pamphlets were in plentiful supply, sometimes thrown over the front fence, or otherwise posted to private persons after which the "recipient distributes copies ... into the hands of the unsuspecting." Such pamphlets might contain explanations of an ailment the reader was bound to be suffering from, or sometimes a diagram of the womb to help explain contraceptive procedures. Likewise letters, officially typewritten, would be sent in bundles to the sick. One woman complained that, even after the death of her husband from cancer, letters were received by her, "accompanied by all sorts of testimonials and statement as to wonderful cures". More detailed explanations of quack medicaments and techniques were issued in textbooks and newspaper articles.

Some newspaper editors unwittingly allowed quackery to be expounded upon in their "Health" columns, as when in the Tapanui Courier there appeared an account of the "Ice Cure" for insomnia.

Quacks enjoyed greatest scope for bilking readers in the publication of their own texts. Many homes boasted of the professional looking "medical" texts on their shelves which could be referred to in the event of accidents and sickness: perhaps it was *Health - The New Method* explaining the advantage of massage techniques, or the family favourite *The New Zealand Family Herbal Doctor*. These

15. Ibid., p.24,
texts would usually describe the symptoms of an illness, then suggest how to concoct a potion, or experiment with an appliance, in simple layman's language. Thus, Dr. Neil believed his herbal text essential in helping the public grasp an understanding of their health because, "most medical works are written for the profession in such language as ordinary people cannot understand". 19.

The quacks most common method of enticing the public into the realm of painless, instant cures, however, was through the printed advertisement. Advertising in magazines and local newspapers was the life-blood of quacks for, by cleverly written and illustrated explanations of their remedies or techniques, quacks were able to trade on the credulous public, insinuating that one's health was not as blooming as it should be and persuading that here was a remedy to alleviate suffering. At the turn of the century such advertisements proliferated in the most respected sources of public literature: even the Home magazine Strand contained advertisements that appealed to "thin-busted women and silly old men". 20.

An analytical study of Otago newspapers reveals what persistent pressure the public was put under by the imposter doctors, and enables us to appreciate why readers were so susceptible to the wares of the wily advertisers. The same nostrums were featured widely in all the rural and city papers, the quack having made a contract with a publisher for the display

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20. Thus stated Dr Mason to the disbelief of Honorary members, A.J.H.R., 1907, p.16.
Fig. 2. Mr Neil's character, herbal remedies, sold at his Dunedin shop, and text were acclaimed by many devoted clients. J.F. Neil, *The New Zealand Family Herbal Doctor*, Dunedin, 1889. (reproduced with permission of Hocken Library, Dunedin)
of his remedy or practice for a specific length of time. Every edition gave evidence of the vitality of quacks in announcing their wares, fully realizing the potential for reaching and manipulating the public. The continual barrage of advertisements that the increasingly literate public was subjected to is demonstrated in the Figure 3 where the average area of quack advertisements occupied 7.5% of the total newspaper space. Small wonder that the medical ignorance of the masses was exploited, and that New Zealanders in their daily visual absorption of advertisements had developed a perennial proneness for quack's miracle cures and appliances.

Table 2 increases an appreciation of the working of the quack's strategy in vending their wares. In the Otago Daily Times, 1907, remedies for respiratory diseases and bowel disorders featured at the expense of other nostrums, both in the variety of medicines on the market, and in the frequency of being advertised. Here the quacks, although in no position to honestly suggest a cure for these ailments because of their lack of training, showed a propensity for stepping in where trained doctors had found no cure for patients with common, but chronic, disorders. The quack could exploit diseases like a respiratory complaint; not only on the basis that no infallible palliative had been found, but because he could take advantage of the confusion that reigned over its symptoms. In research of symptoms of respiratory disease chest specialists have discovered fifty six different causes for spitting blood, seventy six causes for pains in the chest, and one
Figure 3. The histogram illustrates the areas (sq.cms) occupied by quack advertisements in the first Saturday issue of each month of O.D.T., 1906. The number in each column indicates the percentage of such advertisement area relative to the total area of the respective newspaper.

The January to May (inclusive) issues covered 12 pages (34560 sq.cms) and the June to December (inclusive) issues covered 16 pages (46080 sq.cms). The average per month of quack advertisement to area of newspaper was 7.5% (range 5.0 - 8.9).
TABLE 2. A summary of the variety of quack remedies per ailment on the market, and the frequency of their advertisements every second month of 1907.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diseases for which medication advertised</th>
<th>number of remedies/specific disease</th>
<th>average number advertisements every 2nd month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Medicine - 'cure-alls'</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair tonic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonics</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female ailments</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowel disorders*</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rheumatism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*including digestive upsets
hundred and seven causes for coughing. Thus, when in fact a change in the weather alone had dried up a postnasal drip, the quack could claim that his bottled remedy had cured a dreaded disease at the serious end of the cough spectrum. It would not be long until the gullible flocked to test for themselves the efficacy of the latest of his miracle cures. As for constipation, this ailment had become an obsession with New Zealanders.

Sir Truby King articulated this phobia in his description of constipation as "the most damning symptom of ignorance" through which God worked his scientific laws to punish "idleness, self-indulgence, and carelessness"; moreover, when chronic, it could lead to sexual excitement and masturbation.

In analysing the Otago Daily Times quack advertisements it is also helpful to inspect the common characteristics of the "baits" themselves to see how the public was being mesmerised by the extravagant claims made for the various remedies, the value of which were assured. The advertisements were finely attuned to the needs and preoccupations of the ailing, neurotic, or simply apprehensive public. Indeed, so persuasive had quacks become that "the ideal writer of patent medicine advertisements is able to fright the type settler that he stops work to buy a bottle".

Normally there was an illustration to catch the reader's eye, which could be done with little trouble considering the paucity of photos and illustrations in the newspapers, apart from advertisements.

This is exactly what the Chief Officer of Health, Dr Mason, was

complaining about in a public lecture, 1907:

You cannot pick up a newspaper ... but what you see a big burly gentleman, sometimes with his wrong eye to a microscope, or holding in his hand some vessel which he imagines is to be found in the armamentarium of a medical man. His face is usually cast in such a mould as would prevent any sensible person from trusting him with the change of a shilling, and yet because of his skilfully arranged bait he draws into his net thousands whose only hope of cure lies in the leading of a rational mode of life.24.

Frequently the illustration was "taken from the photo" of the one restored to health who would testify to the method by which he or she was miraculously cured of a dreaded disease by this very remedy.25.

A description of the symptoms the nostrum claimed to cure was usually essential to the advertisement whereby the reader, by being his own doctor, could distinguish his urgent need for the remedy stated. Needless to say, the symptoms described were usually as broad and all embracing of everyday disabilities that any overcautious being could justifiably claim the need for the advertised remedy. A great boon in the art of expounding the benefits of a quack remedy was undeniably that of pseudo-medical backing. Here explanation of truthful medical facts was often skilfully rendered, removing confusing medical intricacies, and enabling technicalities to be simply understood by the reader. With such a knowledge of fundamental medical facts, the onlooker would then acknowledge all the more readily his obvious need for healing which only the secret formula of the advertised nostrum...
If you are run down, losing strength, are greatly debilitated, and suffer from the long, hot summer, there is one medicine that will quickly cure you. It is

**AYER'S Sarsaparilla**

Find this interesting testimonial of a lady residing at East Brisbane:

"The past season I had a severe attack of dengue fever, which left me feeling very weak and languid, with little appetite and no energy; but I am pleased to say Ayer's Sarsaparilla cured me.

"As a blood purifier and tonic for those who are affected by the debilitating heat of the Queensland summer, it is unequaled, and I am pleased to recommend it to those who need a reliable remedy."

If you are sick, you certainly should give Ayer's Sarsaparilla a thorough trial. It cannot fail to help you, for it purifies the blood first of all. Then your nerves become steady and strong, and the hot weather of summer does not affect you. Remember, it is a wonderful medicine for the children, too, when they are thin and feeble, pale and languid. Put your confidence in it, for there is no family medicine in the world its equal.

Make sure that you get "AYER'S" Sarsaparilla—not some other kind, put up to imitate it, and which will do you no good.

Prepared by DR. J. C. AYER & CO., Lowell, Mass., U. S. A.

Ayer's Pills cure dyspepsia; strengthen the stomach.

Fig. 4. Personal testimony and portrait "taken from the photograph" was a successful method of advertising. O.D.T., April 20, 1907, p.2.
could supply. A prime example of the use of this pseudo-medical knowledge to help persuade the reader to buy the quack remedy was often given by shrewd advertisements for "Dean's Backache Pills". Here the medical facts were extrapolated, describing the nature of the renal tract and effect of kidney infection in such a way that no medical text could refute the facts. However, it was the method by which the quack used the medical knowledge to his own advantage that smacked of beguilement, and which infuriated the medical profession. It was little wonder if the backache sufferer reading such advertisements was duped by the pseudo-medical explanations, after which his psychological state would be ready to accept without questioning the advertisement's answer to his problem. To state so emphatically as in Figure 5 that Dean's Pills were the only and complete panacea for "all kidney ills" with no explanation of how or why this should be the case was, to registered doctors, an untenable use of empirical knowledge.

That evidence of such medical knowledge, however questionable, was venerated by the public at large could not be called into question; a fact substantiated by the prestige and sale value attached to a medicine bottle when the appendage of "doctor" was in evidence. Even though respect for the "cleverest doctors in town" abounded, however, many of the populace were beginning to experience a sense of alienation from doctors.

27. See illustration, fig.5, p.25.
OH! THAT BACK!

Ache! Ache! Ache! Takes all the life, all the energy out of you. Makes you miserable. There is a danger in it, too. Neglect the warning of a bad back, you neglect an appeal from the kidneys. When the back is bad, when it's lame or weak, when it aches, when it aches, the kidneys are sick—demand attention. Doan's Bunchache Kidney Pills relieve quickly the aches and pains and weakness of a bad back. Doan's Backache Kidney Pills cure all kidney ills, cure urinary troubles, too frequent urinary discharges, retention of the urine, and all dangerous disorders of the kidneys and bladder. If you fail to help the kidneys in time, Diabetes, Dropsy, Bright's Disease are sure to follow. Doan's Backache Kidney Pills are endorsed by friends and neighbours, by people you know.

