CHARLATRY OF MEDICINE AND MEDICAL COLLEGES

BY

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Compliments of DR. C. F. CONRAD.

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INTRODUCTION

Regardless of the fact that most of the text in this unique book was first published by Harry T. Brundidge, a very versatile, energetic Reporter, in the St. Louis Mo., Star, a widely read Newspaper, we believe it will be of considerable interest to the profession, both drug and drugless.

The Book shows fully that Charlatry in the profession is not confined to the "Drugless" profession, as is the general belief.

We earnestly advise all Practitioners, regardless of "Cult" and "ism," to not only read this, well written Book, but keep it in their archives.

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CHAPTER I

Adox Begins Story of His Corruption of American Medicine

I am the man who was characterized as the clearing-house of the national medical diploma mill frauds. The definition was correct, for I have made, or have helped to make, hundreds of doctors of medicine and surgery.

In admitting my guilt, I accept full responsibility for my deeds. I did not fall from the brink of honesty while walking in my sleep, neither was I lured from the paths of righteousness by persons less worthy than myself. I poured the mold at high noon, with my eyes open and after due deliberation. I, alone, am to blame!

I realized then, as now, that I was doing wrong and that the only excuse for my conduct was a desire to make money as easily and quickly as possible. I was insensible to conscience in those days and had come to believe that the moral sense was influenced only by fear. I was convinced that Shakespeare was wrong—that cowards made conscience and not that conscience made cowards. I had no scruples against selling medical diplomas to unqualified persons, for I had persuaded my-

self to believe that such diplomas were but bits of paper and that the persons who made it possible for the holders of the diplomas to ply their trade were responsible for what happened and not I. No still, small voice kept me awake at night.

But when I became entangled in the meshes of the net which justice threw over me, that still, small voice, drugged these many years, revived and made itself known.

My outlook on life in the beginning was clean and wholesome, for my old grandfather, a Baptist preacher, had instilled worthwhile thoughts in me, but back in the eighties I found it expedient to administer an anesthetic to my conscience.

What He Learned As Salesman

I had been employed as a salesman by a corporation which manufactured and sold school books. I soon learned that money played an important part in assuring sales. I gained much knowledge in the art of handling county superintendents, members of the boards of education and other persons upon whom I called in connection with sales, and very soon became an expert salesman.

It took but a short time to ascertain that most people who would scorn a bribe would gladly accept a loan, or a gift. I soon regarded bribery as a legitimate proposition and eventually came to the conclusion that graft ruled the world.

There was every reason for this conclusion.



Competition was keen and money was being used by all book salesmen. I never offered bribes, but the transaction usually constituted bribery, morally if not legally. I would call on the secretary of a board of education and explain my mission, informing him that I was anxious to have him introduce me to other board members and to recommend the purchase of new books. I would always suggest that inasmuch as the secretary was a busy man that he permit me to pay him for the time spent with me. Thus, you see, I paid for the "time" and not the "influence" of the individuals who assisted me.

I recall a specific case. I wanted to put new books in a certain large school. If successful, it would be a big stroke for me, so I went to the town, made inquiries and found that the principal of the school, who could recommend or refuse the purchase of new books was building a new home.

I had a casual acquaintance with the principal, a fine, high class gentleman, so I made an appointment with him. Our conversation, after the usual exchange of pleasantries, was something like this:

"How about putting in new books this fall?"

"Nothing doing."

"Why?"

"Because the people raise hell every time a change is made."

"How's your new house coming along?"

"Just fair."



Money for Loan Available

"Well, we've been friends for a long time and if you should need anything, let me know. I've some money that isn't working and I'll be glad to make you a loan."

"Say, that's nice of you. I could use a little."

"I'll be glad to arrange it. By the way, what about those books? Can't we put in new geographies this fall, new spellers in the spring, and so on?"

"That's a good idea. We'll do it. If we give it to them in broken doses they'll never kick about it."

I gave him some money, not a great deal, of course, and took his note. He recommended the purchase of the books and I made the sale. Then I tore up his note—nor did he ever make any effort to pay it. Putting it bluntly, the principal accepted a bribe and did for money, what he would not have done otherwise even though it were the right thing to do. But he covered his conscience with an ointment which was his knowledge that it was only a loan. Probably, when the moral sense of duty awakens him in the night to taunt him with the cry that he was once bribed, he salves it by telling himself that he must get in touch with R. Adcox, the book salesman, and take up that note. So thinking, he goes off to sleep again.

Man at best is but a weakling who can find all manner of defense for his weaknesses. It has



ever been that way with me, and today when I try, I can find an excuse for every act of moral turpitude.

All this is but a prologue to my activities as a seller of fraudulent educational credentials and medical diplomas. The knowledge I had gained while selling school books, the friendships made. and the obligations under which I had placed many persons, were to be assets of my questionable business later. The county superintendents who had accepted small sums of money from me for their influence, and the principals of high schools who had accepted loans, were to be twisted into my new enterprises. These things were realized later, of course, for when I entered the old Barnes Medical College in St. Louis in 1906, I had but one idea, and that was to become a doctor of medicine. I knew nothing of the money that could be made in supplying them.

The Need for Certificates

During my second or third year at Barnes, along in 1907 or 1908, there was some talk among the students that the school did not rate very high with state boards or medical examiners. A number of students, who were in the freshman year, decided to leave and enroll at St. Louis University. Most of them needed better certificates of preliminary education than they had and there was a lot of talk about how such certificates could be obtained. A number of the students went out to St. Louis County where they were examined by



W. T. Bender, who was then county superintendent of schools and those who passed the examinations were given certificates which were accepted at a great many medical schools as the equivalent of a high school diploma. Those who obtained the certificates were enrolled at the St. Louis University, for Bender's certificates were acceptable anywhere, as he was known as a very strict examiner.

A day or two after the Bender examinations I was conversing with a group of students. A freshman who had never been near a high school turned to me and exclaimed: "Say, Ad, I'd give \$50 for one of those Bender certificates."

Fifty dollars! That gave me an idea. How could such certificates be obtained for students who were not capable of passing the examinations and obtaining them honestly?

How many students were there in the college who would pay for such credentials?

I saw an opportunity and decided to take advantage of it.

I began to investigate to ascertain how, by trickery or fraud, such certificates could be obtained and that was the beginning of my activity as a seller of bogus degrees—a career which was to turn loose upon an unsuspecting public hundreds of ignorant medical charlatans.

Later in the day several students called me from a class room.



"Bender is going to have another examination tomorrow," one of them exclaimed.

"Good," I answered, "I've got a plan. You fellows meet me in the morning and I'll give you your instructions. If it works, and I know it will, we won't worry about certificates."

CHAPTER II

Tricking Old Professor, Put Class Through Hard Exams

Men seldom pause to consider the ultimate cost of ill-gotten gains. Such profits are only temporary, for in the end one pays for his folly. Whether in cash, in the loss of friends, honor and self-respect, or by forfeiting freedom, one is sure to pay. Justice always finds a way of balancing the scale.

Like all others who had fallen before me, I believed I was the one man smart enough to outwit the law. My system was perfect. Nothing could go wrong. I was too cunning. Then at the even-tide of my career, at the age of 63, when I was planning to retire, the long arm of the law reached out and jerked me to my senses.

I have paid, I am still paying, and expect to continue paying for my debt to society, legal and moral, is a huge one.

So it was that when I saw an opportunity to make some of the so-called easy money by supplying ignorant students with certificates of preliminary education, I did not pause to debate what the ultimate cost might be. I took advantage of the opportunity.

The students at Barnes Medical College met me the next morning in accordance with my instructions, as told in my opening article yesterday.

"Here's the plot," I informed them. "We will all go out to Clayton and enter the examination room. Sit as close to me as you can and I'll size up the situation. When I determine the plan, I'll write it to one of you, and you can pass it on."

We went to Clayton and I met W. T. Bender, the county superintendent of schools, who was to give the examination. It took me less than two minutes to determine that Bender was an honest man. No, he would not have a cigar. No, he could not accept an invitation to lunch. Yes, he gave a very strict examination and he included all branches of high school work.

Bender's son and daughter assisted him by remaining in the examination room as monitors. As Bender passed out the lists of questions I saw that they were written in long hand and learned a few minutes later that he always penned them himself. Then he announced that all lists of questions must be returned to him with each examination paper. I pretended to write an examination but, in truth, was busy trying to devise some scheme to beat Bender. You must remember that this was my initial experience. The boys who had gone out with me sat at their desks. eyeing me anxiously. None of them was smart enough to answer Bender's questions. thinking fast, but I'll admit, I was worried. Finally I wrote a note, rolled it into a little ball,



and passed it to one of the boys. He read it, nodded his head, and passed it on.

What the Note Said

My note read: "Don't take exams. Get as many of the lists of questions as you can and put them in your pockets. Go back to Barnes at noon."

On the way back to the college we checked up and found we had several complete sets of questions. I had forethought enough to ascertain the kind of paper Bender passed out to the boys, and I bought a large supply of it. During the next few nights I had the boys write examination papers. I dictated to them the answers to Bender's questions, giving each a different phrased answer. To each of the papers I attached one of Bender's original lists of questions to comply with his rule. Bender held examinations every Saturday and Monday, so on the next Saturday morning I called my boys together for final ininstructions.

"Put your examination papers, which you have already written, in your pockets," I told them. "Go on out to Clayton and sit in the examination room. Pretend you are very busy, and keep writing all the time. It doesn't make any difference what you write, but keep busy or he might catch on. When the examination is over, take the new lists of questions, which he will pass out, and put them in your pockets. When he collects the examination papers, hand him the ones you have



in your pockets. Be cautious, and don't forget to bring me back the new questions."

The plan was as smooth as ivory. Bender, aged and honest, had no idea of what had been taking place. He graded the papers in good faith and in forwarding certificates to my boys was thoughtful enough to pen each a little note of congratulation on the high grades made! I did not feel conscience-stricken about what I had done. To the contrary, we had a laugh about it. I was a smart fellow, the defender of the ignorant, the champion of the poor boy who wanted a medical license!

I was immensely pleased with myself, and charged the boys only \$15 for my services.

