

With the "Boy Scouts' Sale," the druggist had cards printed bearing a special list of goods and the Boy Scouts went from door to door making sales, delivering goods, collecting money; and all the druggist was out was the cost of the cards and his prizes. We have tried this stunt twenty-five times, and it always brings in business. The prizes consisted of Boy Scouts' necessities.

"The Balloon Ascension" was a good one. We advertised a "Big Balloon Ascension" at 3:00 P.M. Of course, everybody expected a great big gas-filled balloon, and we came out with 100 gas-filled toy balloons. Each balloon carried a coupon giving the boy or girl a prize. In this case it was a cake of soap for every balloon and ten other valuable prizes: a camera, candy, cigars, razor, book, thermos bottle, perfume, toilet set, etc., these prizes taken out of stock. At three o'clock there were between eight hundred and a thousand people jammed in the streets and the police department was called out to aid traffic in getting under way. That store took in \$398.00 on that day, and its average had been \$78.00 per day, and the good work was evidenced in the nice growth thereafter.

"The Christmas Tree Sale" is one of the prettiest and also one of the most productive. Last year we had about thirty stores working it. Begin about December 1st to give out sales tickets and descriptive literature on the stunt. About December 15th put up the tree with all the tinsel, toys, lights, etc., that Santa Claus usually brings. Tie fifty wrapped packages of presents on the tree, numbered from one to fifty, and to the person bringing in the greatest total in dollars and cents of sale tickets give first choice of the prizes on the tree. Then follow it down to the fiftieth person—and there will be fifty. Every one of our Christmas Tree sales proved a business getter; and at one store on Christmas Eve the winner of first choice had sales tickets totaling \$79.80, the smallest amount, the fiftieth person, was \$12.75. This druggist took in sales tickets amounting to nearly \$3200.00. Then to every person holding \$10.00 worth of tickets he gave a prize box of Christmas Candy. This store used to do \$16.00 to \$20.00. It's now running around \$78.00 and \$85.00 a day—but, he advertises every week.

The word "Advertising" possesses all the elements of success if put into action:

ACTIVITY	ENERGY	SIMPLICITY
DETERMINATION	RESOURCEFULNESS	INGENUITY
VERACITY	TENACITY	NEIGHBORLINESS
	INTEREST	GINGER

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## THE PROPER TRAINING FROM A PRACTICAL STANDPOINT, NECESSARY FOR A DISPENSING PHARMACIST.\*<sup>1</sup>

BY P. H. DIRSTINE.

In presenting for your consideration this paper entitled, "The Proper Training from a Practical Standpoint, Necessary for a Dispensing Pharmacist," I realize I am dealing with a pedagogical subject that might well come before the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. My purpose in presenting it here is that we

\* Section on Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing, A. PH. A., St. Louis meeting, 1927.

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may get the reaction, perhaps, of practical pharmacists, other than teachers of pharmacy. I hope that the practical men of pharmacy, those engaged in operating stores of their own, may comment freely on the suggestions or any ideas advanced in this paper.

Perhaps there is no other profession in which the field of activity has changed so much in the last 25 years as has that of Pharmacy. Twenty-five years ago when you heard the word "drug store," you had a fairly definite idea as to the service you might expect to receive from such an establishment. Not only that, but you were reasonably sure of certain general characteristics, as to its appearance. The glass globes of various shapes and sizes filled with bright, sparkling colored water, were considered standard pieces of equipment. In addition to these, the row after row of glass-labeled shelf bottles, told you instantly that you were in a drug store.—All this has changed.

The change was gradual at first, but assuredly most rapid during the last few years. To-day we find three classes of so-called "drug stores." Each class indicates quite definitely the character of service that is rendered by it. First, we have the utility store which caters in varying degrees to both the professional dispensing side and the strictly commercial side of pharmacy. Second, we have the strictly commercial store that does not cater to the professional side of pharmacy. It usually has but little of this professional business and, in fact, many times the owners wish there was less or no prescription business at all. Third, and lastly, we have the exclusive prescription store, professional to the last degree in its aims and in the service rendered. This store is growing by leaps and bounds and is daily gaining in favor with the public, as well as with the medical profession. It is this store with which this paper is primarily concerned.