Doan's Backache Kidney Pills.
Cure to Stay Cured - - Dunedin Proof:

Fig. 5. A reputed remedy with amazing curative powers, backed by Dunedin evidence

C.D.T., April 20, 1907, p.2.
One facet of the flux of change in New Zealand society in which men and women were trying to find security and recreate order\textsuperscript{29} was the transformation of the role of the medical profession and structure of the hospital system in the 1890's. In reaction to this change folk looked to the quack to fulfill the traditional image of the doctor.

The years 1886-1915 were transitional years for medicine in New Zealand where a pioneering process of advancement made the public fearful that the traditional characteristics of the local doctor were being lost. Medical training and research was advancing and changing rapidly, especially at Otago Medical School\textsuperscript{30}, where it was recognised by doctors and leaders in the community that specialization was an important technique for promoting efficiency in society as a whole.\textsuperscript{31} A doctor, already becoming increasingly distant and awesome to his patients,\textsuperscript{32} became even more so when he tended towards differentiation as the Medical Association encouraged, "confining himself to that branch (of medicine) for which he feels a natural aptitude".\textsuperscript{33} Thus the distinctively caring style of doctors towards their individual patients appeared to be swallowed up in an expansion of medicine where greater emphasis was laid on scientific advancement than on personal

\textsuperscript{29} Olssen, E., "New Zealand Society", 1890-1940, p.2.
\textsuperscript{30} N.Z.M.J., 1907, p.50.
Brooking, T., Dentistry in New Zealand, p.48, T.K. Sidey was the main force behind the upgrading and expanding of Medical School as a place of learning.
\textsuperscript{31} Olssen, E., \textit{op.cit.}, p.8.
\textsuperscript{32} e.g. With the use of powerful tools like anaesthetics and antisepsis. French, R.D., Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society, p.292 ff.
\textsuperscript{33} N.Z.M.J., February, 1907, p.27.
involvement with the ailing. As one reactionary patient stated:

There are three persons who always put one in mind of dried bones and catacombs: the lawyer, the doctor, and nurse, and he who comes safe out of the hands of these three is indeed a fortunate fellow.34

This distrust of the populace, as they clung to their traditional ideas of medicine, was experienced by Dr Eleanor McLaglan in her early days of practice near Dargaville in 1906-07. Not long graduated, Dr McLaglan had to compete with a quack "with some sort of licence" known far and wide as "The Old Doctor". So popular was he that "although old and deaf, he still kept a devoted and trusting band of followers" who supported him, forcing another registered doctor to set up practice elsewhere.35

Not only doctors, but hospitals also were increasing the distrust of laymen and hence making the quacks invitation more attractive. Hospitals were being transformed and expanded (in the national trend of professionalization and specialization) from the traditional benevolent institution36 where familiar locals had helped nurse, "finding it requisite to wait upon the patients ... sometimes bringing tracts, and sometimes introducing indigestible compounds to the patients".37 No longer were the sick welcome to stay comfortably in their own familiar surroundings of home either, for the Public Health Department were beginning to realize that the "economic waste attendant upon keeping a case of scarlet fever

34. Letter, Fischer, C.F., Homeopathic Echo, p.63.
36. As run on the pattern established in the "Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act" 1885.
(or any other infectious disease) in a house where isolation cannot be obtained is evident": 38, much more efficient to transfer a patient to the bureaucratic institution of a hospital where direct observation and experimentation could be carried out. But here patients often reacted negatively, offended by suffering at the hands of students, or being victims of scientifically orientated doctors. Folk loudly bemoaned the state of medicine which now appeared wholly "scientific" instead of "humane", feeling abandoned in the transformed and advancing sphere of knowledge which proved the traditional predilection for "old mothers' remedies" to be inefficacious.

It was at this critical juncture that the quack stepped in. He reasserted the traditional image of how a doctor should act, denigrating the artificial and malevolent "science cures" and new orthodoxy of collective treatment in a hospital. Instead, whether offering cancer cures to his "brother and sister sufferers" 39, or a new lease of sexual vigour for the married pair's domestic felicity, 40, or simply tricopherous for the balding pate, the quack stressed a personal, caring interaction with his clients, "breathing the most tender solicitude and interest". 41 Such an approach is evidenced by the fatherly explanations and kindly faces recurring in advertisements, or the comforting reassurance that the client would never miss a day off work when under treatment.

40. See Dr La Met's advertisement "The Physiology of Marriage" - Otago Witness - April, 1883, p.30.
Moreover, quacks were not solely concerned with a client's physical well-being, for the spiritual and mental aspects were tended to carefully as well: as in the case where a delicate constitution and nervous complaint would be mystically nurtured by the "metaphysician." 42.

Clearly, quacks were appealing to the deep psychological needs of certain emotionally vulnerable individuals, and in doing so gained a tenacious hold on the client's pocket as well as his devotion.

The quacks' appeal was also bolstered by their upholding of religious belief in contrast to what often appeared the disbelief of scientifically orientated doctors. Many Victorians, and their heirs the Edwardians, believed that the basis for society lay in the primacy of spiritual values and feared that scientific research impugned divine beneficence or threw doubt upon God's omnipotence. 43. Evangelicals, in continuance of the Puritan belief that conscience must override the intellect, were inclined to scorn the value of evidence and proofs, wagering all in their conviction of faith, and distrusting science as the agency of darker forces. 44. Quacks mirrored the prevailing religious attitude to perfection, and frequently it seemed that "Christianity and quackery go hand in hand". 45. The religious tone and exposition of Christian beliefs in the many quack magazines, pamphlets and textbooks is remarkable.

42. A.J.H.R., 1907, p.51.
43. French, R.D., op.cit.
for its homogeneity; as exemplified by Neil's Introduction to his text on herbal remedies:

We believe that human happiness and health are largely dependent on the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and we shall write in such a way as we trust will prove our conviction that Christians ought to do all things for the glory of God.\textsuperscript{47}

For all the quack's wiles and techniques for enticing the public, they could only have been successful if the public's prevailing psychological state had been susceptible. This would certainly appear to be the situation, for an image of mass hypochondria within New Zealand society emerges as we hear of women crowding "Viavi" lectures, farmers travelling miles from Balclutha to a "specialist" in Christchurch, and see the over abundance of patent medicines advertised in newspaper columns. As folk sought simplistic cures and explanations for disease the quack remedies and methods seemed to meet their need. In communicating with the public through advertisements or lectures quacks were offering them something they already wanted. Quacks knew the truth of the statement that "manipulating the salience of an existing attitude is a great deal easier than creating a new attitude".\textsuperscript{48} The existing attitude was one of fear, in an era when disease was understood by few. In their pre-scientific concept of health the populace felt threatened by the spectre of death and disease which continually surrounded them. Deaths from cholera and diphtheria

\textsuperscript{46} e.g. Herald of Health; Dr Fitchett's Life.
\textsuperscript{47} Neil, J.F., op.cit., p.3.
had increased rapidly in the early 1890s, then in 1900 there was the plague scare, and in 1902-03 a grave epidemic of measles.

Fears of death and of physical or mental incapacitation and weakness, with corresponding longings for survival and strength are universally powerful motivators of human behaviour. For the susceptible, quackery seemed to offer magically potent defenses against their deepest fears.

In a state of debility, a patient would naturally grasp at the bait dangled before him when presented with the quack's assertion that the tumour or hernia could be cured painlessly, rationally and even timelessly, for a price of course. Newspapers at the turn of the century often reported on men and women who, in fear of the surgeon's knife, leave the orthodox treatment of the registered doctors and seek "specialized" quack help. An example of this tendency was given by an individual who sought a cure for his hernia without an operation. Although after treatment the man could still see and handle the hernia (it was as big as two fists) he dared not

   p.32, fig.11, In 1890, 25 per million living died of cholera.
   In 1893, 70 per million living died of cholera.
   p.34, fig.12, In 1891, 150 per million living died of diphtheria.
   In 1892, 300 per million living died of diphtheria.


51. This was the attraction of Dr J.A. Sherman's Treatment, O.D.T., June 20 1907, p.15. see fig.7.

52. e.g., T.C., October 3, 1906, p.5.
    T.C., July 29, 1908, p.5.
    O.D.T., June 20, 1907, p.8.
    O.D.T., June 11, 1907, p.5.
approach a physician, declaring that the lump was only flesh - "They said the remedy would make flesh".\textsuperscript{53}.

Besides this characteristic trait of fear, quacks also exploited the prevailing ignorance of the New Zealand mind. That public ignorance over medical matters was rife is evidenced in the frequent personal testimonies of those "cured" by quacks, such as one man who took "Dr Morse's Indian Root Pills" because of the sharp pains in his shoulder blades which he believed was caused by a liver complaint.\textsuperscript{54}. Ignorance over current scientific trends was also traded upon by the quack, just as one doctor reported in 1908 with disgust:

> Quacks with their touters have often found it convenient to hitch themselves on the skirts of a discussion in which the public has been interested ... eager to assure dupes that life may be prolonged and youth made perpetual.\textsuperscript{55}.

One such prevailing popular trend was the interest aroused in the use of electricity: "Electricity will cure you" the public was informed in the newspapers.\textsuperscript{56}. Frequent use was made of "electric belts" which claimed to treat obesity, nervousness, and sexual ailments\textsuperscript{57}. But for bewildering and persuading the public as to the efficacy of electrical cures, no quack did better than

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{53} N.Z.M.J., February 1909, p.49.
  \item \textsuperscript{54} O.D.T., April 4, 1907, p.4.
  \item \textsuperscript{55} N.Z.M.J., February 1908, p.46.
  \item \textsuperscript{56} O.D.T., August 6, 1907, p.1.
  \item \textsuperscript{57} See frontispiece.
\end{itemize}
one "metaphysician" when he explained that disease was started by:

... a disturbance or unequal distribution of vital electricity, and that the organic functional symptomatic effects all resulted from this derangement of the electro motive power of the organization.\(^5\)

It was also easy for the quack to capitalize on the ignorance of men and women in their naive enjoyment of "being their own doctor" as they diagnosed ailments according to their symptoms and found a remedy. For instance a common activity was to test one's kidneys to see whether "Warner's Safe Cure" was a necessary medicament or not:

How to test your kidneys: Put some morning urine in a glass or bottle, let it stand for 24 hours; if there is a reddish sediment in the bottom of the glass, or if the urine is cloudy or milky, or if you should see particles or germs floating about in it, your kidneys are diseased, and you should lose no time, but get a bottle of "Warner's Safe Cure".\(^5\)

This self-diagnosis itself was trading on the inexperience of the reader who would have had little understanding of what caused the symptoms: whether it be cancer of the kidney or a urinary tract infection.