I continued tricking poor old Bender for a long time. Each group of students, after writing the examination in advance and handing in old questions, would bring to me the list which Bender had passed out that day so that I always had a supply. As the questions were in his own writing, he never suspected he was being tricked. I never charged more than \$15 for my services and in those days, on occasions. I obtained certificates for poor boys who were working their way through school, without cost to them.

When the American Medical College of St. Louis was reorganized I was called to the office of a physician who was interested and who said: "Doc Ad, you have had a great deal of success in handling the preliminary educational matters for students both at Barnes and at the American.



We are bringing about a reorganization of the American and I would like to have a contribution from you. In return, I'll see to it that you handle the preliminary qualifications for our students."

Got Concession for \$200

I gave \$200 and for that sum purchased the preliminary education "concession" of the college, just like a pickpocket in the old days bought the privilege from a big circus of robbing the crowds. I was warned, as a matter of course, that there must be nothing dishonest in my transactions with the students and that all must obtain their qualifying certificates through strict examinations. I had other ideas on that matter.

In those days, as now, every student in a low graded medical college was in need of high school credentials. Those who had been graduated from high schools enrolled at the better class medical schools.

All this talk we have heard about the Class C medical school being the only hope of the poor boy who seeks a medical degree is rot. The low grade schools are the only hope of those not qualified to enter first class colleges—the hope of those who wish to cheat and buy their way to a degree. Poor boys can, and do, work their way through the Class A medical colleges.

As my business grew I found it necessary to make new alliances. There were large numbers of students who could not pass the examinations



given by the county superintendents of schools which entitled those who made passing grades to the certificates which were accepted as the equivalent of high school diplomas. I looked about for a superintendent who would not be too strict and finally found one who had accepted money from me for his "time" back in the days when I was selling school books. He lived in a small town near St. Louis.

My experience convinces me that persons holding office in the small towns and rural communities are much easier to bribe than city persons. It probably is because they are so poorly paid.

This superintendent agreed to issue certificates for my boys by "verification." "Verification" was a nice word, and it kept the superintendent from being dishonest.

This meant that I would supply the boys with faked credentials of any kind or character—affidavits, usually—and that I would present such credentials to the county superintendent. It was his job to make inquiry and verify the stuff we presented, after which he would issue one of his own certificates to replace the data I supplied. It worked well. I would offer the affidavit, or whatever we had prepared, he would look it over, toss it in the waste basket and issue a nice legal certificate.

I paid him \$10 for his trouble, and charged my client \$15 more for mine. Thus the superintendent made money, I made money and the boys got in school. Everybody was satisfied and the



superintendent was convinced he had done no wrong, and taught his Sunday school class with regularity.

Some people can convince themselves that their dishonesty isn't dishonesty at all, and with very little effort. That is why graft and bribery play such an important part in our national life.

Inquiries from Other Cities

Business continued to expand. I made deals with more county superintendents, and before long I was receiving inquiries from students in other cities. There was and still is a big demand for educational credentials of every variety gotten by any means whatever.

One of my big problems at this particular time was in supplying credentials for older men who were then enrolling in medical schools, having felt the urge to relieve suffering humanity. The truth was, of course, that the news was spreading that almost anyone could get through a medical college. These older men, for the most part, were without high school training and the majority had been regularly employed up to the time they enrolled. Some even retained their jobs after enrolling. Consequently, it was necessary to obtain high school certificates for them that would date back to the days of their youth. None of the superintendents I was transacting business with had held their jobs long enough to back date more than a few years at most.



Lies have short legs and even with my surgical skill at lengthening such legs, we were afraid to take too big a chance with these older men. If we made it appear they had been attending high school or night school only recently someone might investigate. So it became necessary for me to find a county superintendent who had been in his position consecutively for a long period of years and who would be willing to cheat for a price. Such a man could date back his certificates and take care of my older men.

I had heard of a superintendent over in Indiana who had been on the job for a long number of years, and I decided to go and talk with him about supplying me with credentials. I boarded a train for his city, but, as I neared the town I began to grow nervous.

What I was planning to do was to walk into the office of a state official, a man I had never even seen, and offer him a bribe!

The thought unnerved me and for a moment I seriously considered giving up the plan. By the time the train pulled into the station, however, I had regained my courage and in a short time had arrived at the door of his office. As I entered he looked up sharply. My immediate mental picture was that he was honest.

Suppose I offered him a bribe and he called the police!

Without any indication of the impression my arrival had made, he asked, "What do you want?"



CHAPTER III

Finds Bribery Easy and Develops His Diploma Mill

The Indiana school official's abrupt greeting sent an icy spasm up my spine, and I felt a distinct urge to retreat. No amount of blandishment or monetary enticement would tempt that old gentleman to fall from his high estate, I was convinced. He was a living personification of righteousness and the mention of smart-money by me would bring the police.

Again, as his cold eyes focused themselves upon me, he demanded:

"What do you want?"

"I am Dr. R. Adcox of St. Louis," I began.

"What of it?" he interrupted.

"Nothing, but you see—"

"But I don't see, damme. What do you want?"

"Patience, old man," I began, as my courage began to ooze back. "Don't get excited. It's bad for your blood pressure."

"Sit down."

"Thanks. 'Now, Mr. Gruff, your ear for just a minute. I'm interested in assisting medical students to matriculate in certain colleges and—"

"For a fee, I suppose?"

"Exactly."

"Well, what's your proposition?"

I looked about the room and I suppose my eye fell upon the door, for he said:

"Go ahead, there's nobody behind the door."

"Can you use a little extra money, legitimately earned, of course?"

"You mean easy money. It ain't earned legitimately, either. But go ahead—of course I can use some."

That old fellow would have done anything for money. I believe he could have been employed for an assassination.

I outlined my proposition and he accepted. I offered him \$15 each for certificates. He held out for \$30. We compromised on \$25. I gave him the names and dates of several students and we fixed up the papers at once, dating some of the certificates back as long as fifteen years. It was agreed that in future I would send him the names and dates by mail and that he would fix out the certificates and mail them to me, but in the end he supplied them in blank. I always sent him duplicates so he could keep his files in order and answer any questions that might be asked.

Clients All Over Middle West

Business continued to grow and I had clients all over the middle west. I had a heavy traffic in credentials with students of medical institu-



tions in Missouri, Illinois and other states. In those days I could have seen the handwriting on the wall if I had but reasoned with myself, for a man's brain is a true prophet if he cares to use it. But I did not stop to ponder.

At one time I learned I had a competitor, a student who had decided to make some smart money himself. He had made a deal with a county school superintendent and was underselling me. I at once complained to college officials that my concession was being enroached upon; that a student was poaching. The student was informed that I had paid \$2,000 for the preliminary education "concession"—ten times what I really paid—and warned to stop or leave school. He decided that he wanted to be a doctor, so I took over the county superintendent he was doing business with.

One of the money-hungry superintendents who had accepted the "mess of pottage" which I had offered to appease his appetite lived in Southeast Missouri. He had a lovely wife and a nice home, but was himself a worthless fellow. I could obtain from him "certificates of anything." He would give me grades for students in Spanish, German, Latin and other subjects of which he knew nothing, always swearing that he had spent three days examining each student. Every now and then he would come to St. Louis and indulge in a big spree. On each occasion it would end with his coming to me to borrow money. Always in debt to me, he supplied any number of certi-

ficates and all he got out of it was the occasional spree, which, of course, was expensive.

There was another fellow, an official in a high school, who was always in need of money. Many times he would come to my home and say:

"Ad, I've got to have \$100."

"What now?" I would inquire.

"House rent. Will you loan it to me?"

"Nothing doing."

"Tell you what I'll do: I'll give you five state certificates and a high-school diploma."

"Make it seven certificates and two diplomas and the century is yours."

Always he started by asking for a loan; always he wound up by offering credentials, in blank, of course. We acted like a couple of horse traders, but in the end we were both satisfied. The stuff he gave me didn't cost him a dime, except for the printing, and I turned it over to students at a good profit.

There was one county superintendent of schools who got a great deal of my business. He was a peculiar fellow. He insisted that my students report for examinations; but regardless of how dumb they were, they always obtained certificates.

Only \$5.50 Per Examination

I never paid him more than \$5.50—which was regarded as the legal fee—for each examination. But I had no agreement with him that he was to pass every applicant. I suspected, however,



that he realized I would bring boys out only so long as he passed them, and he was trying to salve his conscience by conducting the tests. This thin veneer eventually wore off, however. I had taken twenty-four boys out to his place and he had directed them to their seats, passed out paper and distributed the lists of questions. Then he came to me and said:

"Listen, Ad, I've got to go out in the country. You look after things, run the examination for me. There's a typewriter and some blank certificates. Fill them out yourself. Write in the grades—what you think they ought to do—and when I return tonight I'll sign them."

When he returned and signed the certificates, I told him it was time to put a stop to the burlesque; that I had long since realized he was not grading the papers and that it was useless to bring the students out there for a pretended examination.

Laughing, he agreed. I paid him for the students who had been there that day and then suggested he give me a batch of blank certificates. He signed the blanks and we took them to a notary public, who attested the signature and stamped his jurat on each. And for that violation of the law the notary got 25 cents per certificate!

That was the last of the examinations. Thereafter I bought the blanks in large quantities, sending duplicates to the office of the superintendent for his file. The same notary also at-



tested them. Not long after he signed the last batch he died, although I did not learn of this for a long time, and so it was that I was selling certificates signed by a dead man.

It was about this time that I received a telephone call from a young man who stated that his business was urgent. I'll never forget it, because it certainly provided me with a thrill. I invited him to come out to my home.

"Doctor," he began, after seating himself in my living room, "I'm from Chicago. Dr. Smith sent me to you. I'm in trouble. I've got to get a different certificate of preliminary education, and I've got to get it quick. I've got to be back in Chicago in the morning. If you can fix me up I'll give you \$100."

I questioned him to convince myself that he was a medical student, and then, going to my desk, took out a certificate, filled in his name, age, address, grades and other data which he asked for, and handed it to him. He folded it and placed it in his pocket. Then, pulling back the lapel of his coat, he displayed a star and said:

"You're under arrest."

