

to proper treatment. For the moment it is unnecessary to elaborate upon details. With a sufficiently wide conviction that a change ought to be, and can be, secured, the methods will readily be devised. There is but one thing upon which I would touch as being a condition precedent to any successful effort and upon which such successful effort is bound to be based. There must be sought and secured the coöperation of the American Medical Association, and of the State and local medical societies. There must be a complete understanding as to what shall constitute the legitimate practice of retail pharmacy. Those who would approach the medical societies, in order to have their coöperation, must evidence first of all a complete desire to remedy conditions in retail pharmacy of which the physician complains to-day. They must ask that the medical societies collaborate in working out to them a satisfactory set of voluntary regulations which are to govern the retail pharmacist in his relationship with the physician, in order that he may reasonably expect and have the physician's support. In a study of the problem, I do not by any means minimize the shortcomings of medicine, but believe that since retail pharmacy is primarily concerned, it should be willing to first discuss its own retarding influences with a view first to their removal. There is no more worthy task to which the American Pharmaceutical Association can at this time give a large share of its energy; of necessity the work must be planned along national lines, because it is of nation-wide importance, and among the pharmaceutical organizations of the country there are none which may hope to succeed in it as may the American Pharmaceutical Association.

ABSTRACT OF DISCUSSION.

Leon Monell expressed his appreciation of the paper and moved that it be referred to the Section on Education and Legislation, A. Ph. A. for further consideration. The motion was carried.

D. F. Jones was pleased with the movement to bring the retail pharmacists into closer relation with the American Pharmaceutical Association. Efforts should be made to induce more prescription writing by physicians.

F. E. Mortenson contended that the paper had a place in this Section. In Pueblo the relation between physicians and pharmacists has brought about a return to prescription writing. Confidence and coöperation are influential factors in establishing conditions which insure best service for the sick, and associations of professional men are helpful in bringing about a better understanding between them.

UNCHARTERED COMMERCIAL OUTLETS.*

BY F. W. E. STEDEM.

An unsuccessful attempt on the part of a friend of mine to purchase an old-fashioned warming plaster spread on leather resulted in his appealing to me for the article.

His comments on the retail druggists and their stock and methods of doing business were rather caustic and uncharitable. His bantering tone led me to accept his challenge and make a voyage into the domain of the retailer of drugs. Of course, nothing that we saw was really new to me for the reason that I had gone over the grounds repeatedly and was well aware of methods and conditions.

* Read before Section on Commercial Interests, A. Ph. A., Asheville meeting, 1923.

His oft-repeated assertion that you can buy anything but drugs in a drug store proved to be ridiculous in face of the fact that we did succeed in getting almost every article of pure drug line that we made quest of. It is, however, remarkable that so many side-lines should be attempted by the retailer of drugs in so careless a manner. On every hand was abundant evidence that the retailer had been talked into one or more side-lines, not because he knew anything of the sale of these articles or how to display them but because he was induced to believe by someone that he could make considerable profit by merely having them in stock.

Believing that business is very largely an adventure, it is easy to understand why the average man will add numerous articles to his stock, none of which have direct connection or applicability to the sale of drugs, resulting often in an enormous amount of unsalable goods, all of which seem to indicate that his banker is either a very charitable person, inclined to leniency, or that his capital is much greater or more elastic than the average retailer is supposed to command. All this led to an attempt to think out some plans that would result in the retailer having an outlet for his adventurous spirit in lines of merchandise and possibility of sales, which would satisfy this spirit and add to rather than detract from his bank account and his standing as a merchant.

It is remarkable how many articles required in the sick room are not carried at all by the retailer, or at least carried in so poverty-stricken a variety that the seeker after sick room needs is almost invariably driven to the department store for such articles of merchandise. This at least is a fact in the cities.

An examination of the supply lists of any of the sundry houses and a reasonable study of the addenda to those lists from day to day, keeping strict tabs on the advertising pages of the drug journals, and an occasional glance at the various medical journals, furnishes a complete and up-to-date list of new articles for sick room needs as rapidly as they make their appearance from the manufacturer or inventor; and the cost of addition of such stock and carrying it in six or twelve dozen lots is so small when compared with the investment in a side-line, that the cost is scarcely worth considering, and yet such articles are in daily demand, requiring no display and resulting in additional business, adding greatly to the prestige of the store and its owner. I am tempted to list here such articles as my friend and I made quest of and failed to find during our excursion on the day mentioned. We did, however, find a considerable variety of all such articles in the department stores, resulting in the reflection that numerous demands on the management of such departments in the department stores was probably the real cause of the introduction of drug departments in these stores. Of this I am not certain. It is a fact, however, that those druggists who stock and keep a comprehensive variety of sick room needs do certainly make sales enough and of sufficient volume to make it pay and, then, the good will of their neighbors and patrons is also worth thinking about.

The second reflection was brought about by a perusal of a catalog of a seed store. I was astonished—not because I was not aware of the things the seed store sells but because it had never occurred to me in so strong a light previously—at the enormous number of articles for sale requiring the use of drugs and chemicals to manufacture them or, in some instances, drugs of a single ingredient and purpose only. Conversation with the owners of seed stores developed the fact that many

of these articles were in demand because of the advertising ability of the inventor of the merchandise and not because of any particular ability to do the work which the label claimed the article would do.

