

of unjust criticism by foreigners who have thrust on China many vices; when conditions are sifted down China is in a much healthier state than some of the European countries. Unfortunately, there are a few in China who are causing a great deal of trouble who do not represent the law-abiding Chinese citizen."

PRESCRIPTION PRICING PSYCHOLOGY.*

BY JOHN CULLEY.

The study of this great universe of ours is built around one science called Philosophy. All real data or knowledge concerning the material part of this world is sensible and together with the laws regulating the changes in matter is called the science of physics. Things existing in the mind but not in reality—things which go beyond our sense of reason, where reason is valueless—are termed the science of meta-physics. That portion of the latter science which is exclusively occupied with the phenomena of the human mind is called Psychology. Thought transference, mental telepathy, hypnotism, suggestion, are all psychological problems.

A physician's written prescription naturally falls within the scope of these two sciences. The physical or material part of a prescription is the mere scrap of paper it is written upon and the bottle or box of medicine delivered to the patient. The meta-physical or psychological side of the prescription is the faith—the credence—the assurance—the confidence existing within the mind of the patient that the prescription was written by the doctor as the result of a most careful and correct diagnosis and that the prescription was compounded most carefully and correctly with the purest of drugs by an educated, well-trained, experienced and qualified pharmacist, and the further supposition that the medicine will produce the desired results. This psychological belief in the efficacy of the compounded prescription should be instilled by suggestion into the mind of the patient by both physician and pharmacist for the mutual benefit of all three.

Human beings have dual minds—conscious and the subconscious—the conscious mind being sensible to the material or physical side of life and the subconscious being susceptible to the psychological or suggestive side. We are all more or less susceptible to suggestion of thought—a mild form of hypnotism if you will. To any suggestion that comes to us, we subconsciously apply the critical faculty. We enquire within the innermost recesses of our minds whether there is a logical reason for or against it, whether it is in line with our wishes. If we desire it so—we subconsciously believe it is so.

How to produce this psychological impression—how to use a little thought transference or mental telepathy on the mind of the patient and with a physical or material profit to us—is our problem.

There is a song used in my section of the country that begins thus,—“God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.”

The scientifically trained pharmacist should emulate the idea conveyed in this quotation and perform his wonders of compounding in a mysterious way.

Alchemy was the forerunner of all sciences and especially that of pharmacy, and depended very largely for its very existence upon this force of mystery; yet

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

those who practiced that art were looked upon by the laity as being men of great ability, intelligence and learning far above the man in the ordinary walks of life. Pharmacists to-day are accorded that same honor of intellectuality, learning and ability. Pharmacy being the modern child of this ancient and mysterious science can look back with a great deal of pride upon its ancestor's achievements and can honorably and well afford to capitalize this heritage of mystery.

The scientifically trained pharmacist of to-day will therefore start the mental suggestions by compounding the prescription beyond closed doors, away from the curious eyes and annoyances, in a manner that is more or less shrouded in mystery, and paving the way to incidentally collect a compounding or professional fee in addition to the price of the drugs entering therein.

In order to create or produce the psychological impression within the mind of the patient that our charge is right and just, it is necessary to coördinate our scientific attainments and knowledge of meta-physics with a little common sense and good judgment. Everything that is of value, luxuries or necessities, should be dressed in a package that will in some way convey the idea of its value. The one thing that a person considers most precious is health, therefore the things that will give to us health must necessarily be considered the most valuable.

Now let us see how this theory will work in practice. Why should we not dress up a prescription for a dozen pills in a beautiful nest of white or pink cotton within a good quality of pill box thereby psychologically conveying the mental suggestion upon the subconscious mind of the patient that the remedy is not only valuable from a therapeutical standpoint but also from a monetary one. It will enable us to collect an increased charge on the suggestion conveyed that the pills are far from being of the ordinary kind; that they must be of extraordinary quality, more precious and of a rare variety; more efficacious, therefore more valuable, to deserve such marked attention and unusual care, and that we appreciate the fact by virtue of our education and experience along pharmaceutical lines.

A prescription calling for a dozen Compound Cathartic Pills dispensed in full view of the patient and dumped in the pill box in the ordinary manner is worth perhaps twenty-five cents and will do about as much good. Take that same prescription and fill it in the manner suggested, within the confines of a private room and charge seventy-five cents for it, and what happens? The first impression within the mind of the customer is that the medicine must be good because it costs so much and if it is so good it must produce the desired results. We have put into that medicine something that was not in the two-bit article—Faith.

Any physician will tell us that half the battle in healing the sick is won if he can only impart to the patient the idea of faith in the treatment he is giving.

Why should we not help along this idea of faith in the medicine by a little psychological suggestion as in the pill case and, incidentally, collect an additional fee for the service?

The mental suggestions that good things come in packages of individuality can be further carried out in the prescription department in various and many ways by exercising a little of the native intellectuality we are supposed to have inherited.

Prescriptions calling for drop doses and eye treatments should be dispensed in bottles with a dropper stopper and all enclosed within a box made especially for that size of bottle. Two prescriptions of the same size should be dispensed in bottles

of different shape. Two or more prescriptions for pills or tablets should be placed in different shaped boxes or of different colors; capsules and tablets of Gland products should be dispensed in screw cap bottles. Ointments in jars and not tin boxes. Suppositories in boxes specially designed for them. Several prescriptions coming from the same patient should carry different and odd prices, and never be priced all alike, else the impression has been passed that all prescriptions cost the same.