CHAPTER IV

Blackmailer Gives Me a Scare and Almost Gets \$1,000

"You are under arrest!" This statement from the young man to whom I had just given a forged high school certificate, the young man I had believed to be a medical student in need of high school credentials, brought to me, for the first time, a realization of the seriousness of my crimes. Like all others, I had fed my own ego until I believed I had raised myself above the law. But now, face to face with an emissary of justice, my courage crumbled. I shuddered at the thought of being held up before the public gaze as a man who had assisted ignorant young men to medical degrees, and had visions of a day when I would change my identity for a number.

Though still calm, to all appearances, I was, in reality, deeply agitated. Turning to my accuser, I asked:

"With what am I charged?"

"Bribery, forgery and perjury."

"Have you a warrant."

"No, my job was to get the evidence, which I have in my possession," he said, touching the spot

where he had placed the certificate. "But," he added, "the warrant will be issued shortly."

"Isn't there some way I could square this?"

"I don't know how it could be done."

"Do your superiors know you have a case?"

"Well, not exactly."

"Could you use \$500?"

"I might use-a thousand."

I breathed a sigh of relief.

"If you'll go to the bank with me, I'll-"

I was interrupted by the doorbell, which rang loud and long. I responded and, as I opened the door, I expected to see a squad of policemen rush in. But instead of the expected officers of the law, arriving to reinforce the man already within, it was a young friend from a medical school. As he came into my living room he looked at the man who had placed me under arrest, and to whom I was getting ready to give a thousand dollars.

"Well, Sol, are you getting ready to come back to school?" he asked of my visitor.

What Did He Mean?

Sol? Back to school? What did my friend mean? I looked at the officer, who scowled, but said nothing and then suspecting a trick, I turned to my friend and asked: "Do you know this man?"

"Know him? Why, of course, I know him. He was out at school for a few weeks last spring,



but quit to go east. Went to Boston, didn't you, Sol? He's o. k., Doc, and if he needs anything fix him up."

I smiled and answered: "Sol seems to be badly in need of a thousand dollars, and I was about to fix him up. But you've changed my mind for me."

Like a beaten dog, my accuser was edging toward the door for, just as my courage had oozed from me when he told me I was under arrest, so did his now depart.

"Wait," I ordered, grabbing him by the coat. "Give me back that certificate. Now get out of here, you dirty little blackmailer, and if I ever see your face again—"

My friend was astounded.

I was so pleased with the sudden turn of this affair that I presented him with \$50 because of his timely arrival. I warned him at the same time to say nothing of the occurrence, realizing full well if the news were broadcast that sooner or later some other bright chap in need of funds would attempt a "shake down."

Now the moralists, with whom I have no quarrel, will assert I should have learned a lesson from this experience and will point to a score of reasons to prove their contention. Their theories will be purely academic, for they have little or no knowledge of the brain functions of the average man who lives just within, and just without, the limits of the law.



The penitentiaries are full of men who are planning, not how they can reform, and walk the straight and narrow pathways when doors swing open for them, but how they can improve upon old systems, and beat the law.

So it was that when the momentary danger had passed my courage returned and my ugly visions vanished along with that temporary realization that I was engaged in wrongdoing. When a man drives out fear he usually drives out conscience. The truth is that I did learn a lesson from my experience, but the lesson was that I must improve my system, not mend my ways.

You can put a man in prison and force him to live right, but no matter where you place him, no matter what you do to him, you can't make him think right!

I learned not to transact business with strangers. My transaction with the would-be blackmailer was the last time, save one, that I had any dealings with a stranger. The diploma mill probably would be working at capacity speed today, and I probably would have never told my story, had I not dealt with the second stranger.

He Grows More Cautious

After my experience with the would-be blackmailer, all persons who applied for assistance in obtaining educational credentials, but who did not come well recommended, were forced to undergo the formality of an examination. I ar-



ranged with several of my county superintendents of schools to give what we called, "dumb-bell" examinations to prospects who were not properly vouched for. Under this system, we made the prospect believe that everything was done in accordance with the statutes, although we saw to it that all who were examined were granted certificates.

The "joker" was in the list of questions, because all were based on the studies of children in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Would you believe that a great many of those who were examined under such conditions would have failed miserably if their papers had been graded? Yet those same "students" were successful in medical schools, made their grades with ease and eventually, became licensed doctors!

As time passed, and as the volume of business increased, there was a demand for credentials issued by county superintendents of schools in Kansas. Many men were coming to St. Louis from Kansas to attend low-grade medical schools and they believed the board of medical examiners, before which they would eventually appear, would not suspect high school credentials issued in their home state. So I set about to ascertain how I could obtain the credentials.

I knew that a school in Kansas City had a considerable number of students from Kansas and I knew, too, that the majority of such students had to be supplied with high school qualifications.

I went up to Kansas City, called on the head of the school and explained the situation to him.

"I can get all the Kansas certificates you want for \$25 each," he informed me.

I never met the source of supply, but he was an old man who had been out of office for a long time, and he had to date back his examination certificates. Whenever I needed one I sent the date to the Kansas City school proprietor, along with the \$25 fee and within a few days I would receive the certificate.

I experienced no difficulty in making arrangements for Illinois certificates. I merely called on one of the superintendents with whom I had done business back in the days when I was selling school books, explained my needs, and agreed upon a price. I got his certificates in blank and filled them out as I needed them. In later days, after prohibition, I could take a quart of whisky with me and get him to sign as many as twenty-five at one time.

People who drank to excess were always easy to handle, much easier than those who did not touch the stuff. Personally, I never learned to drink. My grandfather, the Baptist minister, had taught me that while whisky was good for him, at his age, it was very bad for me, at mine.

For a long time my business had been devoted to obtaining high school credentials. I had not dabbled in diplomas, nor in medical credentials of any character. Then one day I received a letter from Chicago. It read:



"Dear Doctor Adcox: I have heard a lot about your work in St. Louis. I think perhaps we can get together. Anyway, I will be in St. Louis Tuesday, and will call you on the telephone at 10 a.m. One of your young friends has given me your phone number."

The letter was signed by Owen T. Owen, who was, as I knew, a seller of diplomas in Chicago.

CHAPTER V

Future Master Mind of Ring Applies to Him for Certificate

Ralph A. Voigt, who was brought to public attention by The Star as the "master mind" of the diploma mill conspiracy (in his own opinion at least) came into my office at a time when the "ring" was in the making. I testified last week in the state's action against the St. Louis College of Physicians and Surgeons that I had a written agreement to supply students to that school. regarded this contract as a master stroke and never gave a thought to the fact that it was, in reality, paving a road for me over a long, tortuous route, which might end at the gates of a prison. In those days I had my own ideas of right and wrong and believed, sincerely, that the only persons who did wrong were those who were caught and convicted.

Under the provisions of this contract I was to receive 50 per cent of the tuition fee paid by each student I took to the college, less the laboratory fees which had to be paid by freshmen and sophomores. The tuition fees were \$125 for the freshmen and sophomore years and \$150 for the

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junior and senior years. The laboratory fees which were deducted from my split amounted to \$25 for each freshman or sophomore. Thus it can be seen, I made more money in handling juniors and seniors and, consequently, produced an abundance of students who had had two years' training, "in some other college."

The Voigt who stood on my porch that morning, hat in hand, seeking a favor, was not the "master mind" of 1923. I read the note which he brought from Owen T. Owen of Chicago, and inquired what I might do for him. "I need a high school certificate," he informed me.

It developed that Voigt had some credentials showing he had attended Chicago medical colleges for a couple of years, but to me the credentials looked like the handiwork of Owen T. Owen. I fixed up a certificate for him—the one which is now in the files of the Missouri State Board of Health.

Later Voigt obtained one of the bogus Potosi High School diplomas, which is now in the records of the Tennessee State Board of Health, having been used by Voigt in obtaining a Tennessee license.

Still another high school certificate, equally worthless, is to be found in the records of the Texas State Board of Health which body also gave Voigt a license to practice.

He Makes Use of Voigt

After I had prepared the certificate for Voigt



I told him that Owen in his note, had referred to him as a live wire.

"I guess I know my eggs," Voigt answered.

"Perhaps I can use you.

"How?"

"If you come in contact with any students who are in need of credentials, or if you know any persons who would like to become doctors, bring them around to see me. I'll give you a slice of the profits."

Voigt said he would be glad to represent me and that afternoon I took him out to the P. and S. college and enrolled him.

Soon after making the new arrangement at the college I informed Owen T. Owen of my contract.

"Send all the business you can, on a fifty-fifty basis," I told him. He sent scores of students to me.

Letters of inquiry began pouring into the college. News was spreading that "things are easier than ever." These letters—feelers, most of them—asked about the requirements, tuition fees and the rating of the college with certain boards of medical examiners. These letters were turned over to me.

I never bothered with writing to the "prospects."

I would send a telegram to each individual, informing him that I would call in person within a few days. Then I would go to the towns from which the letters had been received.

This work took me all over the country. I



visited New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Hartford, Richmond, Jacksonville, Birmingham, Memphis, New Orleans, Houston, Forth Worth, Dallas, Kansas City, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Denver, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Omaha and dozens of other cities. In most instances those who wrote to the college were men who had some money, but no education. In nine cases out of ten they were individuals who wanted to take a short cut to a medical degree. All of them had learned that this was possible through friends who were traveling over the "short route." As soon as I established that the prospect was honest—that is, that he was not trying to trap me—I would ask:

"So you want to become a doctor?"

"I do."

"What credentials have you?"

"None."

"Did you go to high school?"

"No."

"Do you want to put in a full four years at medical college?"

"No, I can't do that. My friend is getting through in two years, and that's what I'll have to do, if I go."

"How much money have you?"

"How much do I need?"

\$800 for the "Whole Works"

"Well, your tuition fees for the junior and senior years would amount to \$300. Your high



school, freshman and sophomore credentials would cost about \$400 more. Say \$800 for the whole works, and I'll pay my own expenses."

"Will I be sure to receive my diploma?"

"I'll personally guarantee that."