Although in a lamentable state of ignorance, few in society showed any desire for a knowledge of the complexities of medical science: instead the majority preferred simplicity. Here of course quacks matched the public's approach perfectly as when one quack, advocating natural tissue cell salts declared that his

\(^{58}\) A.J.H.E., 1907, p.55.

\(^{59}\) Advertisement, quoted in Ibid, p.31
remedy was "profoundly simple, yet in simplicity profound". 60. Public lectures were advertised on similar grounds where talks would be given "in a simple yet instructive manner". 61. It made no difference whether an individual was intelligent and well educated or not: the hernia patient who had refused an operation had been an "intelligent man in the town of Napier who had made large sums of money in business". 62. Rather, anyone who contracted a disease for which there was no known cure, or who recognized that his condition was deteriorating would seize upon any promise of hope, no matter how far fetched or simple it might seem. The need to believe in a therapeutic miracle was strong enough to twist all scientific and medical facts.

Linked to ignorance, fear and simplicity, was the characteristic of gullibility and susceptibility. Two groups in New Zealand society demonstrating these traits most clearly were those of the adolescent and geriatric.

Where young men and women were concerned, the quack could easily frighten them into thinking they suffered from sexual ailments: even the most innocent had impressed upon them the necessity of an anxious self examination and subsequently of taking the advertised drugs. 63. The quack's shrewd promotion techniques here took the form of converting normal physiological conditions into dire harbingers of syphilis and insanity, and so by creating an ailment

60. Herald of Health, p.333.
61. "Hisvi" Lectures, O.D.T., April 9, 1907, p.l.
where none had existed, the quack could then remove the ailment. The Chief Health Officer in 1907 gave a useful exposition of a quack's dealings with youth in this sphere:

A very common practice ... is to circulate books and pamphlets on sexual ailments in schools. Many boys are guilty of masturbation, and the results of this habit are pictured in the most awful language. The result is that the boy guilty of the habit ... becomes unnerved. He is told that the only salvation for him is to send to the publisher of the book, and the boy scraps up enough money to get some of the medicine.64.

Small wonder that youths were tortured by fears over a subject dogged by Victorian secrecy and shame. Such was the embarrassment of their involvement that they became unable to extricate themselves from the grasp of a quack: indeed, one boy was forced to scrimp £18 to satisfy his "advisor", being too ashamed to divulge to his father or doctor the mess he found himself in.65.

Meanwhile, old folk were the other element in society particularly vulnerable to quacks. This is understandable, considering that they generally show a higher frequency in suffering from the very ailments that quacks were most enthusiastic in advertising remedies for, and most successful in "curing": bowel disorders, rheumatism, lethargy, and respiratory infections.(fig.6). Rheumatism especially was a perfect field for the imposter to exploit. Being excrutiatingly painful it drove the sufferer in desperation to seek any expedient in the hope of relief; and being

64. A.J.H.R., 1907, p.9.
Having been thoroughly cured of a heavy cold on the chest by Dr. Sheldon's New Discovery, I beg to tender you my gratitude. The first dose relieved and soothed the congestion, and after treatment for three days no evidence remained of a cold that had cost me many trying days and nights. I found it warming, soothing, and powerful in its operation.

I have recommended it to two of my employees suffering from influenza, and consider you are quite entitled to the above.

M. L. C., Mayor of * Alecub, wrote as follows:

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to testify to the great value of Dr. Sheldon's New Discovery for coughs, colds and consumption.

I have tried it myself and found it to give immediate relief, and successful in effecting a very speedy cure, besides being a most palatable medicine.

So popular has Dr. Sheldon's New Discovery become in this district, that I find in my store the demand for this line is so continual that I need hardly stock any other cough medicine.

An unparalleled preparation for the immediate relief and Permanent Cure for all diseases of the Throat, Bronchial Tubes and Lungs: including Pharyngitis, Throat, Coughs, Consumption, Inflammation, Asthma, Hay Fever, Sleeplessness, Difficult Respiration, and Pain in the Chest.

PRICE, 1/6 & 3/-

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

If not obtainable locally, will be posted upon receipt of the price by the SHELDON DRUG CO., 15 O'Connell St., Sydney.

Fig. 6 One of the numerous, perennially popular quack nostrums for respiratory troubles, that geriatrics were particularly susceptible to. O.D.T., April 20, 1907, p.2.
a disease that waxes and wanes in intensity the sufferer would often
credit the quack's treatment with his relief if he had used a drug
or appliance prior to a period of remission. If this latter
likelihood occurred then the sufferer, although only enjoying a
remission of his rheumatism, would become an enthusiastic proponent
for the quack's treatment. Besides suffering from such a physical
debility, geriatrics are often hopelessly lonely individuals,
experiencing depression or, the constant companion of old age; grief.
Such a psychological state made them easy prey, not only to
revivifying tonics, but also to the confidence tricks and energetic,
friendly salesman tactics of quacks.

In brief, the quack's success in making a fortune from his
illegal medical practice lay not only in his own shrewd skill, but
also in peoples' fear and ignorance, vanity and desire for self-
preservation, and their gullibility in attending to the blatant
promises showered upon them by the quack - promises which members
of the medical profession would not dare to give.
Chapter Three:

CONCERN AND DENUNCIATION

"Diseases are not cured by Medicines and Receipts but by a learned, methodical use of them, whereunto Empiricks cannot attain".1

Where nostrum vendors and illegal practitioners were free to roam at large, making their fortunes with bottled cures or simplified lectures, a small pressure group in the community attempted resistance. The medical profession proved to be forceful and vehement in reacting to this aberration of medical care and cure for the sick. They inveighed against the obnoxious practices of the quacks, calling ultimately on Government to put an end to what, in medical eyes, was foul play, disadvantageous to the public and private weal. The doctors' motives for such a strong reaction to quackery were mixed, being a combination of humanitarian concern for the deluded and endangered public; their scientific aversion to quack empiricism; and their recognition of the necessity of safe guarding their own profession.

"Protection for the public against incompetence and fraud", as Dr Cahill claimed at the annual meeting of the Medical Association in 1909 was the dominant motivating factor in doctors' deprecation of quacks. Their humanitarian concern for the health of the gullible public who were inundated by the wily insinuation of the

1. Letter from a physician in London to gentleman in Bath, 1749, quoted in Medical History, April, 1976, p.163.
incompetent medical imposters was central to the doctors' regular and vigorous protests. That the public was endangered could not be denied: indeed the number of recorded invidious side-effects of quack activities made it glaringly obvious. The two main areas of danger can be studied by maintaining the distinction between, firstly, patent medicine quackery, and secondly the illegal practice of medicine.

The danger to which the public was exposed by the selling of patent medicines was often extreme. Since quacks were untrained in pharmacology without a true knowledge of the nature of an ailment, or nature of the action of a particular drug on the human system, their prescriptions often had injurious effects on the clients. One of the more heinous activities of quacks was their production of useless formulas inducing alcoholism and drug addiction, because an indiscriminate use of these medicines containing large amounts of alcohol, opium and cocaine, caused a number of deaths and in inculcation of habits which could ultimately destroy health.2

Pure alcohol was a major ingredient in many of the most common "tonics" stored in the household cupboards to be taken when the baby grizzled or mother felt listless. Products such as "Ferra-Stout" (advertised daily in Otago Daily Times until mid 1907) and "Peruna" contained about 40% of crude alcohol and was recommended for the mother who expected to lie in, to the mother

who was lying in, as well as to the child when it came:

The dose was to be frequent and large, and one could easily imagine the exultation which would follow four or five nips early in the morning.3

Children were especially vulnerable to taking such "thriving" tonics, for there was no better way to lay the foundation of "dipsomania" than to follow the advice the advertisements contained.

Some patent medicines went a stage further than inducing alcohol addition, and here "soothing syrups" were particularly notorious for the high mortality rate in babies suffering from the after effects of the medicines. The advertisements could not be discredited in their claim that babies would soon fall asleep after taking a soporific "soothing syrup"; but with the noxious ingredients of bromide of potassium and mercury, they often never woke up again. The reason for one child's death in Wellington in 1907 was discovered when the post-mortem was held: the child died through starvation from the amount of opium contained in a cough mixture, the action of the opium inhibiting the action of the bowel.4

The detrimental effects of the activities of illegal practitioners who advertised their practices and communicated directly with their clients were varied, but most shared a propensity for being ruinous to the health of the public (fig. 7). Doctors traced many peoples' unnecessarily rapid decline in health to

The TRUSS Can Never Cure Rupture.

The SHERMAN Method Gives Relief in One Minute!

No Operation!

No Detention from Business!

ARE YOU ONE OF THESE SUFFERERS?

If you are, let me throw out a Life-line to you.

Dr J. A. SHERMAN'S METHOD

Will give you relief in one minute! It is the only common-sense treatment known in the world. It has stood the test for half a century and the closest scrutiny of the medical profession. It has lifted men and women from the depths of despair, and made their lives bright and happy. Won't you make full inquiry? Send for two Books. They will be posted to you.

CONSULTATIONS ARE FREE!

HOURS daily (Sundays excepted)—From 10 a.m. to 12; 2 p.m. to 5.
Extra hours—Friday Evening, from 7 to 9.

A. W. MARTIN, 14 High St., Dunedin,
Sole Controller for Australasia.

Fig. 7. A Dunedin illegal medical practitioner attracted clients with his painless, instant cure.
O.D.T., April 6, 1907, p.15.
what they believed to be the insidious practices of illegal doctors.