A few years ago it might have seemed more or less of an anomaly that a professional man should receive a training that in many of its aspects is basically practical, and in many ways borders on the commercial. But that is the purpose of this paper. In the following remarks I shall call your attention to the practical training I feel that is *not* now given, and is essential and absolutely necessary in colleges of pharmacy, that their graduates may be properly prepared to render the most efficient service to their profession as dispensing pharmacists.

During the last several years there has grown up in nearly every city of 25,000 population, or more, a class of highly ethical, scientific pharmacies, catering to a highly specialized trade, exclusively that of the physician. Why has this taken place? Probably because of three major reasons: In the old type of utility store it is more difficult to-day to make a success than formerly. The chances of failure, with chain stores and "cut rate" establishments on each side, is a question to be considered in the opening of any business to-day. The first reason was to get away from this "cut rate," chain store business, into a field entirely different. Again it was a desire to be more of a professional man in the eyes of the medical world and the public in general. Third, came the fact that an exclusive prescription business stood fair to return a greater profit with less work and a smaller stock and a cleaner business. But to-day we find fields overcrowded with exclusive prescription stores, they are cutting prices in many places, giving costly service to doctors and the public, without charge, until to-day we find in many places the competition as keen and the return as uncertain as in other fields of pharmacy.

In the commercial field of pharmacy, proprietors and managers have used every means and all their energy to cut down overhead; to turn stocks, to increase efficiency through better selling, a better and more complete knowledge of products handled, and in every way increasing and bettering the service rendered. The schools have assisted a great deal in preparing their graduates for this work by including business subjects especially adapted for pharmacy work. Little thought has been given to the preparation and training of a scientific, professional pharmacist from a practical standpoint. It has been thought that the scientific training given by the average School of Pharmacy was enough. Any of you who have been employed in or have owned an exclusive prescription store, certainly have had occasion to watch men with years of experience, perhaps men who have owned and operated successful, excellent, general drug stores of their own, who when placed in an exclusive prescription store were as bewildered, confused and as absolutely useless, from an efficiency standpoint, as anyone could possibly be. Therefore, it seems that the scientific pharmacist needs to-day some very definite training, in order to be successful and efficient.

The following suggestions are not listed in the order of their importance and no attempt has been made to evaluate them in one, two or three order. I wish, first, to call your attention to the development of *speed*. Expert prescription men are paid more than other pharmacists, outside of the proprietor or manager. Therefore, it is necessary that they turn out the work. The development of speed, rapidity in prescription filling, is a most important asset in any prescription man. It is shown by the fact that a number of State Boards in their prescription and practical examination work grade the candidates by the watch. I cannot help but feel that in our teaching of practical dispensing we could not do better than follow the lead of the State Examining Committees, and put a premium on speed. It is useless to comment on the slowness of some men who call or consider themselves prescription men.

There is one great field in medicine and pharmacy which has grown up in the last few years where our pharmacy graduates are at present wholly unprepared. I refer to the field of *Biologicals*. The up-to-date physician, calling by telephone, to the average pharmacist, to-day, finds him woefully weak in his knowledge of package biologicals. Even if this pharmacist has had the average course in bacteriology, he is not able to render rapid and efficient service to the physician or public, unless he has trained himself in the various manufactured biological products following his graduation. I would suggest that a course dealing with this subject be required of all pharmacists.

Much has been written relative to the arrangement of a utility drug store, or a strictly merchandising drug store, but little do you see written relative to the equipment and arrangement of a scientific pharmacy. All you need to do to satisfy yourself that this needs adequate study, is to visit exclusive prescription stores and see their mistakes. Things that they would not do if they had it to do over again. The arrangement of drugs from the standpoint of convenience, conservation of space, and rapidity of work, will certainly pay a good return for many hours of study. Some few years ago I entered a member store of a large chain in San Francisco and made myself known and was shown through the store. At last we came to the prescription room on the balcony. This store did a large

business, being one of the largest stores in the West. There on the prescription case rested three leather bound books. They were for the pasting in of prescriptions, and covered, when opened as they were at this time, a space of 27 square feet. Again, in one of the largest exclusive prescription stores on the Pacific Coast, I found a patented prescription box with a lid. This box was 8 to 9 inches high by 8 inches wide by 10 inches long and held 1000 prescriptions. Thousands of dollars had been spent in this method of filing the prescriptions. It is safe to say that not less than 1000 square feet of wall space, running 16 feet high, has been covered with shelves holding these boxes of prescriptions. Certainly the right, economical method of prescription filing, if taught, would save our graduates thousands and thousands of dollars. Not only is it a great saving in money, but from the convenience and rapidity of handling, there is no possible comparison.