Sometimes I would take the prospect back to St. Louis with me. If he could not leave at once, I would arrange to meet him in St. Louis at a later date. Upon his arrival, I would have the high school certificate and the credentials for his freshman and sophomore years already prepared. Of course, I always took a deposit to cover the preliminary costs at the time the deal was made. After giving him his instructions, warning him to keep his eyes and ears open and his mouth shut, and to study day and night, I would take him out to the college and enroll him.

Now and then some of the smart young men demurred to Chicago credentials. "I can't say I've been to school in Chicago, I've never been there and I might get caught up. Can't you fix it for me so I can say I put in my four years at one school? I'll pay for the cost of doing it."

In such cases the record books of the college were made to show that the young man already had put in two years at the school and was just starting his third year. Other students received him on the third year basis, without question.

I have heard groups of students, gossiping in the corridors, discussing things which had happened at the college the year before, and telling their versions of the incidents when, as a matter



of fact, not one of them had been in the institution the previous year!

The demand for credentials of every character steadily increased. I found it necessary to seek new confederates and to make new alliances. It was about this time that Frank J. Kenney, alias T. J. Kenny—"Kenny the Versatile"—put in an appearance. Although I did not know it, Kenney was just out of prison!

CHAPTER VI

Tells How He Exercised Care in Making Use of Mails

I found Dr. Frank P. Young at the Jonathan Club, one of the most exclusive clubs in Los Angeles. I gave him my card and informed him our college (for I had begun to feel it was part mine) had received for matriculation a large number of students from his Pacific Medical College.

"What of it?" he asked.

"Nothing, except that upon talking to these students I found that none of them had ever been in California.

"Interesting," he commented.

"Exceedingly so. Now, if there is anything doing—"

"Just what do you mean, sir?"

"If credentials are to be obtained—well, I'd like to do business with you, direct."

We got down to brass tacks and within ten minutes we had reached an agreement. It was a profitable visit, too, for I arranged for the purchase of credentials on a scale which was as follows: Certificates for freshman or sophomore year, \$25 each; for junior or senior year, \$50 each; diplomas, \$75. Dr. Young and I agreed upon a type of letter to be used by me in making application for credentials or diplomas. The text of one of my letters to Dr. Young follows:

Dear Doctor: John Smith, as you will doubtless recall, was a student at the Pacific Medical College from October, 1909, until June, 1912, at which time he should have been graduated.

However, at the time of your 1912 commencement exercises, Smith, who was in very bad financial circumstances was in arrears in his tuition fees.

Not having the money with which to meet his obligations at the school his degree of doctor of medicine was withheld from him.

Smith has decided to take up the practice of medicine and he will greatly appreciate if you will, at this date, forward his diploma.

I am enclosing a check to cover the amount which Smith owes the college.

Of course, John Smith had never been in the college, had never even been in the state of California, but the diploma was sent to me soon after my letter reached Dr. Young. If I wanted credentials, I would state in my letter that my client had attended the Pacific Medical College during the years for which the attendance certificates were desired.

I had been very careful at all times in transacting business of this nature, but with business



steadily increasing I was even more wary. I gave little thought to the matter of state laws, knowing full well that in Missouri and many other states the sale of a medical diploma was not a violation of the law. But I was careful of what I put into a letter, knowing then, as I do now, that Uncle Sam is very particular about the use of the mails.

The diplomas of the Pacific-Medical College were very beautiful and I found a big demand for them.

Osteopaths and Chiropractors Buy

I sold hundreds of these degrees to osteopaths, chiropractors and others of the drugless healing fraternity. Most of the chiropractors wanted them for office decorations and to enable them to use the letters "M. D." after their names and on the doors of their offices. Most of the osteopaths wanted the diplomas to use in enrolling for "post-graduate" work at low-grade medical institutions, knowing full well that after completing their courses that new diplomas—the paper of an existing school—would be issued to them upon the payment of an additional fee.

There are in the United States today some three or four thousand persons who have been "graduated" from the Pacific Medical College, an institution which NEVER HAD a GRADUAT-ING CLASS:

The "mill" was now grinding its grist at top



speed and educational credentials of every kind were available in almost any state in the Union. I had broadened the scope of my work among the county superintendents of schools and had been successful in "reaching" a number of high-school principals and professors, so that I now could obtain real, honest-to-goodness high-school diplomas. These men, of course, demanded fancy prices for fancy work, and I obtained such credits for the few who were willing to pay the price for stuff no board of medical examiners would think of questioning.

I now had on my list educational officials in Missouri, Kansas, Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Washington, the District of Columbia—in fact, I had them from Maine to California and from British Columbia to Cuba. Low-grade medical colleges throughout the country were having capacity enrollments and I arranged for an exchange of credentials with most of them.

With business booming, runners were now appearing on the scene representing the various low-grade medical institutions, and there was a constant fight for students. The bars had been thrown down and anyone who had the price could enroll and be assured of receiving a diploma. Those who did not care to attend school for a year or two could get a diploma by paying the tuition fees and a little extra.

Quack schools sprang up overnight and drugless healers—after it became known that few



states required such healers to obtain a license—appeared in countless droves, each with his little diploma and the box containing his magic healing system. Fads and "isms" of every known variety flourished. I distinctly remember that one chap in Chicago (and the American Medical Association will vouch for the truth of this statement) went so far as to organize a "True Musical Therapy College" and to sell a course of lessons in musical therapy, along with a beautiful diploma.

Music A Cure for All Ills

His bizarre theory was that with the aid of a piano which, quoting from his own literature, was "thoroughly in tune, having high-quality strings," it was possible to produce vibration rates corresponding to the chemical elements. From his literature, in circulation at that time, I read:

"Take, for instance, mercury and chlorine and strike the keys of a well-tuned piano corresponding to these chemicals on the key chart—D in octavo two and B in octavo seven, as marked—and after a few seconds a sensitive person will respond with a noticeable flow of saliva in the mouth. Keep the keys sounding for a few moments and it will start a bowel action."

The possibilities in treating stomachache, soft corns or smallpox by playing the piano seemed, according to this man's own statements, unlimited.



Yet that man actually sold his course of study and his beautiful diplomas!

Another Chicago doctor who started an equally bizarre "cult" sold so many diplomas that he had funds with which to purchase a number of buildings and today lives on his income.

I recall that on one occasion a white-haired gentleman came to my home, introduced himself, presented a letter from a mutual friend and calmly informed me he would like to have a diploma as a doctor of divinity of the Spiritualist faith. I told him that, while something of a magician when it came to making doctors, I was, unfortunately, not in touch with the spirits and could not produce for him.

But I must have been in touch with the spirits after all, for that very afternoon Mrs. Adcox and I went to a circus and, dropping into a side-show, stood face to face with "The Great and Only Madame Guesso, World's Greatest Spiritist, Thought Reader and Mystic!

The madame had an exhibition of her degrees and decorations, and, as this was in my line, I looked them over. One of the first things I saw was a beautiful "Certificate of Ordination" of the "First Spiritual Church of the City and County of San Francisco, Cal." This was surrounded by about nine dollars' worth of gilt framing. Two gold seals with blue ribbons and a whole flock of signatures vouched for the authenticity of the document. Knowing that I was leaving in a day or two for San Francisco on a business trip, and



recalling the visit of the old man who wanted a D.D., I made a note of the name "Rev. Dr. Cutting" which was on the diploma as secretary of the church. I made up my mind to call on the reverend doctor, not knowing that within a few days after my arrival in San Francisco I, too, would experience the sensation of "going through the mill."



CHAPTER VII

Prominent Doctor Asks to Get Diploma for a Girl

Arriving in San Francisco I transacted some business which had to do with the sale of medical diplomas and then found an opportunity to look up the Rev. Dr. Francis R. Cutting, whose name I had seen on the diploma of the woman mystic in the circus side-show. I finally located him across the bay in Oakland, and called at his home. I knew he was a "wise guy" the minute I laid eyes on him and as I wanted to find out just what his racket was, I introduced myself, told him I had heard of his remarkable psychic powers and desired to have my fortune told. It's an odd fact that every crook is anxious to have a first-hand look at the other fellow's game.

Now it must have been that the spirits were playing truant for they were not on the job when the Rev. Dr. Cutting read my mind. As he closed his eyes and transplanted himself beyond the mystic curtain, no confiding shade whispered that all was not as it seemed, and that Dr. Adcox had not called to learn what the fates had in store for him. When he recovered from his trance, I told

him he was a most remarkable reader and admitted that I, too, being something of an occultist was deeply interested in spiritual phenomena.

"You should become a missionary," he said.

"Do you really think so?"

"I do, indeed. The spirits have informed me that it would be a great work for you, and I believe we are in need of missionaries in Missouri."

"What would be required of me?"

"You would have to be ordained."

"And how?"

"You would have to take an examination."

"How long would that require?"

"Just a few minutes, but you would, of course, have to make a donation."

"How much?"

"Twenty-five dollars."

"When could you give me an examination?"

"Right now. Are you prepared?"

"Go ahead."

"Do you believe in infinite intelligence?"

"Absolutely."

"Do you believe that the phenomena of nature, physical and spiritual, are the expressions of such intelligence?"

"Positively."

No Doubt About True Religion

"Do you affirm that a correct understanding of such expression and living in accordance therewith constitute the true religion."



"Undoubtedly."

"Do you believe that the existence and personal identity of the individual continue after the change called death?"

"Surely."

"Do you believe that communication with the so-called dead is a fact?"

"Of course."

"That will be all. You have made a passing grade. I will prepare your Certificate of Ordination."

Like myself, Dr. Cutting was a keen hand with a diploma, so mine was dated back in January 10, 1909. It is a beautiful thing, with its two gold seals and its blue-ribbon trimmings, and I still have it.

The certificate set forth that I had been ordained by the First Spiritual Church of the City and County of San Francisco, by the authority vested in the church by the State of California, under charter 55543, and that I was now authorized "to solemnize marriages, officiate at funerals and perform all other duties." I was also given a typed "salutem" to the general public, properly signed and sealed, giving me the authority "to establish and carry on branch churches and missions in the United States and Canada and to collect funds for the upkeep of same."

I was given a Declaration of Principles and, oddly enough, No. 8 reads:



"We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any human soul, here or hereafter."