Further conversation also developed that any one taking the trouble to study plant diseases, or such injuries as were caused by insect marauders, and would perfect a preparation along the lines of those already in the market, determining to a certainty that the article was really an efficient one for the purpose indicated, would have no difficulty at all in building up a business for his merchandise resulting in a satisfactory showing in the bank account.

The reports of the United States Bureau of Agriculture are well worth serious study by druggists. These reports are based on observations of men who spend their lives in study of the condition, disease or insect destruction, and their recommendations are based on actual knowledge of the requirements of the case. They make many recommendations for remedies, in most cases giving instruction as to the preparation of the remedy, but such instruction usually awes the farmer or plant lover, because of the very natural disinclination to meddle in drug mixing, and here comes the chance of the retail druggist.

If my assumption—that business is an adventure—is correct and that side-lines mean a desire for more business, it is also probably true that these side-lines are added because our drug store owner has room and has time to sell: let us assume that the principal thing on his hands is time and urge him to look into the medicinal needs of plant life and insect discouragers. I feel assured that his interest after a few days or weeks or months of the study of plant life will have repaid him in pleasure of pursuit and knowledge of plant life gained, if there be no other profit. Should he decide that the field is worth while—let him make a special laboratory for the production of one or more plant disease remedies, put in his spare time in manufacturing a little of his spare cash in devising selling means and, after a few years, we will ask him the question—as to which of the two methods of using his spare time is most satisfactory, that of selling side-lines, having no connection whatever with the manufacture or sale of drugs or the needs of the sick, or the use of his spare time in manufacturing some remedy for plant need or a destroyer of plant-infesting insects? I have in mind a preparation used for the destruction of the insect commonly known as rose bug, which I know is not a perfect remedy for this nuisance, but which does in a manner fill the need. The owner of this preparation spent one season in experimental work, giving to various rose growers samples for their use and requesting reports on its efficiency. He spent the following winter in a search for capital and the organization of a close company, and was ready for the market the following season, beginning distribution in February of last year. This preparation, mark you, is not a perfect one, not that it does not kill or discourage rose bugs, but because it does produce a discoloration of the petals of a partly or full blown rose. This may sound like a frivolous or ill-begotten criticism, but it is nevertheless a just criticism of a defect in the preparation. The sales of this article paid dividend on a \$50,000.00 capital invested. Get busy, some of you—perfect a preparation which will meet all the requirements. As an encouragement remember that there are throughout the United States and Canada a possible 20,000,000 customers. If you get a hundredth part of one per cent. of them to purchase your rose bug killer, you will

have built up a business which will keep you busy all of your spare time, meet all of the requirements of your adventurous spirit and make you a financial power in your community.

Just one more instance—a rose grower of my acquaintance, who has the reputation of being the foremost amateur grower in the eastern section of this country, told me of his difficulties in combating rust and fungus diseases of his rose plants. He showed me a formula which he had been using and which gave him perfect results and with which he had but one fault to find—that of its preparation. A study of this formula determined me to make the preparation in concentrated form, so that a teacupful added to five gallons of water would make the spray solution of the right strength. One of the objections to the making of these various rust and fungus disease remedies in large quantity in diluted form is the likelihood of the preparation rapidly deteriorating because of dilution, and here is where the drug store man has his opportunity. Study the needs of the plant grower, make for him a concentrated remedy, which reduces freight costs in shipping; makes it easy for him to mix and apply and because of concentration reduces the likelihood of oxidation.

I was called upon during this summer to purchase the entire arsenic stock of one of our small eastern manufacturers. Their desire to sell all of this stock quite naturally piqued my curiosity to the purpose of finding what use they had had for this arsenic previous to their intent to sell it to me. It did not at all surprise me to learn that they had attempted the manufacture of calcium arsenate and had become completely discouraged because of the manifold difficulties due, principally, to their ignorance of the subject and not lack of market. It is probably no secret to you men of the South that this calcium arsenate is the remedy now much in use for the destruction of the boll weevil. To those of the North, who know something of the terrible inroads on vegetable life of the Japanese beetle, the mere mention of that little pest is a sufficient hint. The potato plant is an important one in the economy of diet. The disease of rust and fungus this plant is subject to are of a trying nature and surely limit its food production. Bordeaux mixture as offered to the potato grower is far from perfect. The opportunity to sell such a product is almost unlimited.

ABSTRACT OF DISCUSSION.

D. F. Jones stated that in the Dakotas insecticides were handled by general stores in large quantities and at competitive prices; as a result, the retailer frequently was compelled to sell at a loss. Others participated in the discussion and the opinion prevailed that the paper presented opportunities for some and opened avenues for related ventures.

PRICE MAINTENANCE.*

BY HENRY B. SMITH.

Price maintenance has been a vital issue of the drug and many other lines of trade for a number of years. The trade pirate or price slaughterer was formerly established in what we style a transient location. He would advertise and put on display all kinds of nationally advertised items at extremely low prices. Should the prospective customers desire to purchase said items the keenest kind of sales-

* Read before the Section on Commercial Interests, A. Ph. A., Asheville meeting, 1923.