Anyone who has worked, to any extent, in a modern drug store prescription department, or otherwise, is familiar with doctors' prescriptions and orders by telephone. Many physicians are very short in giving their orders and as a result the new graduate, when he first begins to work, is frightened stiff whenever a doctor calls to give him a prescription. Many doctors realize they have a green man on the line and proceed to have a little sport or, in some cases, as soon as the new man shows any weakness in taking prescriptions, they hesitate in calling the store and send their business to some store where they feel justified in placing their confidence. You cannot blame the doctor. The trouble is our own. We have neglected this, a most practical phase of scientific pharmacy. This fall, the dispensing laboratory at the State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington, will be equipped with 40 private telephones. A private telephone will be on each student's desk, for his exclusive use. We hope in this way to overcome the nervous conditions of our students in taking telephone prescriptions and orders and give them the most practical training possible in this field.

A student entering upon a four-year college course, regardless of the character of that course, cannot do better than spend enough time to learn to operate a typewriter reasonably well. Especially is this necessary in pharmacy as the old "hunt and peck" system is too slow for the average drug store to-day. A student who typewrites his notes finds that he is well paid for doing so, and when he engages in his professional career as a scientific pharmacist, it will aid him in many ways and save him much time.

The average new pharmacy graduate has much difficulty reading the every-day prescriptions which he receives in his daily work. Prescription reading is an art that is developed only with practice and experience. It many times is one of the weakest phases of a college course. There are two methods which I believe in and have found to be effective: The students are required to read prescriptions three hours every week, in class, under faculty supervision. Thousands and thousands of these prescriptions are read by each individual student. These prescriptions are obtained from drug stores all over the Northwest and are written by hundreds of different doctors in various and wide-spread localities. Toward the end of the course the most difficult prescriptions obtainable are thrown upon a 12 × 12 screen, by means of a delineascope, and individual members are called upon to read them at sight. This can be done very rapidly and gives an accurate check on any weak member of the class.

My last recommendation is that more time and instruction be given in training the student in the proper method and technique for the preparation and administration of arsenicals. This is one phase of pharmacy where a good scientific training in antiseptics, sterilization and bacteriological technique is sure to demonstrate itself, and is certainly appreciated by the medical profession, far beyond any monetary value it may return. It is not always possible to reap a money value return on all of our scientific training, but the prestige that comes in a business way to the man who is highly trained, from a scientific and professional standpoint, is by no means small.

During the last several years the tendency in this country in all lines of educational work has been to fill college faculty positions with only men and women of higher degrees. Along with this tendency referred to, we have seen schools of pharmacy fill their faculties with men and women with the higher degree the only requisite to qualify for the position. A fairly large per cent of these faculty folk, in many instances, have not had three months, if any, practical experience in a drug store. Others may have spent one or two years in a drug store twenty years ago, and have not worked in a drug store a day since that time, yet consider themselves perfectly qualified to teach present-day pharmacy. Is it any wonder that we have so many graduates who know very little or nothing whatever of practical pharmacy, as it is to-day, and find after graduation that they have two-thirds of their education yet to obtain from the hard knocks encountered in the practical every-day life of a pharmacist?

The greatest indictment against pharmacy, in my estimation, is that 50 per cent of those who attempt State Board Examinations fail to satisfy the practical every-day pharmacists, who make up these examining committees, that they know their profession and should be permitted to practice. I feel that presidents of colleges and universities and deans of colleges and schools could not do better than to look more carefully into the experience and practical training of their teaching personnel. I would even go so far as to definitely recommend that faculty members associate themselves, during their vacations, with drug stores and in this way insure that their teaching is practical and modern, and represents pharmacy as it is practiced to-day, both from a commercial and professional standpoint.

#### ABSTRACT OF DISCUSSION.

The author prefaced his paper by stating that the suggestions made were drawn from his experiences in teaching during the past fifteen years and the vacation periods of the last ten or twelve years, when he was engaged in drug stores; he had also profited by discussions and conversations with former students and visits to drug stores. He had quit an exclusive prescription store two days before coming to the A. Ph. A. convention.