"The doctor wished me luck when I departed and informed me such certificates could be obtained by me, for others, at \$10 each. Such luck! I had lost the name of the old gentleman who had offered \$500 for such a degree!

Upon my return to St. Louis I learned that a young man had been calling at my home every few hours for the last three days in an effort to get in touch with me. I had been in the house only a short time when he returned. He was almost desperate.

"I've made an application to practice in Minnesota," he explained. "I find I must have two years of pre-medical training, which I do not have. I've simply got to make this board. I have a wife and two children and we have settled in Minneapolis. I have \$600 which I will give you if you can fix me up. Today is the last day I've got to get back to Minneapolis and I must leave tonight."

I had nothing in the house which I could fix up for him, nothing that would stand the acid test of the Minnesota board, so I telephoned to one of my assistants and explained the situation. He came over, met the young man, promised to fix him up at once, and guaranteed the certificate would stand "the acid test."

Elated, the young doctor paid him \$600 and hurried back to Minneapolis. A few days later I



received this telegram: "Board refused to accept certificate. Am coming back to St. Louis for interview."

Had A Heart, If Not A Conscience

I called the man who had supplied the credentials and told him about it. He was sorry. No, he could not make good the guarantee; the money was gone. The young man arrived at my house. I told him of my interview with the other man. The young chap was broke and down and out, and I felt so sorry for him that I gave him a check for the \$600. I did not have a conscience in those days, but I've always had a heart.

The demand for educational credentials was at times even greater than the supply. Young men who were attempting to become not only doctors of medicine, but pharmacists, dentists and attorneys, were seeking back-door assistance.

I confined my activities to medical students, turning over all applicants for dental, legal and similar degrees to a "guy with the goods" who occasionally worked with me and who was a magician at changing the worst sort of raw material into a dentist or a lawyer. He has ground out many dentists and lawyers from his own little mill and I know of attorneys and dentists in St. Louis, Boston, New York and elsewhere who entered their profession through the back door.

I had made a contract with Helmuth P. Holler, the owner of the "Oriental University" in



Washington, who sold diplomas conferring more than 600 different degrees, but transacted little business with him. I obtained a diploma for a prospective pharmacist and he was successful in getting by the Missouri board with it.

Holler was a queer old fellow. He had been a foreign missionary and, according to the story he related to me when I visited him in Washington, he had come in contact with so many benighted people who needed religion and education that he, being a Christian worker, with his heart bleeding for suffering humanity, returned to Washington and opened his institution so that he could confer degrees upon these poor sufferers.

The truth about it was that he purchased the college (if any) from a friend of mine, who told me he never was paid for it!

In those days it seemed to me that every street-car conductor, every porter, photographer, chauffeur, milk-wagon driver—in fact, everyone with whom I came in contact—wanted a medical degree. Nurses, midwives, yes, even the attendants in the offices of doctors, having seen physicians at work, felt the urge to become practitioners and believed they could go ahead and treat the sick without any additional training!

I recall that on one occasion a St. Louis physician, high in his profession, brought his office girl to my home. She was a charming little thing who wanted to be a doctor. Her employer offered to give me \$1,000 if I would get her a diploma. I told him that I knew nothing about



"getting diplomas" and threatened to report him to the medical society. My objection was to the young woman. I never liked to transact business with women, and never did when I could avoid it. Women are too talkative. They all want something for nothing, all know too much and all expect to drive a better bargain than a man would. I helped a few to degrees, but not many.

The volume of my mail increased. Inquiries were arriving from all over the nation. Messenger boys were running to and from my home. My telephone was busy, and the money was pouring in.

And now, with the entry of the United States into the World War, the "mill' was to grind faster than ever.

CHAPTER VIII

How I Helped Supply Army With Bogus Doctors

With the entry of the United States into the World War, the demand for fraudulent credentials doubled. Some chiropractors and osteopaths, mechano-therapy fakers, electro and hydro therapy quacks, and all the divers and sundry charlatans who had been clinging to the coat-tails of medicine, wanted medical diplomas and commissions as officers in the army medical corps. Persons who had once studied the healing arts sought to complete their education within a few Men who had been out of practice for a generation, dug up yellowed documents and blossomed forth as army surgeons. Low grade colleges graduated ignoramuses in droves. Students in first class institutions deserted their classes and flocked to the "mill" schools to be graduated. or to purchase diplomas outright.

Hundreds of quacks and charlatans strutted about in uniforms. It seemed that my door bell rang every few minutes, each time to notify me that a young chap who had studied medicine—some—felt called upon to serve his country, in

the medical corps, "and please good, kind Dr. Adcox, could you help me get a diploma so I can get a commission?" I did my bit, my rotten bit, by assisting the government in obtaining the needed doctors.

In those stirring times I thought nothing about it. It was all in the day's work. But in these days of life's autumn, when I am no longer a stranger to conscience, my thoughts turn to those scores of men who entered the service of the medical corps as doctors and surgeons, men who belonged in the trenches, or in the labor battalions. I think, too, of those cold, bleak days, days of sleet and snow and biting winds, when the dread influenza ravaged the training camps of the nation.

I think of the toll that was taken, of the resultant misery and suffering, and I think of those who were responsible for a lot of it. Sometimes, yes, often, I am awakened in the dead of night by a ghostly cry which others cannot hear, and I know it is but a mocking scream of some poor wretch who died for his country in a training camp hospital—the victim of some smirking ignorant charlatan who wore the uniform of an officer, a gentleman and a man of science.

I realize full well, at this late date, that the most contemptible of all criminals, the most degraded of all mankind, are those who prey upon the sick, unless, and my heart aches at the thought of it, it be the man, or men, who make such preying possible.



Enough of this. I do not care to open old wounds or to bring fresh suffering to Gold Star mothers, whose boys never had a chance. I blame myself, my associates, the politicians, the graft and the corruption, and the easy system of government. As for me, at the age of 63, I am paying, paying, paying, paying.

Agencies All Over Nation

The demand for credentials continued even after the armistice, and I found it necessary to organize as I had never before organized. Every man who had been ground out of the mill was a walking advertisement for our system, and, with the opening of agencies in other cities, branch offices of the national medical diploma mill, such men were utilized. Big commissions were paid for all prospects sent to me. Owen T. Owen was active in Chicago and Frank J. Kenney was busy in Washington and Baltimore. Other agents were on the ground in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Houston, Dallas, Minneapolis, Detroit, San Francisco, Memphis and a score of other cities. Ralph A. Voigt, now an M. D. and out of the army, was looking after things in Kansas City. Prospects came from all over the nation and the mill ground steadily and without interruption from state or federal authorities. I had long sneered at the state laws and for years had been careful of the nature of business transacted by mail.



Yet, in the end, I was indicted in both state and federal courts.

New "medical institutions" sprang up like mushrooms. In those days it was easier to start a medical university than it was to open a grog shop. "Medical societies" which offered a cloak of respectability to fakers and quacks multiplied like rabbits.

All reputable practitioners want to affiliate with high-class medical organizations and, therefore, those who moved in the twilight zone of professionalism, from those who rode bizarre medical hobbies to the charlatans who were even too ignorant for that, barred from association with the respectable members of the profession, felt the urge to "join something." Thus were created these hybrid "societies" which, for a few dollars, issued certificates of membership, beautiful but worthless.

Two of the most interesting of these were "The Incorporated Society of Science, Letters and Arts of London, Limited," and "The Italian Physico-Chemical Academy." Both continued to sell their stuff long after they were exposed, and but recently I heard an alleged medical man boast that he was an "F.S.S.C., Lond." The letters, which mean "Fellow of the Incorporated Society of Science, Letters and Arts, of London, Limited," look well, sound well, and have an air of erudition and mystery, but mean nothing. Any quack could purchase one of the fellowships by



writing to the society in London and sending a \$5 bill.

"l'Academie Physico-Chimique Italienne" was even more interesting, as it awarded not only letters but beautiful medals and diplomas. This concern, operated by two non-scientific men, mailed hundreds of letters, addressed to American doctors, from Palermo, Italy.

The Joker Brings the Revenue

These informed the unsuspecting that "Monsieur le Docteur," had been nominated as an honorary member of the academy by the council, which had conferred upon him "a first class medal, diploma and fellowship, for technical work and scientific merit and in consideration of his humanitarian efforts, his many dignities and his great learning." All le docteur had to do upon receiving the letter was to write to the academy accepting the honor "in conformity with sections 19 and 22 of the constitution, whereupon le docteur would receive la medal de premiere classe, the diploma and other documents relating to the title accorded."

The joker was in these two sections of the constitution, which I quote as follows:

Sec. 19—The entrance fee to carry office and postal expense is \$5 (American money) and is payable at once to the academy by special bulletin filled up, stamped and signed.

Sec. 22-Those to whom medals are awarded



and who wish to possess the medals must pay for the coinage \$10 (in American money) as the academy does not, at the moment, possess the necessary funds for this purpose.

Any person who would address an inquiry to the concern would forthwith receive a reply, informing him the council had just nominated him for the medal, the diploma and all other documents. Imagine how the quacks went after those diplomas and medals! Think what they meant to any charlatan who was trying to impress his great learning upon his patients!

It was the same with the so-called medical schools which were organized throughout the country. Diplomas were obtainable in nearly every large city in the nation. The field of drugless quackery was thoroughly worked and thousands of drugless healers were turned loose upon the public with their pretty diplomas, all because of the absence of laws in many states regulating the practice of drugless healers. These concerns sold diplomas at from \$10 to \$500, in fact, took anything a prospect offered.

Courses of instruction were thrown in, free of charge, with all diplomas.

With the courses came many text books of an interesting nature for the perusal of the newly created "doctor," and the titles of some that I recall were "How to Approach a Patient," "How to Get the Fees at Once," "The Business Talk That Will Make the Patient Pay," "How to Handle the Question of the Size of the Fee,"



"Real Money Talks" and "Always Get Cash Down."

The general public and even the public health authorities have no idea of the extent of operations of these "mills," nor of the great suffering caused by the "doctors" who were permitted to "practice" because no state laws barred them.

