

A. C. Taylor brought points of preceding questions into his remarks. He had tried the ownership of three stores and cut prices and was unsuccessful. He then opened a store, with a purpose to give service and make use of his reputation with physicians which had been established; the business was largely in prescriptions and related work. When the war came on the Government occupied a building, back of the store, where several hundred girls were employed. There were no eating places in the neighborhood and he saw an opportunity for serving sandwiches and lunches. He ventured but was fearful of the loss of his prescription trade. Physicians who came to the store made no objection. Some of those served left prescriptions. During the influenza he sent out food. When these employees were no longer needed, this part of the business was discontinued, but many of the patrons of the days of the lunch counter still were customers of the store. In his opinion service was the thing.

William C. Anderson brought out some points of service as a patron; he said the conditions of the neighborhood have a bearing on what the store will be and, no matter what the conditions, service will win trade. He referred to the purchase of tincture of iodine—one, supplied in a cork-stoppered bottle and at another store in a proper bottle for such a preparation; in one store he had purchased ice cream—the carton was wrapped, but the warmth of the hands melted the cream; at another store the carton of ice cream was placed in a paper bag large enough to keep the warmth of the hands from the carton.

Thomas Stoddart said it was the service of the employees that built up a business and held the patronage; having the goods is another essential of business success.

Secretary Philip emphasized the need of saleswomen in the average pharmacy. Mr. Stoddart remarked that he had one store which catered largely to women's patronage and in all of his stores women were employed. Mr. Taylor expressed similar views. Mr. Webster said that the kind of service desired varies—some patrons wish to buy and leave, some want the convenience of a charge account; some like to be shown goods, others become impatient, etc.

The remainder of the morning session was taken up with a discussion of the seventh question, participated in by Messrs. Smith, Stoddart, Anderson, D. B. R. Johnson, Philip, Diner, Webster, Taylor, and others. The points of argument were for and against experience prior to entering colleges of pharmacy—the kind of experience gained by the apprentice in the stores, the practical experience given in colleges; legislation from various viewpoints—the college entrance requirements, the regulations of stores, etc. The consensus of opinions centered on the necessity of coöperation of the several divisions—the colleges should keep in touch with the requirements of pharmacies, and pharmacists should advise with the faculties; the apprentices should be young men who had given some thought to continuing in the work and not merely to be employed.

Chairman Smith appointed the following on the Committee on Nominations: William C. Anderson, J. H. Webster, Thomas Stoddart.

SECOND SESSION.

The second session of the Section on Commercial Interests was called to order by Chairman Henry B. Smith at 10:00 A.M., August 29.

The Chairman called for the reading of the following. It was read by Secretary W. Bruce Philip:

SHALL WE WAIT?

By Samuel S. Dworkin.*

I am not a pessimist but I have recently conducted a survey of conditions in the retail drug field in New York State and conditions as I find them are, to say the least, discouraging. What I have to say has its foundation in fact and if the note I strike is not a happy one, it is because the facts do not seem to warrant my being very optimistic. Pages could be written on the problems involved but I realize that time is limited and I shall be brief, trusting that the discussion will serve to direct attention to the importance of the matter in hand.

What is Pharmacy? Is it a profession, a business, an enterprise or a trade? It seems to me that as it stands to-day it is a combination of a profession, a business and a trade.

Only a comparative few stores stand out as professional pharmacies, fighting against the strong tide of commercialism—standing as a final defense of the profession against the tide that

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threatens to engulf us all. In many stores, as you all know, the prescription department has been removed to an unimportant corner, with a modest sign indicating that physicians' prescriptions still are compounded in the miniature department store which has supplanted the old-time drug store and which actually, if not professedly, now has as one of its many side-lines, drugs, chemicals and professional service. What was at one time, and still should be, the most profitable department of the store, has become the least profitable one. The art of dispensing threatens, in many retail drug stores, to become a lost art. Apprentices who formerly obtained their pharmaceutical training behind the prescription department, now obtain it at the soda fountain, dispensing the latest creations in sandwiches and salads.

This new pharmaceutical "jazz" is producing a condition in the retail drug field which cannot fail to reflect discredit upon our profession. With the tremendous increase in the sales of advertised remedies there has been a diminishing number of sales of prescription medicines until at the present time there are localities in which from seventy-five to ninety-five per cent. of all of the prescriptions compounded call for proprietary products of one kind or another. With the continued simplification in prescribing and the increased use of serums and biological products, the compounding of prescriptions has become increasingly a matter of handling ready-made products rather than the manufacturing of items, the making of which demands pharmaceutical skill.

The physicians are getting their supplies direct from manufacturers or from supply houses controlled by non-pharmacists. I am convinced that the pharmacists generally are overlooking very important future business. I believe that by excluding this part of the biological trade they are forcing physicians to depend upon supply houses and other non-pharmacist dealers. I am of the opinion that biological products will more and more replace certain old-time remedies and that pharmacists who do not make the proper effort to hold this trade will soon find that their prescription business has dwindled away with nothing to take its place. Present-day drug stores will find themselves drugless. Efforts will be made to separate drug stores and pharmacies into two classes and the store that does not keep up with the present apparent trend in medication may find itself in the non-pharmaceutical class.