**J. B. Christgau** brought out the importance of speed, as well as accuracy, in prescription practice.

**C. W. Holton** asked for further explanation of the author's prescription filing system. In reply Mr. Dirstine described the method.

**O. P. M. Canis** contended that speed in prescription filling came with practice; he also briefly outlined the method followed, in the school with which he was connected, for teaching prescription practice.

**George Judisch** said that the difficulty with the prescriptionist was not so much lack of speed as lack of skill in compounding and deficient pride in the product.

**Leonard A. Seltzer** referred to Dr. Prescott's motto: "Accuracy, neatness and dispatch."

**J. B. Christgau** considered speed important; in his experience the average man "loafed on the job" in prescription compounding.

**P. H. Dirstine** admitted the importance of quality dispensing, but it should be combined with speed.

**D. H. Spencer** complimented the paper and agreed with the author in the essentials of his paper; speed in dispensing should follow after the fundamentals had been mastered.

**Clyde M. Snow** was impressed with the practice followed by the author in spending the greater part of vacations in pharmacies to gain further knowledge and experience. He also inferred that a pharmacy student should be taught how to make a living as a result of his training in a College of Pharmacy.

**W. Bruce Philip** referred to the author's method of filing; in his opinion the last five thousand prescriptions should be divided into five hundreds, as of the last five hundred more would be refilled; he also suggested the placing of a card board between each hundred of prescriptions.

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### LEAKS IN LAWS.\*

BY A. L. I. WINNE.

Most statutory law of a regulatory character is very much like a fisherman's net after a hard season's use. The holes through which the big and little fish may escape seem always to be present. No matter with what care a bill may be prepared and no matter with what care it may be examined before enactment, there usually is found a few accessible exits for the culpable who may be enmeshed.

All of us who have had anything to do with the enactment of pharmacy laws, and with their enforcement, are aware of the weaknesses in our own particular set of regulatory sections. Those of us who have examined the pharmacy laws of other states have been able to pick flaws in them, and to point out their weaknesses. There is no such thing as a perfectly expressed regulatory statute, and there probably never will be such a thing so long as the English language is what it is. If it were possible to put into cold type the exact intentions which we had in mind, to so express our thoughts as to render them susceptible of but one reasonable interpretation, we have two barriers yet to be handled before we could expect the results from our laws which we desire. The first of these would be the extreme likelihood that our bill would be amended by some enthusiastic legislator, so as to render it impotent to an extent. The second, and by far the more serious consideration, is the proneness of human kind to view questions from differing angles, to interpret the meaning of words according to their light or to suit their convenience, or to serve their purposes. Most tests of pharmacy laws are made before juries and nobody knows what a jury will ever do with a set of facts and the laws applying to those facts. Few pharmacy statutes are ever constructed by higher courts, although some have been so passed upon. Ordinarily, the verdict of the lower court stands.

In addition to the above few possible contingencies there might also be mentioned the effect of local sentiment where attempts are made to prosecute some transgressor. These prosecutions are usually started by the state authorities

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\* Section on Education and Legislation, A. Ph. A., St. Louis meeting, 1927.

and they are often regarded as outsiders interfering with the affairs of local citizens, and there frequently is shown a poorly disguised resentment. Certainly the defense attorney is smart enough to capitalize this phase of the matter in many instances, and it frequently happens that justice is cheated.

I am not here attempting to say that laws regulating the practice of pharmacy are useless or that they should be discarded. I believe in sane regulatory provisions, and have done much in my own state toward securing such changes in our laws as would keep us in step with the procession. What I am attempting to say is that the answer to the solution of our many vexing problems in pharmacy is not going to be found, in my humble opinion, in more and more legislation. We must have such provisions as will discourage the quacks and the charlatans who would usurp the prerogatives of our calling, but the numerous attempts to enact laws which will stem the economic trends of to-day are more or less futile. Some temporary advantages may be secured in spots, but in the long run if the advantages we have so secured are useful only to serve selfish ends, or are not in the public interest in fact, they will eventually be wrested from us, either directly or indirectly.

That we are overburdened with problems that are vexing and destructive is readily conceded, and that something must be done about the situation is readily agreed to by most of us, but how to do it is where we hold little unanimity of opinion. I believe that the answer, and the only answer, lies not in perpetual legislation, but in education.

