

Section on Commercial Interests

Papers Presented at the Fifty-Ninth Convention

PERSONALITY IN PHARMACY.

P. HENRY UTECH, PH. G.

So many different factors enter into the regime of the pharmacist's life that it is well nigh impossible to determine with any degree of accuracy just which forces play the more important role in the scheme of the successful man's career. Any attempt to analyze the problem must necessarily take into account such vital factors as talent, opportunity, heredity, environment, etc., and then by some process of elimination, or natural selection, determine, psychologically or otherwise, just how far or how much each of these factors have exercised their influence or power in shaping the destiny or career of the individual. To have made a success of life is the crowning ambition of man. To have achieved this unique distinction is the highest glory of mankind. According to one authority, the receipt is very simple. He says: "Success in life represents a rule in three. Multiply one's talent by one's opportunity and divide by circumstances and limitations, and you have the career." But leaving aside the psychology of the matter for others to discuss, let me call your attention at this time to still another all-important faculty and note briefly the importance of personality, i. e., how our personal attitude may be looked upon as a fundamental asset in conducting a successful business, be it pharmacy or otherwise. Let us pause, therefore, and inquire into the problem of ourselves and see how far the personal element has contributed to our personal welfare; and see at the same time, how many of our fellow workers place such little emphasis on personality as a factor in determining the relative position which they occupy in the world of business.

The world today—as in all the ages of the past—still gives the first prize to persons of high and noble character, all other attributes appear to have lesser consideration. One of the first prophets in history was cognizant of this condition when he gave the admonition that "a good name was rather to be chosen than great riches," but somehow, in our eagerness to achieve material success, maxims, wisdom and past traditions, are all scattered to the wind. It is unfortunate that more of our pharmacists are not possessed of higher ideals, for I know of no profession or vocation, in which the note of personality is so all important. To have acquired the respect, esteem and good will of a community, is the best asset a business man can command. Many a man has built up a future on reputation of his good name—it represents sterling worth in character, as in metal. Having acquired this reputation for honesty, integrity, uprightness in your dealings, the battle is almost won. Instinctively, people prefer to deal with a high rather

than a low type of individual; there is a feeling of security and satisfaction about it, an inherent sense of admiration for the person of clean character and high ideals. And in addition to all these advantages, the business community trusts and respects him, takes note of his work and ability, and when the opportunity calls for responsible men, his name appears first on the list.

Perhaps some of you may think this is not the time, nor place, to enter into a discussion of the question of morality, but the problem of honesty and integrity is so closely identified with the new standard of ethics in business, that it becomes our bounden duty, as pharmacists, to awaken from our lethargy, particularly at this time when the public scrutiny is upon us and when we have the endorsement and approval of the chief executive of our land, who has confidence in our ability and who is inciting us on to still higher ideals of social responsibility.

We are living today in an epoch-making period in the history of pharmacy. Our profession is undergoing a great crisis, and the public eye is upon us as never before. Two great national issues are before us demanding consideration, viz., the ethical standard of our products and, our attitude toward the liquor question, and the individual conscience—the personality of each and every pharmacist—will determine just what our measure of success in dealing with these problems shall be. Since the passage of the Pure Food and Drugs Act, the question of honesty and morality in articles of food and drugs is being freely and thoroughly discussed everywhere. For some unaccountable reason, many of our people inherently believed that most drugs were either poisonous or adulterated, but thanks to our good friend, Dr. Wiley, his able assistants, and the influence of the secular press, this opinion is being successfully controverted. Still it behooves us, as loyal workers in a common cause, to render all the assistance possible, each in his own community, to clear up any local prejudice or misapprehension that may exist, and thereby indirectly elevate the whole moral standard of our calling. The combined influence of such a concerted effort cannot fail to be productive of great and lasting benefit.

The other phase of public scrutiny to which we as a profession have lately been subjected, is the problem of liquor selling. And it is this particular feature of our business which is mainly responsible for bringing odium and disfavor upon us as a profession throughout the length and breadth of our land. While we have thousands of honorable, upright, conscientious men engaged in the business of pharmacy, the small percentage who indulge in this debasing and nefarious practice, naturally bring the entire profession into disrepute. Unfortunately, the world does not judge people, or a profession, by its highest types, but prefers to cast the lot of the whole with the few, who, taking advantage of their social position, indulge in all sorts of mercenary and illegitimate practices in their wild desire for material gain. But the battle is on, and we cannot afford to ignore it. We shall have to gird our loins, like the knights of old, and call into play all the latent forces at our command if we are to emerge victoriously from the impending crisis. Our personality must positively and definitely assert itself if we would preserve the integrity and good name of the profession which we have the honor to represent. Just what measures to employ in order to combat this growing menace in our midst, is not for me to suggest. Much abler minds than mine have been baffled in their endeavors to curtail this pernicious traffic. That

eminent scholar, Martineau, says somewhere, "Until somebody has a conscience nobody can feel a law," and I should be glad indeed to have this grand old association—which has already fought many a battle for the interests of legitimate pharmacy—endorse this sentiment and take some definite action in condemnation of this open and deliberate practice by the pharmacists of our land. This much we can do—this much, as an organization looking for the uplifting of pharmacy, we ought to do. Economists tell us that idealism for the few is not possible until we all attain perfection, and the object of this paper is simply to urge our fellow workers to advance a few steps toward the attainment of an ideal profession of pharmacy.

BEWARE OF SCHEMES THAT ARE QUESTIONABLE.

"Beware of the many alluring schemes that are being constantly cooked up by 'get-rich-quick' sharps and brought to you for adoption for the alleged purpose of increasing your business. They look very enticing if you fail to go deeply into their outcome, but are always very costly to the victim, knowledge of which comes too late to be of service. If you permit yourself to be cajoled into identifying your store with any one of these schemes you will discover shortly that your neighbor has gone you one better, and taken up with another, that will double discount your fake game—and so it will go on until business becomes thoroughly demoralized and you will all be hunting ways of escape.

"Our Association succeeded some years since in entirely eliminating all the nuisances of this character from the drug business, but it has taken hard work and eternal vigilance ever since to keep clear of them.

"We have been led into the writing of this article because calls have been coming from all directions concerning a lottery scheme that is being pushed under the auspices of one of the daily papers of the city, that is being urged for the purpose of increasing its own income by depleting yours. We are amazed that a reputable journal would take up with such a questionable method of advertising itself at the cost of its friends and patrons, whose business will be demoralized and unsettled by falling in with it.

"Do a little quiet thinking before the damage is done."—*Western Pa. Retail Druggist.*

•