I know a young chap who purchased a mail order outfit, read the course of instruction and rented an office. He could not distinguish between the circulation of the blood and the digestion of food in the stomach, but he bought a white coat, grew a beard, hung up his diploma and made several thousand dollars a year—treating the sick!

With diplomas obtainable almost anywhere, and with some state boards of medical examiners willing to accept almost any sort of credentials from persons applying for license as physicians and surgeons, one of the biggest problems confronting us was how to obtain such licenses for persons who were too ignorant to pass the examinations. I had been giving the matter a lot of thought and then, one day, a young chap offered to give me a thousand dollars for a license to practice medicine in a southern state. I decided to make the effort and so set about making my plans.



CHAPTER IX

Takes Exam in Client's Name, Opening New Field

I had known for a long time that big money could be made in obtaining licenses for "dumb bells" to practice medicine and surgery, but I had been too busy with other work to give serious consideration to ways and means of getting Now with the "mill" thoroughly organthem. ized, and the branch agencies taking care of the work which, in the past, had necessitated my traveling from coast to coast, I found time to develop this new field. No still, small voice within me protested at the thought of giving licenses to ignorant persons to enable them to prey upon the sick. It was a cold-blooded business proposition, the case of a crook matching his wits and his skill against a new arm of the law.

I had been at odds with the law for so many years that nothing really mattered now; nothing save my personal safety and the comfort of my family. If I could outwit the law and obtain something for nothing I experienced the feeling of "well done, thou good and faithful servant," just so long as I was well paid for my trouble.

In those days it really was a pleasure to serve, a pleasure to watch the faces of my clients light up with smiles of satisfaction when I handed them "the goods."

Having given the matter considerable thought, and after making an exhaustive investigation of the whole subject, I sent for the young chap who had offered me a thousand dollars for a medical license in a southern state, and, upon his arrival, I gave him a thorough questioning.

"How many questions could you answer without help if you appeared before the board and took the examination?" I asked.

"Darned few," he admitted.

"What are you going to do if I get the license for you?"

"Pay you \$1,000."

"I don't mean that; I want to know how you are going to conduct yourself after you are licensed."

"I'm going to open an office down there, practice a little, help out in some hospital and study at night."

"Do you think you have brains enough to keep out of trouble and to refrain from advertising your lack of knowledge of medicine?"

"I'm sure I have."

"Well, I'm going to get that license for you. Here is an outline of the plot: There will be no sense in my taking you down there in the hope that we could both take the examination and that



I could slip you answers to questions you are not familiar with.

Prepares to Take Examinations for Him

"You don't know enough for that. I'll have to take the examination for you, in your name. I'll make out your application in my own handwriting and we'll get a notary public that I know to attest it and stick his jurat on it. He isn't particular and won't ask any questions. I'm going to do that for the protection of your license, in event I get it for you, for, if the board members are smart, they will compare the handwriting on the application with the writing on the examination papers and if there should be a difference, well, something would happen and, of course, inasmuch as I'm assuming your identity, you would be blamed for it. I have made an investigation and, fortunately, the board does not require a photograph of the applicant. That will make it easier.

I prepared the application and mailed it to the board, using the name and address of my client. A few days later he received a notice to appear at a specified time and place, in a southern city, for the examination.

I took notice, which he brought out to me, and left for the scene of the big adventure in a troubled frame of mind. It was my first venture in the license market. Would I get caught? Would some student whom I had assisted in ob-



taining credentials be foolish enough to blurt out my name? Would some bright member of the board notice the discrepancy between the age of the applicant, which was given as 31, and the age of the man who was writing the paper? Would it be discovered that "the old gentleman" was pinch hitting for a younger man?

My fears were soon allayed. Upon reaching the scene I discovered that several other men of my age were taking the examination and each applicant was given a number which he signed to his examination papers, instead of his name. Realizing there was little possibility of a slip I started answering the questions.

Things progressed smoothly. It was a really difficult examination, but I finished my papers in two days and returned to St. Louis. I called my client on the telephone and told him to watch the mail for a report from the board. A week later he came running up my steps and as I opened the door to greet him, he cried out: "I passed! I passed! Look—here's my license!" He waved the piece of paper joyously and did an Indian war dance in my living room.

Within a week he went to the southern city, rented an office, hung out a shingle and began to practice.

The news of his success must have spread, for within a week I had received a dozen requests for licenses to practice medicine. Young men who had diplomas but no licenses, offered fancy prices for permits.



I proceeded cautiously, however, for I knew my age was against me and was certain that if I made a practice of posing for young men that sooner or later I would be caught in a board room.

Arkansas Opened to Fixers

I took the matter up with Ralph A. Voigt and with several others who were active in the organization. Within a week one of these men, a wonderful fixer, had made a deal and had "opened up" Arkansas. He had the situation so well in hand that he could obtain licenses for the asking and he bottled the good thing up so that he alone could operate. Those who wanted licenses, and who could not pass the examinations, had to see him. Steadily he refused to let any one else in. Scores of men, ignorant of medicine for the most part, were taken to Arkansas and licensed. At times this fixer would gather about him enough prospects to warrant the railroad over which he traveled to give him a special car for his clients, in which to make the trip to Little Rock. Who were the men?

If the proper state officials would like to know the names of those men who were licensed and who did not know the difference between functions of the brain and the kidneys, let him but examine the records. The records tell the story, and disclose the names.

Florida, likewise, was opened up by an eastern operative and any person who had a bogus medi-



cal diploma and \$500 could get a license to practice in that state. If the individual lacked a degree, the gentleman who dispensed licenses could fix him up with one. I was not on the "inside" of that situation, either, but I've talked to a great many of those who were licensed in Florida, who told me their stories. The "examinations" given applicants were oral and the questions always the same, were about as follows:

"Are you a doctor?"

"Yes."

"Got a diploma?"

"Sure."

"Do you want to practice medicine in Florida."

"Yes, sir."

"Will you obey the laws of this state?"

"Of course."

"Can you keep your mouth shut?"

"I can."

"Did you bring your \$500."

"Here it is."

"Thanks. George, make out a license for Dr. John Doe."

On one occasion I received a telegram from Frank J. Kenney asking me to meet him in Philadelphia. I met him there at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel.

"I've got a live one," he said. "A druggist from a small town near here, who wants a license to practice medicine. He'll pay \$2,000 for it. I'll split with you."

"Does he look like me?" I asked.

"Exactly to a dot."

The prospect soon arrived. He was of Jewish extraction, short and weighed 200 pounds. I am a Gentile, medium of height and far below 200 pounds in weight. Outside of that we looked alike.

Kenney introduced me. "This is the man who is going to take the examination for you," he said.

"I am the man who is NOT going to take it," I answered promptly.

Kenney was angry, but I refused to act. Later, however, I found a way of getting the man a license.

As I have said, I was working cautiously, but now and then I took an examination for a client my age. It was on one of these excursions that I got the thrill of my career. I was sitting in the board room, just finishing the examination, in which everything had worked perfectly, when someone tapped me on the shoulder and asked, "Isn't this Dr. Adcox of St. Louis?"

I looked up and saw that the speaker was a member of the board of medical examiners!

CHAPTER X

Trapped, but Finds Ally in Man Recognizing Him

"Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord," but as I looked up from my work and recognized the man who had tapped me on the shoulder and called me by my right name, I felt that justice, long thwarted, was about to come into its own and that I would soon be led from the room in disgrace. I had been caught in the act, there was no doubt about that. I was engaged in taking a medical examination, for pay, in the name of another man, and now, at my shoulder, stood a member of the board of medical examiners, who had recognized me. My first impulse was to leave my seat and dash from the room. But that would avail me nothing, for I had no desire to become a fugitive from justice.

Then, just as I was to announce that I had been caught with the goods, the board member handed me one of his business cards upon which was penciled: "Come to my office when you finish."

What was the game? Was it a trick? Was he saving me the embarrassment of being hauled

from the examination room by blue-coated officers? Did he have a dictaphone installed in his office and did he hope to obtain a confession from me before turning me over to the police? Or was he one of that great army who had his price?

I pondered the questions, but was hopelessly befuddled. I had almost finished the examination and was now on my favorite subject of anatomy, so I experienced little difficulty in concluding my work. Leaving the examination room I hurried to the street and hailed a taxicab, directing the driver to the building in which the man who had caught me had his suite of offices.

It was on the fifth floor he was waiting for me.

"You are Dr. Adcox of St. Louis," he inquired.

"That depends upon whether I'm to be arrested?"

"Arrested? Of course not. It's quite all right to admit your identity to me. I want to be certain, that's all."

"Well, I'm Adcox, there's no question about that."

"You've been down here as Dr. This and Dr. That on several occasions, haven't you?"

"A time or two, yes."

"Do you realize the chance you have been taking?"

"Perhaps."

"It is a big chance, bigger than you think. It's a wonder to me that other members of the board are not suspicious. I saw you last time and made



some inquiry. I learned your identity. That's why I brought you up here today. One of your friends happens to be a friend of mine."

"I appreciate your consideration, doctor. I'll give it up. You may rely on me to stay away from here in the future," I told him.

"Tut-tut. You can come back. But keep out of the board room. Bring your young men down here with you and, well, if you'll just drop into my office all by yourself the day before the examination starts you'll find an envelope on the mantel over the fire-place that will interest you. Don't take the envelope, leave it behind and, if you like, you might leave a little something in it in return for what you find.

"Do I make myself clear?"

"As crystal."

He Sees A Great Opportunity

I could have cried out with delight. This was the sort of thing I had been dickering for. I had a hunch what I would find in the envelope and, if my hunch were correct, it meant I could get licenses for my clients, regardless of how dumb they might be. It meant, too, that no longer would I have to handle one at a time. I could bring two, three, five or a whole drove of them, if I liked, and, if things worked out well, I'd be using special cars myself. I did not confide my good fortune to my associates, but, like others who had worked out good things, kept it to him-



self. Yet they say there is honesty even among thieves!

Upon my return to St. Louis I looked over the list of young men who were seeking my assistance in obtaining licenses for them to practice medicine and surgery. I selected five of the brightest deciding upon that number for the first venture.