These are little things but it is these little things that produce the right impression and make the customer pleased to pay the price.

Some will say that it is impossible to collect an increased price for a prescription in advance of or above the regular prescribed profit and that the idea is founded on a fallacy. A prescription is the one and only thing in a pharmacy relative to which the customer cannot talk price and cut-rates, whereas the pharmacist can talk quality, science and give service. There is no competition in brains.

The patient will gladly pay the price for quality and service and the higher the price to a reasonable degree the greater the psychological impression it will make. It will serve to instil within the mind of the patient that faith that is necessary for the cure of disease.

Let us try the psychology on ourselves, call it auto-suggestion. If we lack confidence in our own judgment we can't blame other people if they share the feeling. The only thing to do is to try it out. I did; this is the result. A year or two ago our average price for prescriptions was 67 cents; we have gradually increased the price until it is now \$1.03 and growing. The materials did not cost us any more, in fact less, so the profit must have raised—at least an average of 36 cents on each. The average profit on 1000 prescriptions filled at psychology prices will be about \$750.00. Can any department in the store show a turnover and profit like that?

How can we excuse ourselves for charging a real professional price for services rendered in addition to the cost of the goods. There is no excuse necessary. Sometime ago there appeared a cartoon in a newspaper regarding the high prices of food. The cartoon was in three sections, the middle section being absolutely black, the first section showed a farmer selling his potatoes to the grocer at \$1.00 per hundred weight, the third section showed the grocer selling them at \$4.00 the hundred, and the title of the picture was "What happened in the dark?" We all know what happened in this case, overhead expense and loss, etc. In the case of a prescription what happens in the dark is of an entirely different character.

In addition to the merchandise and business over-head costs which enter into a prescription the pharmacist adds other thing—years of costly education, scientific ability and protection. The pharmacist in this case ceases to be a merchant but becomes a professional man and also a producer. He produces a value to the drugs that were not there before, he produces by his professional ability and psychological suggestions faith and confidence in the medicine and a small fee for services rendered is but fair and just and is gladly paid by those receiving it.

PREScription PRICE LIST.

Liquids—teaspoonful doses.	3 ounces.....	\$.85-1.00
1 ounce.....	4 ounces.....	1.00-1.25
2 ounces.....	6 ounces.....	1.25-1.50

8 ounces.....	\$1.50-1.75	Capsules and powders.
12 ounces.....	1.75-2.00	12 for.....
16 ounces.....	2.00-2.50	18 for.....
Dessertspoonful doses about	10% less	24 for.....
Tablespoonful doses about.....	15% less	50 for.....
Eye drops and drop doses.		100 for.....
1 ounce or less.....	\$.75 up	Suppositories.
Argyrol and like solutions.		\$1.00 for.....
On basis of 10% solutions at..	\$.50 an ounce	Ointments—Eye Ointments, 50-75 Drachm tubes.
On basis of 15% solutions at..	.75 an ounce	1 ounce.....
Pills. Tablets of ordinary cost.		2 ounces.....
12.....	\$.40-.50	3 ounces.....
3 cents each up to 50 pills.....		4 ounces.....
50 for.....	1.00	8 ounces.....
100 for.....	1.50-2.00	

Proprietary remedies dispensed in original bottles, charged at double the cost.

When any narcotic is added to any ordinary prescription, a charge is made for that ingredient and 25 cents added to cover registration.

Drugs of an expensive character are dispensed at not less than double the cost in addition to the regular charge for powders, capsules, etc.

PRICE SCHEDULE.*

BY CHARLES R. WEILLS.

The following pricing schedule is one similar to that used in a chain store group in a large Eastern city. It has been found to be very practical and after one becomes familiar with the outline it is only a matter of a few seconds to properly price a product. The schedule is comprehensive enough to cover almost every need and if any point is lacking it can easily be supplied by making comparisons with other values.

PROPRIETARIES.

Where proprietaries are sold over the counter in broken packages the following schedule is used.

Selling price per pint.	1/2 oz.	1 oz.	2 oz.	3 oz.	4 oz.	8 oz.
.50	.10	.10	.15	.20	.25	.35
.75	.10	.15	.25	.30	.35	.50
1.00	.10	.15	.25	.35	.45	.65
1.25	.15	.20	.30	.40	.50	.75
1.50	.15	.20	.35	.45	.55	.90
1.75	.15	.25	.40	.50	.60	1.00
2.00	.15	.25	.45	.60	.75	1.25
2.25	.20	.30	.50	.70	.85	1.35
2.50	.25	.35	.60	.75	.90	1.50
3.00	.25	.35	.65	.85	1.00	1.75
3.50	.25	.40	.75	1.00	1.25	2.00
4.00	.25	.45	.85	1.15	1.35	2.25
4.50	.35	.60	1.00	1.25	1.50	2.50
5.00	.40	.75	1.10	1.40	1.65	2.75

For prescriptions, add 20 cents to the above prices for labeling, container, etc.

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