One effect was that while chasing the therapeutic will-o'-the-wisp, patients were being diverted from obtaining more effective and urgently needed therapy; a problem exposed by Dr Chapple to the members of Parliament as he drew from his own accosting of quacks in the Tuapeka county:

One of the greatest evils of quack treatment is the delay that results in getting sound and curative treatment, when quacks start to experiment on a patient they take away very often the one chance that the patient had of being cured... Let a person with a preliminary pain, or a little lump go to a quack - it means that that person's life is endangered, if not sacrificed, for no quack ever turns a patient away.\(^5\)

A Waikouaiti carpenter learnt this lesson the hard way when he sought treatment from a "very pious, soft spoken" Christchurch specialist for a cancer swelling on his lip (diagnosed by doctors as common epithelioma of the lip). Severe acid treatment was carried out sporadically over eight months which simply aggravated the cancer in its initial stages, so that the glands under the jaw were affected and the cancer growth became "too deeply imbedded for any surgical aid to reach it". Too late the carpenter blamed his gullibility as he lay on his death bed, "a patient in hospital, where I should have come at first".\(^6\)

At other times illegal practitioners found a market in debilitating perfectly healthy folk who were too easily susceptible to glib lies. A particularly brazen set of quacks posing as optometrists illustrated this trait so frustrating to the medical

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profession. Patients seeking treatment with quacks from the "D.B.O.A." (Distinguished Brothers of the Optical Association) invariably came away with spectacles whether they required them or not. Trained doctors were alarmed at some of the resulting cases, such as one neurotic woman who came to hospital wearing a plus cylinder in one eye and in the other a prism, of minus 4 diopters.

She had no eye complaint whatever. She had been told to wear these glasses constantly, and she was trying to do so. The result was the woman suffered giddiness, constant headache and sickness, and was a complete wreck when sent to the hospital by a medical man.

But ultimately quacks were feared and inveighed against because of the evidence uncovered that showed them up to be little better than murderers. Thus in 1906-07 there were at least four deaths in New Zealand caused by illegal practitioners operating. A highly publicised case involved a Christchurch "specialist", Dr Stanton who, after operating fatally on an eighteen year old suffering from diphtheria, was charged for manslaughter "in that administering medical treatment, he failed to have and use reasonable knowledge, skill and care, and did cause the death of said Greaney."

The reasoning and method of the "nostrum mongers" and "empirics" approach to health and disease, or rather the lack of

7. Changes magnitude, given to people with an astigmatism in the defect eye.
8. A prism would move objects to right or left of vision.
11. O.D.T., June 11, 1907, p.5. / August 20, 1907, p.4.
it, was another major element in the doctors' rejection of quackery and their fight against it. In contrast to the scientific reasoning and theoretical practice of trained doctors, the rampant empiricism of quacks looked sadly shabby, if not downright dishonourable.

In the developing scientific medicine of the early twentieth century doctors stressed the necessity of understanding the human body and its functions, using a theoretically based, experimental physiology, pharmacology, and pathology in their powerful array of therapeutic tools. Because of their anti-empirical approach, doctors called for an acceptable theory to be integrated into their experimental work, and where experimental medicine was used it was a "rigorous, systematic, esoteric, scientific discipline" serving as the intellectual touchstone for training and qualification in the profession.\(^\text{12}\). Doctors upheld the belief that their "initiation into the mysteries of basic medical sciences"\(^\text{13}\) provided an insight for the genuine professional far different from that of the self educated quack, so that to the former alone belonged the rights and privileges of treating the sick.

Set against this standard of medical knowledge were the empirical practitioners of medicine: the quacks. These empirics in revolt against rational theories, in flagrant disregard for scientific reasoning, sought to experiment by trial and error alone; believing that one could not "get anything better than practical knowledge".\(^\text{14}\). Quacks openly stated that examinations and a


\(^{13}\) Ibid.

grounding in anatomy and physiology were not a prerequisite for the practising doctor, after all; "medical men are not made by study". Rather than basing their practice on a rational theory, quacks preferred to trust to their own intuitive senses. For instance, one "metaphysician" trusted to his musical ability in ascertaining a heart beat and diagnosing the heart condition; his "highly gifted" intuition here was apparently more reliable than a "good memory of an ordinary practitioner".

Small wonder then when doctors demanded that justice be done in the legal medical world as they reacted in horror to the prevailing ethos of "every man his own empirical diagnostician". Looking to the Government and Department of Health, they sought to free the public and their own profession from an absurd empiricism, a degradation epitomized by one of New Zealand's leading "metaphysicians" speaking before the Select Committee on quackery:

Before entering on a course of practical experiment I was led by observation and reflection to the conclusion that all forms of disease commence in the nervous system.

Doctors were adamant on the necessity for safe-guarding the medical profession against the encroachments of such empirically minded quacks. They feared that untrained, irrational, "arrant humbugs" would, by claiming falsely to be doctors, undermine the professional and scientific standards of registered doctors:

15. Ibid., p. 41.
16. Ibid., p. 43.
17. Ibid., p. 55.
in fact all that the Medical Association stood for by world standards. Articulating its fears most clearly through its Association in its "steadily growing strength, power and influence"\(^9\), the medical profession recognised the danger implicit in the proliferating groups of quacks and did its utmost to weaken the quack influence.

By 1900 doctors were in the continuing process of organizing themselves on a more stringent and elaborate basis as a profession. Especially doctors in contact with the 361 other members of the Medical Association were conscious of the elite standing of their profession, and stressed the necessity of their differentiation from quacks and charlatans. Since 1876, when Pasteur and Koch had proved that a specific micro-organism carried a specific disease, it was scientifically obvious that quacks had no rational basis for their cures. In the following two decades scientists had isolated the sources for a vicious array of diseases such as typhoid, malaria, leprosy, cholera, diphtheria, plague and tetanus. Immunization had appeared and by the 1890s the diphtheria antitoxan had been introduced. Obviously now in the face of developing medical science no honourable gentleman could proselytize his home brewed concoctions on every street corner; at least in the opinion of registered doctors.

But even if scientific discovery had shown them up as contemptible, quacks (males and the high proportion of females alike)

\(^9\) Ibid., November, 1907, p.29.
flourished as the Census records made clear:20.

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Medical Practitioners</th>
<th>Irregular Medical Practitioners</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>134</td>
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</tbody>
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In criticising the fact that all too easily "inefficiently trained practitioners are foisted upon the colony" doctors laid the blame at the door of the outmoded Medical Practitioner's Registration Act of 1869, consolidated in 1908:

The 1908 Act gives really no idea to us of who are our medical practitioners, nor does it afford any assurance that those who are registered do possess the qualifications which should entitle them to practise medicine. Some of those qualifications appearing in the list... are wholly unsatisfactory and insufficient; and it is time that we should now have such a careful examination and scrutiny of qualifications as to preclude the possibility of persons practising here who are not actually qualified by experience and knowledge.21.

The great weakness of the 1869 Medical Act lay in Dr Collin's second point: that the qualifications stipulated for registration were unsatisfactory.22. Many quacks found clause (12) a convenient loophole, for it enabled them to present any foreign diploma with an imposing set of letters (sometimes false) after their name and hence legally to establish themselves as registered...

22. Medical Act, 1869, clause (12), see Appendix.1.
doctors. One such "legally" practising quack was a vexing man, Elmslie by name, residing in Wellington in 1909. Although he was a "disgrace to the profession" the Medical Association was powerless to prevent him from exploiting the public and lowering professional standards, simply because Elmslie held a diploma of "L.S.A." and had duped the Registrar-General into registering him. Thus he had every right to enjoy the prestige of seeing his name appear among the registered practitioners in the telephone list and, as far as legal advertisements were concerned, he was not gulling the public because he was what he claimed to be—a duly qualified "registered" practitioner.23

Another problem outlined by Dr Collins was, that once quacks were legally registered, the Registrar-General had great difficulty in removing their names from the Register if they were exposed for fraud. In 1914 the Medical Register consisted of 1,201 names, but according to the Health Department's working register the total number of medical practitioners in New Zealand was only 690.24 Such a discrepancy could have been due to the presence of quacks who were registered by the Registrar-General, but not recognized by the Health Department, as well as to the number of doctors who had died or left the country.

Even if quacks' names were with difficulty erased from the Register, however, the 1869 Medical Act did not explicitly prohibit them from continuing to freely practise. This defect of

the Act inherent in clause (21) was another cause of the medical profession's unrest. It followed that quacks whether unregistered, registered, or deregistered unrestrainedly set up their practices around New Zealand causing all kinds of medical scandals - such as the fatal peritonitis operation known as the "Dunedin Sensation" of 1906. The negative effect such activity of fraudulent practitioners would have on the credibility and standing of medical science, and on the public's attitude to doctors in general was incalculable. But all the Medical Association could do was to challenge and petition the Government to "help us watch and guard the interest of the profession".

Besides trying to promote a high standard, as they guarded their profession, doctors also sought to improve the economically unsatisfactory state many found themselves in due to the activities of quacks. According to one doctor writing for the Medical Journal in 1908, quacks were contributing to the impoverishment of doctors as they enticed patients away from orthodox medicine or surgery in search of miracle cures. Of course, many of a doctor's original patients would eventually return in a weak or dying state and give "more grist for the medical mill", but often they had been so fleeced by the quack that they could not pay for a doctor's treatment. A common price for a miracle cancer cure would be between £20 - £30 which

25. See Appendix I.
28. Ibid., February 1908, p.27.
represented the wages of many weeks work for folk. In such cases, instead of charging his prodigal patients, doctors often preferred to treat gratis. Thus, doctors felt an ever greater sense of urgency as they petitioned the Government to protect their profession from the competition of quacks.

Another reason doctors considered themselves threatened by the troublesome imposters was on account of the developing strength of the quacks themselves. Joining the trend in New Zealand society of a proliferation in professional associations, quacks of all descriptions were organizing themselves into specific groupings, centralizing their "knowledge", and giving support to each other within their particular occupational spheres. Increasingly quacks were becoming accustomed to thinking of themselves as members of a specific group and realizing the strengthened position that could be gained by taking action through their group institutions. One such organisation was the New Zealand Association of Medical Herbalists established "some time" in 1905 - 1906 whose twenty to thirty members were obliged to pass examination based on "certain text books" including botanic materia medica. In the secretary's own words:

The Association is for the purpose of uplifting our profession and urging every member to make himself as perfect as possible, to help each other, and to diffuse information among members.