My survey of New York State revealed the fact that a majority of the pharmacists were not carrying biological products at all and that survey showed that less than ten per cent. of the retailers have proper refrigerators for carrying such stock.

I found, among the answers to the questionnaire that I distributed among the pharmacists in New York State, the following prediction for the future: "The pharmacy," a retail pharmacist wrote me, "will be merely a prophylactic station, as less and less medicine will be used by the public and less and less administered by the physician." Shall we wait unprepared?

It is the duty of this Association to start an aggressive campaign to remedy such conditions and the Committee on Closer Affiliation Between Pharmacists and Physicians should be instructed to start a campaign immediately to encourage prescriptions of more U. S. P. and N. F. preparations and to inaugurate a national movement to stop the distribution of biological products, serums, vaccines and other strictly pharmaceutical preparations by non-pharmacists.

A special committee should be appointed to take charge of biological and serum propaganda. The committee should prepare literature for publication in all the pharmaceutical publications.* Also it should arrange lectures in various local associations and colleges on this subject, teaching, instructing, advising and discussing various phases of this subject. There should also be a sub-committee, members of which should be heads of biological departments of the most prominent and reliable manufacturers, the function of which should be literary and advisory.

This work should begin at once. It is our natural inclination to wait until the deluge practically overwhelms us before we make an effort to save ourselves. This flood we can see approaching and in justice to ourselves and to the pharmacists who will come after us, we should take the steps necessary to avert the threatened catastrophe.

William C. Anderson moved that the paper be received and the recommendation therein referred to the House of Delegates with a favorable recommendation of this Section.

Thomas Stoddart asked whether it was generally known that some of these biologicals were furnished free to physicians. Chairman Smith said that was the case and many cities supplied these serums and vaccines free.

* See *The Pharmaceutical Era*, October 25, 1924, article by M. Colloton. On a related matter see p. 557, Volume 50, PROCEEDINGS, A. PH. A.

L. L. Walton said that some of these products were distributed free by the state; it means a tax, and a protest of some kind would seem timely and helpful.

The motion was seconded.

Redmond Mayo said he had some experience with a physician who had been procuring biologicals from him, but now from the Health Department. When asked why he had changed, he said, "there was such a variation in prices" and also admitted that "the Health Department was very liberal in giving out these products."

Chairman Smith and L. L. Walton referred to the expiration dates of these products. The former also mentioned the fact that manufacturers carried the stock in the larger business centers.

The motion was carried.

The following papers were read, discussed and referred for publication:

"Retail Selling" by Turner F. Currens.

"Service Helps Success" by E. H. Breckon.

"The Drug Store Window and Its Potentialities As an Advertising Medium" by F. H. Peck.

The Chairman called for the report of the Secretary; it follows:

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SECTION ON COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.

By W. Bruce Philip.

All the success of this section in the way of program is due to the efforts of President Henry B. Smith. (Personally, I do not favor papers read by title or valuable time taken to present papers by absent authors. Those that give their time and money to attend these meetings are entitled to every hour of the sessions; at best, this time is too short.) The West is four days' travel from Buffalo; eight days going and coming. All the Western men in attendance at this Convention, with the exception of myself, are strictly college men. They are contributing to the scientific and conference work of this Convention, hence the absence of papers by them before the Section on Commercial Interests, though an earnest effort was made to have some of our successful commercial men come to Buffalo and meet with this Section.

There is no question in my mind of the value of this Section on Commercial Interests. There is, however, in my opinion, a doubt as to whether we are following the best method of developing this Section so that it will be of the greatest value to pharmacy, including our Association. In offering the following my ideas may appear radical, but they are the result of study over a long period of organization work spent in solving practical commercial problems. I hope in offering these suggestions I do not intrude on the privilege of our worthy chairman. I believe the Section on Commercial Interests should be the means of drawing the pharmacists of the different local centers where the conventions are held into the American Pharmaceutical Association. To do this we must have their coöperation and their help. I think it is a mistake to have the Secretary of this Section living at a great distance from the President. Correspondence by mail is not satisfactory. If the President of this Section was from the Convention City the Secretary of this Section could be selected from the same place, assuring team work and greater coöperation. Every large city has its commercial problems. With the President and Secretary from the Convention City these local problems in commercial pharmacy would be brought before this Section and fully discussed, giving opinions relative to a solution of them from pharmacists all over the United States. Credit for problems thus solved by this Section of the American Pharmaceutical Association would be valuable. It would prove the worth of our Association and increase our membership among retail pharmacists. A canvass of the Buffalo druggists just a few weeks ago by a friend of mine revealed the fact that quite a few of them did not know that there was to be an American Pharmaceutical Association meeting here; others had no idea of the date of this meeting and still others did not understand that they could or should attend. Would the plan I suggest remedy this? Yes, if the efforts now used by the officers of this Section and communicated to the hundreds that cannot attend were concentrated to the hundreds of members and non-members within car-fare distance of the Convention Hall; it is true that meetings may be held in other than big cities, but there are always in the neighborhood of meeting places druggists that have their problems; the solution of these is an essential part of commercial pharmacy.