I employed a young doctor, who, to use slang, knew his stuff and who, like myself, could answer, without referring to text-book, any question that a board of medical examiners might ask. His job was to go along and, if I needed him, to help out. At the proper time our party of seven left St. Louis for the city in the south. I parked my prospects at a hotel and, after telephoning the friendly member of the board to see if he were in his office, which he was, I strolled over to call on him.

What would I find in the envelope? Would my hunch prove correct, and would what I expected really be there?

The board member and I exchanged courtesies and then, excusing himself, he walked out into his reception room. I hurried over to the fire-place and there, on the mantel, was a large brown envelope. With nervous hands I opened it. My hunch was correct, for it contained a copy of the list of questions to be asked at the examination.

Putting the questions in my pocket, I placed a sheaf of \$20 bills in the envelope and, sealing it, placed it back on the mantel. Then I began



whistling, and the doctor opened the door and walked in. We talked for a few minutes and I promised to see him at the next session of the board. We shook hands and I hurried back to the hotel, where my "dumb bells" were waiting for me.

We went to work at once preparing the answers to the questions which were to be asked on the first day. The young doctor helped me and between the two of us we supplied the five young men with the answers, each differently phrased. Each prospect wrote them in the smallest hand possible, on a "pony," a book of tissue paper which can be concealed in the palm of the left hand while the student takes a peek and then writes during the examinations. I taught the boys how to turn the pages without removing the "pony" from the palm.

I pulled one trick on the five which they never suspected. By an arrangement with my doctor friend, made in the bathroom, we gave them the wrong answers to a number of questions, but saw to it that not one of the five "guessed wrong" on the same question.

The next morning the five went to the board room. They worked all day and upon their return to the hotel in the evening, we prepared the answers and the "ponies" for the second day. All five passed and all were duly licensed. Some remained in the southern state; others practiced for a time there and then made application for licenses, through reciprocity, from other states.



By that method they could, eventually, get into the state in which they desired to live without taking additional examinations.

Oh, reciprocity—how many ignorant charlatans get by in thy name!

In the meantime, I was taking examinations for men of my age in other states. The southern board met but four times a year and I could not hope to obtain licenses for all those who desired them from this source.

How Ralph Voigt Kept Busy

Ralph A. Voigt, in Kansas City, was taking care of the young fellows. We had on our list, also, the names of several bright young doctors who, for \$500 and expenses, would go to any state in the Union and take an examination in the name of one of our clients. We made all the arrangements in such cases, merely having the assistant fill out the application in the name of our client and then, on the proper day, go take the examination. Voigt was kept busy taking examinations in Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Kansas, Texas, Tennessee and other states in the middle-west and south.

We had all sorts of schemes for getting around state boards of medical examiners. We would sit for our client and write the examination or, if he were bright and felt he could answer the majority of the questions correctly, we would help him without violating the law. For example, a client and I would both make applications for



examination at the same time. Then, after we got into the examination room, we would sit as close together as possible. We had a set of signals worked out before we entered. If he could not answer the first question, he would hold up one finger. If he had difficulty with No. 6, he would put his hand on his head and hold up one finger. If it were No. 24 he would scratch his head with two fingers and then hide his thumb in his palms. It was quite easy. As soon as I got the signal I would write the answer on a small piece of paper, roll it in a ball and at an opportune time, pass it to him.

Now and then some applicant whom I had never seen before would catch on to our system and, stumped by some question, would signal me. Of course I helped him—I had to, knowing full well that, if he desired, he could report me and get us kicked out. Voigt, who was most adept at this sort of thing, has taken as many as five prospects into an examination and worked so fast that he supplied all of them with the needed answers to their questions. When Voigt took an examination for some clients before a board which required all applicants to file photographs of themselves, he would go to a trick photographer. have his picture made, and attach it to the application which was made out in the name of the client. The photograph was guaranteed to fade out in six weeks, leaving only a black piece of paper.

My graft in the southern state lasted only a



little more than a year. My board member died! As I was casting about for a new arrangement I learned that Connecticut had "just been opened up" and I decided to go there and investigate. What I learned surprised even me.



CHAPTER XI

'Fixer' Claims Right to Connecticut But Is Defied

When a new oil field is opened and a gusher brought in, the news spreads to the far corners of the oil world. So it was in our fraternity and when someone "opened up" a state, the news spread like flames in dry grass. I knew nothing of conditions in Connecticut, but had heard there was something good on tap there and I was determined to "cut myself in" on it. I took for granted that the obtaining of medical licenses for persons who were too ignorant to pass honest examinations had been made easy.

I had two unusually dumb young men on the string who had been trying to obtain licenses. Each had \$1,500 to lay down in return for the pieces of paper which would permit them to ply their trade. I had already made several efforts to get licenses for them, but both had failed to get by even after I had things fixed. They were too stupid! I called these chaps to my home and informed them there was still a chance, explaining that something had happened in Connecticut and that I intended to find out what it was. I

offered to take them along with me and make one more effort in their behalf, providing, of course, that they pay all expenses. They agreed.

We went to New York, took a taxi from the Pennsylvania Station to the Grand Central and boarded one of the hourly trains for New Haven, Conn., where we walked over to the Garde Hotel and registered.

"Stay in your rooms until I get the lay of the land," I warned them. "Don't talk to anyone."

I strolled down to the lobby and one of the first persons I encountered was the famous "fixer" who previously had "opened up" Arkansas.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"Came to look things over," I answered.

"Well, you might as well get on the train and beat it west."

"And why?"

"Because you can't do your stuff in this state."
"Is that a fact?"

"It is a fact! I've got the rights in Connecticut. It's a trust, a monopoly, all mine."

"What's to prevent me from working?"

A Threat That Does Not Alarm Adcox

"Little me. This is my pie. I baked it myself, and you're not going to get one little slice, see! I'm going to warn you right now, if you pull any funny stuff in Connecticut I'm going to have you put in jail!"

"How about yourself? Do you think I'd stay in jail without your sweet company?"



"You can't scare me. I'm sitting too pretty to get in a jam."

"If you can operate I certainly can, and I will."

"You can't, and you won't. I thought you'd be butting in on a private party, so I've been busy. I've warned my friends that you are bad medicine, plain poison, and that if you're allowed to buzz around somebody will get stung."

"The board is on the lookout for you and they'll call a cop if you even stick your nose in the board room."

"Well, tell them to have the cop handy for as soon as the party starts I'm coming in and I'm bringing two of my dumb friends with me. All three of us expect to win prizes. See you in the morning, if you're sober."

I was not disturbed by the encounter. I knew for certain now that he had arranged something good and was determined to keep it for himself. I knew, too, that he would not risk a row. I had no definite plans. I had hoped to find out what his racket was and work it myself, but so far, had been unsuccessful. I had made applications for licenses for myself and the two boys and so, for want of a better plan, I decided to go into the examination room next morning and do what I could with the two boys and, at the same time, keep my eyes open.

Early next morning I took my two clients down to the examination room. which was in the hotel. We were the first to arrive, as I had anticipated. I selected seats for them, telling them to be sure



to take them when the examination started. The seats were in rows and under my arrangement I would have one of my boys in front of me and the other behind me. We had breakfast and then I took them to my room for final instructions. I said to them:

"When the questions are passed out, look over the first list and if you find any you can answer correctly, signal me with your fingers. If you can answer number one, hold up one finger, and so on. Don't signal that you can't answer certain questions, for I am going to take it for granted that you can't answer any of them.

"I'll write the answers to all questions, excepting the few you will be able to answer, and pass them to you. All you will have to do is copy what I write. Work slowly and be sure you write plainly enough for the board members to read your papers. Whatever you do, don't drop the papers I pass to you on the floor after you finish with them. Eat them, put them in your pockets, do anything you want to do with them, but don't drop them."

The Competitors Watch One Another

The board arrived and the "fixer" appeared with his delegation. He chatted with members of the board and then sent his gang into the room. I had my boys placed near the door and when the rush for seats began they dashed in, with me behind them, and we got the seats we had selected. My competitor eyed me in a sour fashion



as I took my seat. I smiled. The questions were now passed out. One of my clients indicated he could answer the second. The other boy shook his head, denoting that it was all Greek to him.

I wrote the answers as rapidly as possible, passing the bits of paper fore and aft. Between times I was writing an examination for myself. And all the time I was keeping an eye on my friend the "fixer" in an effort to find out what sort of a racket he was working. His boys, all of whom looked unusually dumb, were busy at their desks, writing, but I could tell from the blank expressions on their faces that they did not know what it was all about and were not answering the questions before them. examination had not started until almost noon and at 5 o'clock the meeting was adjourned until 9 a.m. the next day. I now kept my eyes on the "fixer" to watch his next move. His boys went to their rooms and he dropped from sight.

I saw him again an hour later. He had sent word for his gang to meet him in his room at once. I learned that he had the questions which were to be asked the next day and that he had arranged to have the papers which his boys had turned in that day returned to him, to be replaced by papers prepared by them during the night. They worked all night, fixing up papers to replace those written the first day, and writing papers which were to be turned in at the end of the second day.

The trick worked. All of the "fixer's" clients



passed but one. He failed because he was so illiterate the board could not read what he had written. Both of my clients got licenses. It is of record that I failed to pass one Connecticut examination. This was the occasion. I was too busy helping my two boys, too busy trying to find out what was going on, to write an intelligent paper.

Just before the party broke up I met the "fixer" again.

"You got by this time," he said, "but you won't be on deck next trip, I've seen to that already. I've got you just where I want you now."

I returned to St. Louis. A few days later we were informed that the diplomas of the St. Louis institution with which I still had a contract would no longer be recognized in Connecticut!

The "fixer" had kept his word.

I had fifteen prospects who wanted to make the next trip to Connecticut. What was I to do?

CHAPTER XII

Decides to Reform, but Takes One More Chance

In all the history of medicine, in all the history of state government, there has never been anything quite as rotten to the core as the scandal in Connecticut. A bunch of cheap grafters, without hearts, souls, or consciences, guided only by the love of the dollar, threw down the bars and invited all those possessed of the price to come to that great state. There were no requirements, no restrictions, and any person willing to pay could obtain the right to treat the sick and the injured, administer to the dying, and bring babies into the world. The type which took advantage of the offer was the worst—ignorant immigrants who knew but a few words of English and the lowest of laborers.