I am not going to attempt to say to the men whose business it is to teach how they should teach, but I do know that there is a wide-spread feeling that as a whole the schools of pharmacy are falling down on the job of training the students they are turning out into the field so as to meet the requirements of the job. I know that many educators feel that after they have trained the student in professional pharmacy their job is completed, and they resent the suggestion that the schools should train men in commercial matters. I would suggest, however, that if the schools of pharmacy will not teach these subjects there is nowhere else for the student to get such training except by a tortuous course in the university of hard knocks, and in the meantime he is not a credit to the school which turns him out on the market branded with its stamp of approval.

If you will pardon a parenthetical paragraph which has a bearing on this phase of the matter I will stop for a moment to tell you of a criticism which came to my attention recently. It is of course somewhat exaggerated, but it carries a point. A man who is in constant contact with the retail drug trade, and who is himself a graduate and a registered pharmacist, talking about the present-day pharmacy schools, said that from his viewpoint the schools were almost entirely missing their mark. He directed my attention, first to the fact that about ninety per cent of modern drug-store activity is in the commercial end of the business, and that the schools were pretty nearly ignoring that aspect of the game. That left, he said, ten per cent of total drug-store activity in the professional sphere, and he said that he is of the opinion that the schools are not even recognizing their obligations in this limited professional area. He enumerated the things the schools are stressing most vigorously as being the very things for which the practicing pharmacist has little or no practical use in his daily grind. He mentioned the rigorous drilling in chemistry, botany, bacteriology, the attention given to botanical drugs, the

microscope work and other activities, all of which he conceded was of some small value to a pharmacist, but not nearly of so much importance as the schools would have us believe them to be. He then mentioned a few of the shortcomings of the schools, as he saw them, such, for instance, as their failure to realize the growing importance of biologicals and to properly train their graduates in that line. He said that it was his opinion that many doctors would like to use certain biologicals at times, but that they were not always informed about these preparations and would like to be able to pick up the information they wanted from their druggists but that the druggists knew next to nothing about them and cannot help the doctor out. Both lose there. As with this, so with other every-day matters. He mentioned the arsenicals. Most druggists know little about them. The schools are not telling them much about them. And so on, he enumerated instances of where the schools were failing to train their men to meet the conditions found in the ordinary every-day prescription department. In his opinion the schools were giving the student a lot of stuff for which he would never find any use and were neglecting to give him information which he could make profitable use of every day, and he finally summed the matter up by saying that the schools were teaching the students about ten per cent of what they need to get along behind the prescription counter and that they had to learn the other ninety per cent by experience after they entered the stores. Thus he figured the matter out to his own satisfaction that the pharmacy schools of to-day are about one per cent efficient in meeting the requirements of the modern-day drug store. He probably has underrated the matter, but a lot of us believe that you are falling a long way short of one hundred per cent efficiency. Talk this proposition over with some of the men who have left your school and gone out into the world. Get them to open up and tell you what in their opinion a man who is going into a retail pharmacy to earn his living, and incidentally to attach himself to the pay roll of a hard-boiled business man, should be taught by the school that trains him for that work. Some of them are going to tell you that you gave them a pretty good training in the things you trained them in, but that you missed your guess if you thought you were training them adequately for modern-day, retail, drug store work.

The pharmacy schools have the future of pharmacy in their keeping. It is a large responsibility and it is a splendid opportunity. If you are going to shut your eyes to many conditions that exist and go on plodding in the same old rut that has been followed too long already, you are going to dry up and die in that rut, and be forgotten without any regrets. But if you will wake up to the fact that you are there to train men for a business as well as to train them in the diminishing professional department of that business, and inform yourselves of the requirements to be met, and meet them adequately and intelligently, you will justify your existence. Pharmacy's problems are going to be understood and solved if you train the next generation of pharmacies to do what this generation will never be able to do—intelligently measure the whole field, pharmaceutical and economic, accurately gauge causes and effects, sift out facts from fiction, become an intelligent merchant as well as a competent pharmacist. You have an opportunity to help speed the day of this condition. If you make the most of this opportunity, you will contribute more toward the ultimate permanent welfare of the pharmacist than all the laws the rest of us may have enacted in the meantime.