By 1908 the Association was even petitioning Parliament to give herbalists the same status as given to pharmaceutical chemists.

32. This N.Z.trend is described in detail in Olssen "N.Z.Society, 1890 - 1940", p.10.
In all that the quacks were doing, whether it was infiltrating into the ranks of registered doctors, or organizing themselves into competing Associations, or depleting the doctors' bank balance, they seemed to be attacking the foundation of the medical profession's status in New Zealand society. Status in New Zealand was above all a "function of wealth and occupation", it was those fortunate or hard working enough to enjoy wealth and high rank through education that were accorded success and respect. If, as they seemed to be doing, quacks undermined doctors' status, then it was imperative that Government support the medical profession in its scientific and general work.

Thus, by the early nineteen hundreds it was clear to the increasingly infuriated medical profession that quacks held too firm a grip over the public's attitude towards health and medicine. It seemed an utterly absurd situation that empirically-minded charlatans possessed a status in the community that could undermine the academically, scientifically trained doctors. But beyond the absurdity of some fanciful concoctions and the facility of people to believe in amazing curative tales, arose the spectre of the hardy New Zealand population endangered and deprived of health by wily quacks. Faced with this possibility doctors realized that the situation could be changed little, and that quackery could not be prevented until the public became less

ignorant and the present state of law, which allowed quacks free rein in amassing small fortunes, was remedied. No organisation in New Zealand society was strong enough to do this other than Government.
Chapter four:

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

"We are seeking to protect innocent people... from swindling and criminal methods pursued by those who have been styled charlatans and vampires".1

New Zealand politicians appeared willing to give ear to the complaints and denunciations of the medical profession - they took careful consideration of what the doctors revealed and strove to act upon their advice. Such a desire of many of the nation's official legislators to deter, and even obstruct the activity of quacks was due to a recent awakening within the Liberal Government of their responsibility to the New Zealand people.

The period around 1900 was a transitional one for governmental policy where traditional, laissez-faire attitudes no longer dominated political thought. Instead, interest was being taken in social legislation. The "welfare state" was lumbering into motion and "God's Own Country" was being acclaimed the social laboratory of the world, leading other western countries in the implementation of progressive programmes of social reform. One of the specific spheres in which the state now desired to take a more active role in the lives of New Zealanders was that of health. Local authorities had failed dismally in their public health duties

as one informed bureaucrat pointed out while discussing the Public Health Bill in 1900:

A state of affairs is allowed to continue which is not conducive to the health or well-being of the people - in some cases things are allowed to happen which are an absolute disgrace.²

The responsibility laid upon the Public Health Department by the 1900 Act³ evinced the general government and public recognition that the state should act through legislation, and a centralizing of administration, to promote the well-being of the nation's citizens if New Zealand was to develop into the most worthy member of the British Empire.

The Government intrusion into the quackery scene, from which was to derive the Quackery Prevention Act of 1908, must be scrutinized within this prevailing sense of responsibility in official circles. Demanding new standards of social rationality, professionally trained men now sought to substitute the alternative and traditional sources of authority, such as quacks, by a bureaucratic control over the health of New Zealand lives. They aimed at centralizing organisations in order to produce greater efficiency in operating the health system of the country. Protection and care for health was now at a premium and new elites of qualified experts believed that social disorders could be diagnosed and cured by the coordination and centralization of the decision making in health procedures.⁴

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3. N.Z.Statutes, 1900, pp.103-158. The Act sought to counter the unsatisfactory state of physical fitness by enforcing sanitation, quarantine, and vaccination regulations.

In the preoccupation of bureaucratizing health care, and rationalizing attitudes to the application of medicine in New Zealand, the conscience of the Government was easily stricken by the rumours of frequent cases of illness caused or aggravated by quacks. Newspapers reported manslaughter charges against quacks, the Medical Association harped on about the increasingly inebriated and addicted population, while the respected Chief Health Officer, Dr Mason needled with his anti-quackery campaign. All such information contributed to the acknowledgement in the House of Representatives that it was a great honour as well as responsibility to protect the lives of New Zealanders. Member of Parliament, Mr Hanan, articulated the prevailing attitude during a debate over the evils of quackery:

"The Government will not be doing its duty... if it does not bring down a Bill to put an end to these contemptible practices, and to protect the lives and health of our people against swindlers and charlatans who prey with impunity from punishment upon the weakminded, the sick and suffering."6

The Government's intervention to protect the nation's health was motivated both by a desire for social "justice" and social "efficiency".7 In the realm of social justice there was a strong element of humanitarianism present in the desire to promote the well-being of society: the deluded public must be saved from their own gullibility and simplicity.8 It was only fair that

5. O.D.T., June 11, 1907, p.5.
7. These terms are used in the context of N.Z.Society in a paper by W.H. Oliver, "Social Policy in the Liberal Period: Social Justice or Social Efficiency?".
8. Thus, one M.P. claimed the Quackery Prevention Bill to be a "humanitarian law"—N.Z.P.D., vol.136-137, p.408.
the ill-informed who had little ability to defend themselves in the face of a quack's guile be safeguarded by the paternalistic Liberal legislation:

We are seeking to protect innocent people against specious frauds... who fatten and grow richer upon the exploitation of credulity, ignorance, and folly.\(^9\)

The arguments of social efficiency were overwhelmingly in favour of promoting public health by the rooting out of the quackery danger. A cluster of developments which underlay the quest for national efficiency was an awareness of a declining birthrate and an anxiety about deteriorating physique. Social policy thus was making "social provision against waste of life and resources and against social inefficiency".\(^{10}\) It was here that quacks appeared to be undermining the very fabric of New Zealand society: one of their most lucrative spheres of business was in bilking folk in the understanding and undertaking of contraception and childcare.

Politicians were fully aware of the demographic revolution taking place in the years 1881-1911 wherein fertility rates were declining and infant mortality rates remained high.\(^{11}\) Owing to the enthusiasm of influential gentlemen the public's attention had been forcibly directed to the "unsightly blot on our civilisation caused by the alarming proportion of preventable infant mortality".\(^{12}\) Politicians, fearing that a declining birthrate meant a declining country, ranged widely over issues associated with the care of the child as they looked at the

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12. N.Z.M.J., August 1908, p.36.
population problem. Children were "an investment in the future" and an asset the State could not afford to neglect.

The Government used two main channels while seeking to combat the declining birthrate. First it supported Sir Truby King and the Plunket Society in their persuading young women to fulfill themselves in the rewarding role of motherhood, and then joined the attack on the quacks' business racket of contraceptives, or "preventatives" as they were more commonly referred to.

Quacks were one of the major sources of contraceptives at the turn of the century and it was commonly acknowledged that the low birthrate was due to the prevailing use of these "preventatives". One politician went further, stating that the use of contraceptives would increase the number of "weaklings" who had "escaped these efforts that have been employed to prevent their birth". Women had easy access to the numerous quack pamphlets circulating information - ones where diagrams of the womb and instructions of how to insert the "preventative" would be printed. As long as quack information and appliances, or oral contraceptives abounded, bureaucrats feared the future of their strong, pure Anglo Saxon

13. "Motherhood is woman's exclusive profession, the highest of all callings for which a woman may qualify". Sir T. King, quoted in Olssen, E., "The Plunket Society and its Ideology, 1907-1942", p.25.
15. Ibid., p.414.
16. A Napier paper was the source of such an advertisement, Ibid., p.406.
race was in jeopardy, and so realized that:

We must set ourselves to do the best we can to check the consequent extinction to which modern civilizations are tending.\textsuperscript{17}.

The high infant mortality rate was exacerbated by the more deadly quack medicines mothers faithfully used in accordance with advertised instructions. Doctors were keeping the public informed about the danger of "soothing syrups",\textsuperscript{18} and from other sources had come rumours of suspicious "baby farmers". Such was Minnie Dean of Winton who, when caring for babies, would kill them by dosing with "Chlorodyne", "Neill's Cholera", and laudanum when they were restless or grizzly. The post mortem of at least one of her "adopted" babies revealed quantities of morphia in the kidneys, in addition to morphia and meconic acid in other organs. As a doctor in this court case of the 1890s pointed out, laudanum should not be given to children except under medical supervision: the drug was too dangerous for nonchalant use when one grain of opium was sufficient to cause the death of a twelve month old child.\textsuperscript{19}.

Where "soothing syrups" did not cause death, they could still cause a weakening of the "stock of the country", as MacKenzie the Waikouaiti Member of Parliament put it in true farming phrase.\textsuperscript{20} Politicians were warned that addiction to the drug or alcohol content of quack nostrums inferred a steady debilitation of

\textsuperscript{17} Legislative Council, Infant Life Protection Bill, 1907, quoted in Olssen, E., "N.Z.Society", p.9.
\textsuperscript{18} See above, p.40.
New Zealand youth, and unless the country was rid of this invidious attack on its well-being, it could not be guaranteed a strong, healthy population in the future.

Overtones could be heard here of the obsession with social darwinism that prevailed in early twentieth century thought. It was believed that in the "struggle for existence" nature provided that only the best competitors in a competitive situation would win. This process must lead to continuing improvement, and so politicians wondered how the Anglo-Saxon race could ever retain its "superiority" if irreparable damage was done to the physique of its youth.

Social darwinism theories also influenced concern for the morality of New Zealand folk - morality being an integral part of the respected Anglo-Saxon character. It was doubted whether youths' sense of virtue was strong enough to stand when beset by the offensive suggestions that permeated quack literature of sexual orientation. Mr. Hanan was one respected gentleman who articulated his wish to do all in his power to save youth from moral pollution in a politely reserved Victorian manner:

I do strongly protest against the publication in papers of advertisements dealing with subjects which I have no desire to mention more specifically - hononary members will understand what I mean. 21.

Here he was obviously referring to those advertisements, usually cloaked with secrecy, which would announce to Young Men and Ladies: "don't consult doctors or chemists" but instead

told them to send for a free book "concerning yourself". Immoral" circulars seemed to encourage an obsessive interest in the urogenital organs of the body, such as one published by Freeman and Wallace which addressed itself to men whose whole penile arrangement was small and suggested a sort of pump in order that the organ might be made larger. Dr Mason objected to the many circulars that asked questions which seemed to require a young fellow to masturbate himself in order to answer. For the sake of the nation's moral standing, and the character of its evolving environment, all such disgusting literature and its authors had to be removed.