They invested their savings in diplomas and licenses, and, once authorized, did not hesitate to take full advantage of the privileges accorded them by their licenses.

They cut, they hacked, they sawed and scores of murders were committed in the name of science and covered up in the carefully couched phrasing

of death certificates. Men who had been driving dump carts in January were administering anesthetics and operating for appendicitis in February.

The state of Connecticut became the dumping ground for the riff-raff of the nation. Men who were too ignorant to be flattered with the name of "quack," who came from the very cesspools of life, and who would not be tolerated in any other state, found a haven in Connecticut, and the fakers lost no time in organizing. By the free expenditure of money, they became a potent political power.

It was this condition, which I saw with my own eyes, that brought to me, for the first time, a realization of the seriousness of my offenses, and a determination to end my career as a seller of bogus degrees.

When the news came to me that my college would not be recognized in Connecticut, I knew the "fixer" who had threatened me had been at work. My problem was to defeat his purposes. I studied the situation and found but one solution: I would send my prospects to the "fixer" and have them purchase from him the diplomas of his institution. I personally called on the "fixer" and inquired if he would assist my men in obtaining licenses if they purchased his stuff. He said that he would. That settled the problem.

Again Graduated at Kansas City

All my "graduates," upon obtaining their St.



Louis degrees, hurried to Kansas City and were again graduated. The "fixer" had complete control of the situation in Connecticut and actually set the dates for medical examinations. Having fixed a date he would pass the word around, and we would all meet at the Garde Hotel in New The "fixer" would bring with him a sufficient number of blank diplomas to care for easterners who had not gone west for the commencement exercises, and for such unexpected business as would put in an appearance. On only one occasion did he fail to obtain the list of questions in advance of the examination. In this case he called all the applicants together and said: "Go as slow as you can this morning. I'll get the questions at noon. Bring out plenty of the board's paper."

He got the questions at noon, had the meeting adjourned until the next morning and we devoted the afternoon and night to preparing examination papers for our clients. The "fixer," however, was not to be relied upon. On one occasion, he called five of my boys to his room and said to them: "If you expect to get licenses you've got to pay me \$5,000. I don't care how much you have given to Adcox. I've got to have five grand or you'll be pinched when you go to the board room in the morning."

They came to me, badly frightened. I told them to sit tight, that he would not have the nerve to go through with his threat, and that everything would come out all right. He knew



he would back up, that he could not risk a fuss, and I was right. It was only a threat and nothing came of it.

How An Eyé Specialist Got His Start

On one occasion Ralph A. Voigt of Kansas City went to Connecticut for me. He had several of my young men and some of his own. He got to Connecticut too late for the examinations, but a member of the board took the whole delegation into a hotel room and gave them oral examinations. One of them now has a big practice as an eye specialist in Richmond.

The business in Connecticut was so extensive and we took so many prospects with us that part of the time we could not write a different paper for each candidate. Inspection of the examination papers will disclose that a lot of bright young men answered the questions word for word, comma for comma, mistake for mistake.

Conditions in Connecticut grew steadily worse, from the viewpoint of humanity, easier from the viewpoint of the grafter. Hospitals, operated by the quacks, began to spring up. Offices were opened in the big towns and the little hamlets. Every known "ism" was practiced, and the quacks reaped a harvest. On my numerous visits to that state I came in contact with men who had never studied medicine or surgery, and who were already discussing among themselves, the success, or lack or success, they had in operations of the



most difficult character. All of them were selling their whisky prescriptions at \$3 each.

Let me say right here: The advent of prohibition was an incentive for hundreds of men to take up the study of medicine by the short cut route. With prohibition in force, the whisky book held out an assured income of \$1,200 a year, \$100 a month, to all young physicians. They took advantage of it, too!

It became apparent to me by this time that the diploma mill was growing too big for us to control, and that it would soon fall of its own weight, probably burying its builders under the wreckage.

Returning to St. Louis from my last trip to Connecticut, I informed my wife that I was through with the miserable business, that henceforth I would walk the straight and narrow path. I told her that the others could continue if they cared to, but I was through. One day shortly thereafter, there came to my home a young man who had been a neighbor of mine on Delmar for several weeks.

I had heard him inquire of the letter carrier as to where he could find a doctor, and had heard the carrier direct him to my home. His throat was swathed in bandages and his eyes indicated fever. I took him into my home, examined him and found he was suffering from tonsilitis. I treated him and we became friendly. Then, one day, he indicated to me that he would like to become a doctor, that he had always been



ambitious to be a member of that profession, but had never had an opportunity to go to a medical college. I asked him if he had saved any money and he said that he had. I saw in this young man a chance to make a little more money. Like the bank robber who before retiring for all time, decides to rob just one more bank, I decided to take one more client. And so I offered to make "Harry Thompson" a doctor.

It did not occur to me, at the outset, that "Harry Thompson," who boarded two doors west of my home at 4414 Delmar boulevard, was other than a salesman for the Meteor Coal Company, as his card stated. At no time did I suspect a plot to trap me. I had been in the business too long, and was too smart for that. I had heard "Thompson" inquire of the letter carrier where he could find a physician, and had seen the mail man direct him to my home. Again, "Thompson" had not asked me to assist in making him a doctor, he had merely told me, one day, that he was envious of me, because he had always had ambitions to be a physician.

I swallowed that bait, hook, line and sinker, for I took advantage of what I thought was his secret ambition, and offered to make him a doctor. If he had taken advantage of my offer on the spot I might have had some suspicions. But he didn't do that! he waited at least twenty-four hours, telling me he wanted to think it over. In the meantime, I saw him going to and from his "home." After he told me of his intention to



accept my offer I decided to make some inquiry and so called Homer McDonald, president of the Meteor Coal Company, and ask if one Harry Thompson was working for him. McDonald said that Harry Thompson was a salesman. Unknown, as I thought, to "Thompson," I followed him one morning and saw him go to his place of employment. I was satisfied and, inasmuch as I really wanted to get out of the business, I decided to turn "Thompson" over to Ralph A. Voigt in Kansas City.

Voigt Takes Charge

Voigt took charge of "Thompson." I was honest with Voigt and informed him that I knew nothing about "Thompson" and that it might be wise for him to make an investigation. Voigt did so. He asked "Thompson" for references, which "Thompson" gave him, and then employed a detective to make an investigation. The "references," as I now know, were warned in advance and were working with The Star, for the detective reported that "Harry Thompson" was Harry Thompson, and had been for a long time, at least.

I won't go into the details. The general public is aware of the fact that "Harry Thompson," the coal salesman, soon became "Harry Thompson, M. D. D. C." But in October of 1923 Voigt wired me he was coming to St. Louis to see me at my home on an important matter. He was greatly



excited when he arrived and asked: "Have you seen 'Thompson'?"

"Yes, I saw him this morning."

"Well, I've got to find him. I suspect something is wrong. A friend of mine who saw me on the street with him told me that his name is not 'Thompson.' I think we're about to be nabbed. I've got to locate that bird. I'm going to tell him that I have made arrangements to get him a license in Indiana and have him turn over the high school certificate, the medical diploma and the chiropractic diploma he got from me. If I get my hands on them he'll never see them again."

In the meantime, without my knowledge, of course, The St. Louis Star was clinching its case against the ring. Voigt, myself an others, were cleverly photographed with "Harry Thompson," without our knowledge and "Thompson" was introducing "friends"— reporters for The Star, of course—who also wanted degrees, and we were unwittingly transacting business with them.

He Buys An Extra

Then, on October 15, 1923, the blow fell. I heard newsboys outside the Vandeventer Trust Company crying "extra!" I purchased a copy of the Home Edition of The Star. My heart sank and my blood chilled. There was a fac-simile on page one of the diploma which Voigt had sold to "Thompson" and I learned that "Harry Thomp-



son" was Harry Thompson Brundidge of The Star's staff.

Caught!

I called my home and Mrs. Adcox answered.

"There's a man waiting for you—several men," she said.

"Who is it?"

"Howard Sidener, the circuit attorney, what in the world does he want with you?"

"He wants plenty, I expect. Tell him I'm going to East St. Louis."

There was a pause, and then she said: "He says he is going to wait, if you go to Alaska."

"Tell him I'll be right home."

I hurried out to my house to be arrested. I realized that at last, at the very eventide of my career, I had transacted business with the wrong man.

I was taken to Central Station where bond was arranged. Then I learned of the arrest of Voigt and others, in Kansas City. My telephone began to ring. A lawyer informed me that unless I arranged bond for one of my associates who was sought, and who was now in hiding in East St. Louis, that he would turn state's evidence.

"Tell him I'll do the same thing if I get the chance," I informed the lawyer.

Doctors who were made by the mill began calling, urging me to go to Canada and asking if I intended to turn them up; offering money for my defense.



Receives Threats

Others whom I had assisted, called on the long distance telephone to threaten me if I "squealed."

Voigt, released on bond, demanded to know why I had turned "Thompson" over to him.

Then, as the investigation continued and as new frauds were uncovered, a fund was raised to have The Star's witnesses assassinated, I refused to subscribe and warned against any such methods. The idea finally was given up.

Attorneys began calling on me in behalf of clients, men whom I had assisted to degrees. One lawyer came out from New York with a plan to have the records of one college destroyed, and said he had engaged a man to do it. I warned against this, too.

Another attorney, with whom I was acquainted, brought to my home a county superintendent of schools who offered to take up where the others had left off, and supply me with preliminary credentials. I declined with thanks.

The general public is familiar with the developments. All I need say is that everything The Star published was the truth.

In the course of time I was tried and convicted and sentenced to serve two years' imprisonment. Friends urged me to leave, offering to make good on my bond, but I had no desire to become a fugitive, a walker of strange streets, who saw in every stranger, a man come to arrest him.



Then, with the return of conscience, I felt the least I could do was to tell the truth.

Let me say here that I have no malice for anyone connected with the expose of the mill and that is why I have told my story to the man who exposed me. The Star did a good job for humanity.