In the quest for national efficiency and improvement, politicians at the turn of the century also argued that the State simply could not afford widespread poverty. They were receptive to the ideas of contemporary British economists who accused poverty for being detrimental to the State, precluding as it did all effective participation in society. Solely from the economic vantage point, health and welfare programmes were essential in society to ensure the upgrading and preserving of the "productive capacity of the workforce". It was this very workforce whose money was being drained away by quacks charging £20 for a cancer cure, or £10 for advice to young men on sexual ailments. The poverty of one working family of eight whose forty year old mother

24. Ibid.
was dying of phthisis was exposed by the Medical Association: the labourer husband earned two guineas a week from which he paid 14s. rental, leaving 28s. for food and clothing. This meagre amount was further decreased by a quack's worthless petroleum emulsion bought for the wife at 3s. and 5s. a bottle - a serious item out of the weekly wage. It was such senseless prodigality that Findley, Attorney General in 1907 inveighed against:

> The money wasted every year in this colony upon quacks of the most detestable kind is simply appalling - I administered the Post Office of the colony for a short time and I had brought before my notice the enormous sums passing from this colony every year to feed those rascals who are preying on the vice and superstition of the people.

Clearly New Zealanders must be safeguarded from this state of ignorance and alarming propensity for reckless spending of wealth - if not for the nation's physical and moral health, then at least for its economic stability.

Prior to 1906 when the Quackery Prevention Bill was first introduced into Parliament, the Government had already sought to curtail the quackery evil in New Zealand. The method of reform had been twofold along legal and educational lines.

A number of suggestions were incorporated into the educational approach to combat ignorance. Dr Mason, Chief Officer of Health led the crusade of informing the public, as he lectured to public meetings in the main city centres. By exposing the

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27. Findley, quoted in O.D.T., August 24, 1907, p.7.
scientific and medical facts on appliances and miracle cures he hoped to sensitize the public to the fallacies of quack claims. Well might his audience laugh as he described the working of an electric belt, but he was lecturing for a purpose other than for an evening's entertainment. 28.

Realizing that quacks enjoyed a field day amongst the adolescents of high schools, 29. Dr Mason also desired to deliver lectures in school gatherings. If he himself could not attend the numerous assemblies such a scheme would demand, the duty must devolve on the headmaster to explain in decent language the technicalities of human maturation and health, and to warn his pupils against the offensive tactics of quacks. 30. Dr Mason's ideas were obviously linked closely to those of Sir Truby King who emphasised the responsible role schools could play in this sphere:

Sexual precocity and sexual irregularity present great difficulties in any civilization which regards self control as essential in early life. Every conscientious master/mistress of a school recognises this as the greatest of their cares and responsibilities. 31.

Dr Mason also organised the Department of Health to publish analyses of the formulas of patent medicines in his plans for education of the public. By publicising these the Government hoped to clarify the fact once for all that the nostrums were inordinately expensive for the worthless ingredients they contained. If a client knew from analyses that "Doan's Backache

28. Dr Mason's lecture quoted, O.D.T., August 23, 1907, p.3.
29. see above, p.34.
Kidney Pills", which claimed to "cure every form of kidney ills, contained only the following ingredients surely he might be prevented from investing 2s.9d. on the box of 40 pills:

- Oil of juniper . . . . . . . . . 1 drop
- Hemlock pitch . . . . . . . . . 10 grams
- Potassium-nitrate . . . . . . . 5 grams
- Powdered fenugreek . . . . . 17 grams
- Wheat flour . . . . . . . . . 4 grams
- Maize starch . . . . . . . . . 2 grams

From the legal aspect one early move had been the insertion of a clause into the Offensive Publications Act of 1892 after the turmoil caused by Downie Stewart's investigations where he had bought some of the dark and mischievous activities of quacks out into the open. This clause had outlawed sexually orientated advertisements from New Zealand newspapers and magazines, and henceforth all such literature was blacklisted and gazetted by the Post Office. This legal move helped clear many of the city papers and Dr Mason confidently asserted that New Zealand newspapers were "now perhaps the cleanest in the world". But that was not necessarily a strong vote of confidence in New Zealand literature. Many fallacies were still published, despite a spontaneous decision after 1900 on the part of newspaper editors to delete from their columns the most delusory advertisements and

32. see fig. 5, p. 25.
34. see above for description of "activities" p. 8 For the Act, see N.Z.Statutes, 1892, p. 294, clause 5.
"curb the scoundrels in their cruel work". It had to be admitted in Parliament that any legal effort had as yet been unsatisfactory and further action aimed at quack literature was necessary:

The poor people who are suffering from cancer, consumption, and other terrible scourges of our civilization, when they see these atrocious advertisements in the newspapers still really believe that these villains can do them some good.

The Public Health Act of 1900 had given fresh impetus to Government supervision and control of quackery, both directly and indirectly. Indirectly, while seeking to improve and regulate medical services, provision had been made for the removal of persons suffering from infectious diseases to hospitals - hopefully out of the clutches of quacks and miracle cures. At other times, medicine and disinfectant were given freely to the poor who otherwise might have been tempted to use quack remedies. The new full time salaried officers working under Dr Mason were an important link in the chain of bureaucrats exposing quackery, and enabled a closer watch to be kept on the nation's gullibility in the realm of medicine, as well as in that of drainage and sewerage.

Directly, the Government in clause (101) introduced a potential threat to patent medicine quackery by stating that the Minister of Health could at any time be empowered to inspect the ingredients of nostrums and prohibit their sale. For the first

39. Appendix II
time the Government was making quacks wary in the anticipation of a legal and dangerous interruption to their business.

The potential threat became a stark reality when in 1904 the heavy hand of Sir Joseph Ward fell upon the profit making nostrum vendors in a major effort to legally combat the "nefarious trade". In the November Gazette Ward, on the authority of the 1900 Act, required that patent medicine vendors legibly set out their ingredients on the package. The violent reaction to this legislation spotlights the prevailing attitude of those involved in the quackery scene - particularly the mercenary attitude of quacks that the Government was contending with.

Purely commercial arguments were used to oppose belligerently the regulations, culminating in the threat that:

If the regulations are enforced it is almost certain that the proprietors of certain medicines would withdraw from the New Zealand trade rather than disclose their formula.

The quacks reasoned that indication of their secret formula, which "had involved a great deal of hard work and expense" would damage their business; that interference with their British trade meant "manifest injustice to drug importers", and that already the regulations had thrown trade into a state of unrest.

It was estimated, and here the Government trembled, that besides the loss that small commercial enterprises like boxmaking would suffer together with the related industries of advertising

40. K.Z.Gazette, vol.II, November 3, 1904, p.2697, see Appendix III
contracts and printing, customs revenue would drop £7,000 per annum; and expenditure on advertising would drop by £30,000.\textsuperscript{42}

With such pressure being exerted by vested interests the Government meekly revoked the regulations in June 1905: obviously motivated by thoughts of social efficiency as opposed to social justice.

However, many within the Liberal Government, including Sir Joseph Ward himself,\textsuperscript{43} were to regret that as Minister of Health he had given way to the pressure and manipulation of quackery interests. The spineless attitude only encouraged the indignation of concerned parties inside and outside Parliament: an indignation that in 1906 culminated in the introduction to the House of Representatives of the Quackery and Other Frauds Prevention Bill.

The Bill was to take two years to be debated over, redrafted, and renamed, until in its completed and emasculated form of 1908 it presented New Zealanders with some means of protection from the fraud and skull-duggery quacks had subjected them to.

The Bill sought to eradicate quackery by means of purging New Zealand newspapers and circulars of all quack advertisements, in the hope that the public would thus no longer be defrauded into wasting their savings on worthless remedies, or duped by the professional looking titles of unregistered practitioners. The difficulty met by Mr Hornsby, the Member of Parliament who introduced the Bill, in carrying through his desired reform shed

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p.14.

light, not only on the ignorance, but also upon the emotional attitudes of many politicians towards quacks - their hidden fears and prejudices. The first debate extended over more and more hours of recrimination and disagreements as many a politician stood up to describe his personal experience, good and bad, of quackery.

Public response was just as dramatic, and the Bill received a wide coverage in city and rural newspapers. Here was a matter that bore directly on people's private lives, on their faith in "mother's old remedies", and their practical experience of sickness and health. The Tapanui Courier in support of the Bill was quick to blame the stone-walling of the Bill on politicians for their "personal reflections" in haggling over apparent trivialities and definitions. 44.

Elsewhere in New Zealand, it was the doctors who were accused of promoting self interest and preventing the public from receiving remedies which were "very useful, far better than the doctor's prescription" in order "to heap up riches for a close profession". 45. Such intense opposition of some individuals often seemed to be motivated by "anti-establishment" feelings, rather than any fervent belief in the efficacy of the quack's claims.

Inveighing against the "very close guild of the medical fraternity", they detected behind the professionals' obstruction of quackery a coverup for the perpetuation of a doctor's own power. The quacks,

44. T.C., October 3, 1906, p.3.
now "victims" of the establishment in the free Dominion must now be championed.

Many folk, however, were irritated by the Bill, simply because they objected to the threat of their own quack heritage being tampered with:

So every mother, good old grandmother, or friend who tries to alleviate the suffering of her child by administering the use of something which has been proved serviceable in thousands of cases is "an unregistered practitioner"... Everyone who having heard of Sandaw's treatment and has his appliances in his possession... is "an unregistered practitioner", mirabile dictu - And we are told we are not in Russia.47.

Back in Parliament, 1907, the vociferous declarations had reached no grounds of agreement over what exactly constituted the dangers of quackery, and how serious these were, so a Select Committee was established to investigate the rightful claims of all amateurs and professionals involved in the quackery scene.
As an assortment of quacks moved through astute probings and cross examination incriminating themselves by ignorance; as Dr Mason produced medical and scientific facts and figures, analyses of patent medicines, and chilling descriptions of quack techniques, the committee was left in no doubt that legislation to quash the social evil must be undertaken.

Finally by October 1908, after compromises among politicians, and yet more amendments to add clarification to the Bill, it was judged to be a "workable measure". Even if, as Mr Massey complained, the House was "substituting a new Bill about four times

47. Letter to Editor, O.D.T., August 20, 1907, p.3 / see also October 9, 1907, p.5
the length of the original", the sense of urgency underlying procedures propelled the Quackery Prevention Bill on to the New Zealand Statute Book. With a sense of relief the nation's legislators anticipated "clean" newspapers, healthy children, and burgeoning national life, hopeful that they had "put a check on the worst class of roguery now going unpunished in New Zealand".

49. Quackery Prevention Act, N.Z.Statutes, 1908, see Appendix IV.
"Knaves there will always be, and fools, and therefore, pseudo-medical deception." 

Hopeful the legislators of the Quackery Prevention Act at first might have been, but no one was satisfied for long with the attempt at reform; no one was at ease, unless it was the quacks themselves.

The medical profession was wary: precious little had been accomplished for registered doctors' protection, and even the public was not safeguarded from the dangers that doctors had exposed. Many in the House, including Sir Joseph Ward and the Act's originator, Mr Hornsby, feared the Act to be so ineffectual that this "harmless dose for quacks" was "milder than a dose of salts." Since the politicians themselves took little pride in the Act, soon realizing its weakness, very little reference was ever made in the Health Department records. The only mention the Act received in the Annual Reports of the House was the uncomplimentary remark of Mr Fowlds, the Minister of Health, after the passing of the Act:

No one is foolish enough to imagining that quackery and fraud can be stopped entirely.

Obviously the Act was not sufficiently drastic considering it

dealt only with control of fallacious quack advertisements,\textsuperscript{4} and did not aim at curbing the activities of the suppliers of false medicines and appliances. Only people directly involved in newspapers and publishing firms would be liable for prosecution under the Act.\textsuperscript{5} Only superficially had the insidious quackery been arrested. Any perspicacious onlooker could agree as early as 1908 with one disillusioned bureaucrat: that the Act "will have the effect that Holloway's pills and ointment have on people - it will not do much good, and certainly it will do no harm."\textsuperscript{6} The premonitions were to be proven correct. The popular demand for trusted and familiar nostrums was to be amply met by quacks, still safely screened from prosecution.

One of the most disappointing aspects of the Act was the frustration of its major method of combating quackery - that of cleaning out from New Zealand circulars any offensive literature by which so many people were led astray. In this respect the legislators had underestimated the sly methods of quacks, or perhaps overestimated the righteousness of the press. Dr Mason himself had been confident that although some newspapers still contained advertisements these would not be reinserted in the columns once the contracts had expired.\textsuperscript{7} But contrary to this opinion, the familiar advertisements of false statements recurred long after the 1908 Act as is evidenced by Table 4's comparison of the average number of advertisements

\textsuperscript{4} Appendix IV, Clause (2)
\textsuperscript{5} \textit{Ibid.}, Clause (2), (5)
\textsuperscript{7} \textit{A.J.H.R.}, 1907, p.10.
appearing every second month of Otago Daily Times in 1907 and 1913. Obviously newspapers and publishers found the pecuniary gain too rewarding to adhere strictly to the Act, and continued with impunity to gain money under false pretences. The President of the Medical Association had several indignant words to say over the apparent hypocrisy.

How they (the newspaper publishers) reconcile it with their high standard of public morals, I have not yet heard explained. 8.

The ineffectiveness of the Act was due to the shrewdness of quacks and the fact that the Act itself was not stringently enforced by the authorities. Unscrupulous promoters of pseudo-medical wares proved their ingenuity and agility to adjust to the new demands of law. They teased and exasperated the Law and Post Office by finding devious means of carrying on their trade in cure-alls and remedial appliances. One common method of evasion was for a quack, when his name was black-listed by the Post Office in the Gazette, to change his name, explaining to his clients in a letter that "because his reputation was so great he asks New Zealand patients to send letters to another address and inscribed to another name"; or else he explained that "because his New Zealand clients were so numerous, he had determined to administer his business from Sydney"; 9 by settling in Australia the quack found it a simple task to bypass the New Zealand Post Office.

TABLE 4. A comparison of the average monthly numbers of quack advertisements for different ailments appearing through every second month of 1907 and 1913.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diseases for which medication advertised</th>
<th>Average number advertisements/2nd month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Medicine - 'cure-alls'</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair tonic</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonics</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female ailments</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piles</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowel disorders*</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rheumatism</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patent foods</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* including digestive upsets
When a situation demanded enforcement of the legal aspects of the Act, difficulties arose so that often no prosecution could take place. According to the Statistics of New Zealand in the years 1908 - 1918 not one soul, publisher or quack, was committed, apprehended, or convicted for offence against the Quackery Prevention Act. The problems arose because the prosecution had to prove, to the satisfaction of a magistrate, that the claims made for a particular remedy were false. This would be extremely difficult especially if the defence was able to produce pathetic and convincing and often extraordinary testimony to the contrary, or witnesses claiming some benefit from the remedy.

There was no doubt that if a quack was prosecuted he would be supported by a formidable array of satisfied clients prepared to travel miles to exonerate him of any blame of harming the public health. Some witnesses were bolstered in their defence by a belief that their quack was a genius, ahead of his time, who had hit upon a cure of which the medical profession was ignorant. Such devoted enthusiasm for the quack and his miracle remedies was demonstrated by a farmer and his brother from Balclutha who in 1907 journeyed to Christchurch to give evidence for the quack Stanton. George and Crawford Anderson had been convinced of Stanton's exemplary medicinal skills, having earlier that year been cured by him: George's ranula and the cauliflower growth in Crawford's ear had both diminished remarkably quickly after

11. For description of manslaughter charge brought against Stanton, see above, p.43.
12. A cystic tumour beneath the tongue.
Stanton applied a secret remedy. When such evidence exonerating quacks was presented, medical men may have scoffed, but no jury would treat it in a light manner, as one medical journal explained:

The medical expert may say that the testimonials must be altogether mistaken as to the causes which had produced the benefit. Yet the people of that class (giving testimony) are competent to give evidence or to act as jurymen in cases of murder and will be believed by the average judge and jurymen more than the medical "expert".

With the unwillingness of publishers to eradicate quack literature, and with difficulties of prosecution if the imposters were traced, quackery continued to flourish with as little impunity after 1908 as it had enjoyed previously. With advertisements of quack cures still being promoted by circulars it is hardly surprising that the public demand for miracle cures continued with the supply remaining correspondingly high. Despite having analyses of formulas available to be read, and being warned of the gross discrepancy in the worth and price of nostrums, the public remained as gullible as ever.

Evidence of the high demand was seen in the huge and expanding demand for "Lane's Emulsion", one of the commonest of household remedies listed in the Gazette regulations of 1904. The Emulsion had so increased in popularity in the eight years it had been on the market (after all - it was advertised daily in the Otago Daily Times) that the Lane Medicine Company in Oamaru planned to open a new factory for the manufacture of "Lane's Emulsion" not long after the passing of the Quackery Prevention Act itself.

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13. Interview - Dr Moana Gow, the daughter of Mr Crawford Anderson, May 26, 1980.
15. O.D.T., April 16, 1908, p.8.
in 1914 also boasted of the herbalist Thompson whose "Eczema Cured!" proclamation attracted many folk in the pre-war years: 16. Skin problems would be a thing of the past if the public was willing to pay a handsome sum.

Indeed, by 1912 the habit of paying exorbitant prices for treatments had become entrenched in the public's consciousness. Few had paid attention to warnings, and the Medical Association could do little to stop their patients from being "gulled both through their pockets and their health". 17.

Amongst quacks and their clients electrical treatment cures were still as popular in the second decade of the century as in the first. One quack set himself up in World War I as an eminent authority in medical electricity, adopting the title of "Professor" and claiming to cure everything by electricity. The only medical experience he had received was as a porter in hospital for a week during an influenza scare. 18.

However, it was cancer therapists, whose irascability was proving how ineffective the government response had been, who caused the concerned public greatest apprehension. An interesting advertisement from the columns of the New Zealand Times, 1911 testified to the prevalence of this particular avenue of irregular medical practice:


17. N.Z.M.J., August 1912, p.229, The latest finding by the Editor of the N.Z.M.J. in this sphere had been that quacks charged 2s per dozen for pills, while the same from medical sources would cost 1s 6d. per dozen.

18. Elliott, J., Quacks and Quackery, p.8.
CANCER
And its Cure. A Home Treatment and No Retention from Business. No Knife. No Pain. All who have tried STROOPAL will tell you so. Indisputable testimony. Sufferers from Cancer, Ulcers... and Kindred Ailments should write for a Free Copy of book entitled "Cancer and its Cure". Please enclose 1d for postage. Sole Agent for N.Z. W.H. COLMAN, Benefield Street, Wanganui East.  

Thus, advertisements for cancer never changed after 1908, and neither did the treatments offered by quacks. One cancer specialist was still at work in World War I using the old "cure" of applying strong caustics which had a burning, corroding action on the tumour, similar to the acid treatment that had been widely publicised and denigrated by the Otago Daily Times in 1907.20.

Yet, despite frequent warnings, many desperate folk neglected advice and chose to take long courses of treatment. One expensive "cure" undergone by a woman with a fibroid tumour in 1911 consisted of "pastilles" which caused a daily discharge of blood, clot, and eshar: supposedly the tumour was coming away.21.

It was discouraging, but true, for the medical profession that the brisk demand for quack treatment continued unfettered, and that many varieties of quackery still abounded. The numbers of irregular medical practitioners had increased since the Quackery Bill was first introduced, as the 1911 Census made clear:

20. See above, p.42. The theory was that the caustic "brought away pieces of skin; these pieces were collected as the "tumour" - one that had been cured without operation". - Elliott - op.cit.p.9.
TABLE 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Medical Practitioners</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irregular Medical Practitioners</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irregular Medical Practitioners</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A summary of the deteriorating situation was given by one President of the Medical Association as late as 1922:

The Quackery Prevention Act of 1908 which was introduced for the purpose of protecting the public, might also have expected to help the G.P. But it has not done so, for quackery is more rampant than ever. It is a curious fact that in spite of the advance in medicine, and its evolution in recent years from an empirical profession, quackery is still on the increase.23.

Doctors had done their part in supporting Government action to curtail advertisements of quackery practices prior to 1908, but the problem of countering the charlatan practitioners' activities which interfered with the medical profession was as great as ever, and still unsolved by Government after the 1908 Act. While doctors watched cancer specialists, electricity faddists, and spiritualists proliferate, the government inaction infuriated them: obvious from the consistent anti-quackery themes that ran through Editorials of the Medical Journal and Presidential Addresses to the Medical Association.24.

By 1910, having been provoked for too many years, members of the Medical Association unanimously resolved that "immediate steps

23. President's Address, N.Z.M.J., April 1922, p.87.
24. e.g. N.Z.M.J., March 1912, p.4 / 1914, p.45.
be taken to bring about an amendment of the Medical Practitioners Registration Act of 1869".25. In demanding action the doctors were indeed seeking to safeguard their own profession but it was strongly believed that such a law "would be far more in the interests of the unwitting public".26.

It was not until 1913 that Government was stirred into action on behalf of registered doctors, and politicians undertook to "provide for the properly qualified medical attendance of sick people who desire the services of a registered medical practitioner".27. But by this time the Government's lethargy, and the corresponding energy of quacks, had aroused another group affiliated to the medical profession, "masseurs", better known today as physiotherapists. They had long been aware of the injurious effects quacks had on clients when using electrolysis techniques of massage, rollers,28 and other deadly appliances. Masseurs' demands were announced before Government in 1914 in the wake of the doctors' registration provisions in the words of a Bill:

...to safeguard the public against those using, if not bad methods, methods which might be injurious; and it would help the public to distinguish between those who had been properly trained and those who had not been so trained.29.

25. For discussion of the feeble Medical Act which, according to Dr Mason had been "framed almost entirely for the protection of the people who were committing frauds", see above p.47.
28. See illustration, fig.1.
In the flurry of World War I and subsequent turmoil within Parliament no notice was taken of the Masseurs' Registration Bill, and as little debate as possible was spent on the Medical Bill. Opposition to the latter was minimal. Perhaps the rude shock many politicians received from hints that the youth were not as physically fit for war as expected, had reinforced the lurking fear that the nation's health was precarious and in need of protection.

The main force of the Medical Act in obstructing some of the most cherished pretences and screens of quacks lay in its Clause (3) authorizing the setting up of a Medical Board before which all doctors or quacks must be examined, and recognized by, before registration. Nuisances like Elmsie would have little chance of fooling the Board of six doctors and Inspector General with his fraudulent representation of his "L.S.A." as he had the Registrar General previously. In their meticulous interrogations and examinations of medical scientific knowledge to ensure that the applicant met with the more stringent qualifications required by Clause (8) of the Act the Medical Board would be wary of fancy titles and an elaborate string of diploma letters. Moreover, the Act made a new provision for the removal of any practising doctor who was guilty of any "grave impropriety or infamous conduct in any professional respect". Such a clause neatly fitted

30. Callon, Lyn., B.A.(Hons) dissertation, 1980 - Early in W.W.I. 30% of volunteers were not accepted on the basis of medical reasons.
32. See above p.48.
33. Medical Act, Clause (22:1) op.cit., p.398.
characters like Elmslie, who were already legally registered before the 1914 Act and enjoying the profitable trade of quacks' worthless or deadly cures.

With the passing of this Act the Medical Association and Government had made one last major attempt to protect the lives of New Zealanders from quackery. The instigators of this social reform now had to wait and see if the law could be effectively enforced, or more practically, if the public was perspicacious and strong willed enough to counter the shrewdness and strategems that quacks would, in all probability, still employ.
CONCLUSION

For all the regulations and acts passed in New Zealand during the first two decades of the twentieth century, it appeared that they were not powerful enough to loosen the grip of quackery on the public. Strategies of protestation, persuasion, education and regulation had all been used by men of responsibility seeking to free folk from fear and ignorance of, and vulnerability to, the wiles of quacks: yet for some reason still the vexation persisted and the enthusiastic use of unproved remedies flourished briskly.

Perhaps this reflected a fetichistic instinct, or a primitive craving for the supernatural latent in man, that exerted its dominance in the face of all attempts to expose quacks and their therapeutic fads. Despite the sophistication of Victorian culture and education, the quackery-prone minds of New Zealanders could not seem to be moulded to accept and act rationally on the evidence of doctors and politicians who blamed quacks for fraud and perfidy. Whatever legislation might be enforced, or information communicated, the basic attitudes of New Zealanders did not change: in their desire for painless cures and instant health, warnings fell on deaf ears.

The realm of quackery exaggerated various facets of New Zealand society at the turn of the century. Thus the trend towards new standards of social rationality, which emphasised the necessity of professionalism and a growth in bureaucracy, was caricatured by the proliferation of quack Associations; meanwhile the quack's drive to raise their own social status intensified an already prevalent social attitude.
Likewise the disturbances and denunciations that quacks excited by their practices, exaggerated the distrust and fears that previously had been lurking in the mind of the public. Fears of racial and social degeneracy had become more strongly entrenched, as well as the phobia of the effect of a disintegrating morality. But, at the personal level, New Zealanders were now encouraged to look at each other distrustfully in extremist shades of black and white, where "vampires" fought the "simple innocents", or where devoted friends were being banned by a "conspiracy" of vested interests. This perverted sense of the power of others to harm or protect one, and an excessive inner sense of one's own vulnerability persisted with the childish and illogical form of magical thinking.

It appears that it was the inherent irrationality of the public mind (attuned as it was to the salesman-like techniques of nostrum vendors, and attracted by the lustre of miracle cures), that allowed quackery to be so successful in New Zealand. Such irrationality raises the question of what solution could possibly have been forceful enough to resolve the danger and protect the public from its own recurrent, instinctive gullibility. Should the legal and educational action undertaken by officials have been adjusted, or been supplemented, in order to effectively help the public to change its attitudes and thus curtail quack activities?

In retrospect, it would seem that the efforts already made by Government and medical profession had been pertinent to the New Zealand quackery scene: in 1908 officials had been correct in
identifying the potential danger of advertisements; and likewise in 1914 officials correctly recognised the paucity of regulations surrounding registration of the medical profession. But the new Acts, if not tightened, at least had to be more stringently enforced in the future if quackery was to be curtailed.

Likewise the Public Health Department's design of consumer educational campaigns had been noteworthy, but the continuing success of quackery demanded a more powerful effort from the media to educate the ignorant. Everyone, from schoolchildren through to the senile, more than ever needed to be presented with factual, accurate information about health and the quacks' false, extravagant claims.

There were still those in society, however, for whom the quack provided emotional security, and no solution had yet been found to help these folk. Perhaps politicians realised it was outside their sphere of influence to help the emotionally unstable, and that these peoples' unconscious but powerful psychological needs would best be met by registered doctors. It was now surely up to the doctor and paramedical services to take a realistic, active approach when discussing an illness with patients. It was their responsibility to offer positive medical care and explain the ineffectiveness and even dangers of quack nostrums. In the long run, the vulnerability of the New Zealand public to quackery would be crucially dependent on how effectively the administration and availability of medical services would meet the patients' physical and emotional needs.
APPENDIX I

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS REGISTRATION ACT, 1869
(New Zealand Statutes 1869, p.169)

Clause (12) Every person now or hereafter possessed of any one or more of the qualifications hereafter described shall be entitled to be registered...

... Any person who has passed through a regular course of medical study of not less than three years duration in a school of medicine or surgery and has received after due examination from some university, college or other body a diploma degree or license other than those before specified entitling him to practise medicine or surgery whether within Her Majesty's dominions or not.

Clause (21) If any person shall have procured himself to be registered by making or producing or causing to be made or produced any false or fraudulent representation or declaration either verbally or by writing or if any person not entitled to be registered shall have been registered or if any registered person shall be or shall have been convicted of any felony or misdemeanour in Great Britain or Ireland or in any of the British Dominions the Registrar-General and Registrar respectively shall erase the name of any such person from the Register and such erasure shall be notified by the Registrar-General in the New Zealand Gazette.
APPENDIX II

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1900
(New Zealand Statutes 1900, p.105)

Clause (101) The Government may from time to time make regulations for any purpose for which in his opinion they are contemplated or required by this Part of this Act, including,

1) The inspection and analysis of drugs, chemicals, and patent medicines.

2) Prohibiting the sale and providing for the destruction of such drugs, chemicals, patent medicines as are adulterated.

3) Requiring the ingredients of patent medicines to be disclosed at or prior to the sale thereof.

4) Imposing penalties not exceeding £50 for any breach of the regulations.

APPENDIX III

GAZETTE, 1904, vol.II, p.2697

Clause (1) All patent medicines imported into or sold or offered for sale in the Colony shall be required to have the contents with their exact proportions legibly set out in English upon a label affixed on the bottle, box, or container. In addition to such information, where such medicines contain one or more of the poisons scheduled under "The Sale of Poisons Act 1871"... the words "this contains Poison" must be marked in clear medium-sized block type upon the label.
APPENDIX IV

QUACKERY PREVENTION ACT, 1908
(New Zealand Statutes 1908, p.127)

Clause 2. Every person commits an offence who publishes
or causes to be published any statement which
is intended by the defendant or any other person to promote
the sale of any article as a medicine, preparation, or
appliance for the prevention, alleviation, or cure of any
human ailment or physical defect, and which is false in any
material particular relating to the ingredients, composition,
structure, nature, or operation of that article, or to the
effects which have followed or may follow the use thereof.

Clause 3. A statement shall be deemed to be published within
the meaning of this Act if it is inserted in any
newspaper printed and published in New Zealand, or is publicly
exhibited in view of persons in any road, street, or other
public place, or is contained in any document which is
gratuitously sent to any person through the Post Office or
otherwise, or which is gratuitously delivered to any person
or left upon premises in the occupation of any person.

Clause 5. If any person causes any statement to be inserted
in breach of this Act in a newspaper printed and
published in New Zealand, the printer, publisher, and
proprietor of that newspaper shall severally (and without
excluding the liability of any other person) be deemed to have
published that statement in breach of this Act, and shall be
liable for an offence against this Act accordingly.
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