

DENTAL DRUGS AND PREPARATIONS—ACCEPTED AND NON-ACCEPTED.*

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The pharmacist has a definite responsibility when creating a demand for his professional service among men of the dental profession.

It may be said, without comment, that the pharmacist's first responsibility should be scientific accuracy in compounding prescriptions. So closely correlated with this that it can be considered as part of the same responsibility should be the purity and quality of the drugs used.

In order to exercise his professional skill, the pharmacist must create a demand for his services. Emphasis must be placed—not on the merchandising of packaged products but on the creation of a demand for official products. He must fall in line with the campaigners for dental drugs and preparations official in the U. S. P. and N. F. That campaign is of sufficient importance to warrant having a paper devoted in its entirety to that subject, and does not come within the scope of this paper.

Closely related to the professional integrity which must accompany the pharmacist's scientific skill is his responsibility regarding the sale of packaged products.

It has been said that there are very few exceptions to the rule that every patented or proprietary preparation is a modification of drugs and preparations official in the U. S. P. and N. F. This statement should offer a strong argument for pharmacists urging dentists to use official drugs. The prescribing of official drugs by the dentist not only permits the pharmacist to engage in the profession for which he was trained but also allows the dentist individuality in writing his prescriptions. However, national advertising by manufacturers of packaged products has made the selection, sale and recommendation of such products an important problem to the pharmacist. With such a statement in mind let us consider briefly the case of the patent drug manufacturer.

I should like to preface my remarks with the statement that I am not waging a campaign against the honest manufacturer of a non-secret preparation with true claims as to its therapeutic action. I mean to strike only at the manufacturer of secret remedies and medications with false claims.

Before proceeding I should like to make a few simple distinctions between the terms "patent," "secret," "nostrum" and "proprietary" remedies.

A "patented" medicine in the legal sense is a medicine whose composition or method of making or both have been patented in the United States Patent office or the office of a foreign country. Strictly speaking, a "patented" medicine is not a secret, because its composition must appear in the patent specifications and after seventeen years, when the patent expires, it becomes public property. A "patent" medicine—patent without the "ed" is generally considered as any medicine of secret composi-

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tion which is advertised directly to the public usually for self-medication. A "nostrum" is any patented or secret remedy. A "proprietary" remedy, according to the Council on Dental Therapeutics of the American Dental Association, is any chemical, drug or similar preparation used in the treatment of disease if such is protected against free competition as to name, product, composition or process of manufacture.

If the manufacturer of an article wishes to mark it with a distinctive device or brand, if he has that device trade-marked he is protected against anyone using that trade-mark without his permission so long as he makes general use of the trade-mark himself.

A common interpretation of the terms "patent" and "proprietary" is summed up in the statement, "all nostrums advertised and sold directly to the public are referred to as 'patent medicines;' those advertised directly only to physicians and dentists are spoken of as 'proprietaryes.'"

A pharmacist should not sell, or offer for sale, preparations, the ingredients of which are not known to the medical profession. Secrecy concerning ingredients or false claims made for the therapeutic action of the ingredients should immediately condemn the article. In this respect the pharmacist can be a most important factor in housecleaning the drug world of at least some of its cure-all venders and thereby increase both the doctor's and layman's confidence in medicaments in general. In this respect the pharmacist should feel a definite responsibility to all persons requiring his services.

Advertising has become a tremendously powerful weapon to nostrum manufacturers; \$70,000,000 a year are spent by the makers and distributors of such medicines to promote their use. Every conceivable method is used to popularize such medicines. I do not mean to infer, however, that all products advertised under this \$70,000,000 program do not merit the use by and the recommendation of the medical and dental professions or the recognition of the pharmacist—but it must be remembered that national advertising does not necessarily guarantee the worth of a product. In fact, the present-day maze of extravagant advertising makes it difficult to determine the true merit of a preparation.

The American Dental Association has a Council, similar to that of the American Medical Association, which was organized to determine the worth of various drugs and preparations used in dentistry. It organized so that men in the dental profession could take guess work out of the use of their medicaments and dentifrices. The reports of the Council on Dental Therapeutics should be a source of information for the pharmacist. The Council determines the therapeutic and scientific usefulness of products manufactured for dental use. The organization of that Council is the American Dental Association's attempt to rid its ranks of unscrupulous manufacturers who have no regard for either science or truth.

The American Dental Association is waging a consistent fight against quacks, cure-all venders and manufacturers. It is refusing to rent floor space at dental conventions to manufacturers of questionable products; its leading dental journals are refusing to sell advertising space in their journals to manufacturers whose products are fraudulent or worthless. In line with its campaign to inform its members of worthless products through the reports of its Council, it has laid down

rigid rules governing the admission of proprietary articles to the list of accepted non-official dental remedies.

It would seem that pharmacists should feel the responsibility of working intelligently and coöperatively with the American Dental Association in its campaign against worthless and fraudulent medicaments and dentifrices.

The rules of the Council are aimed to assure dental preparations of superior standard and quality. Every wide-awake manufacturer of a product of which he is not ashamed will do everything he can to comply with the regulations of the Council. If his product does not bear the stamp of acceptance of the Council on Dental Therapeutics and he will not disclose its ingredients, then you should know that there are one or more of the following reasons why his product is not meeting with the requirements of the Council.

1. The composition of the product is secret.
2. Suitable tests for determining the composition of the product were not furnished the Council.
3. The advertising is misleading.
4. The claims as to the origin are false.
5. The therapeutic claims are unwarranted.
6. The product is unscientific and useless.
7. The package contains the names of the diseases or of conditions for which the product is used in such a way as to suggest self-medication where self-medication is probable.

Of course a manufacturer may have a product which is useful and represent it truthfully, and may not have applied to the Council for approval. Under such conditions ask for information regarding the product from the Council on Dental Therapeutics. It would have much more professional significance if a pharmacist inquired of the Council regarding the merits of a product offered for sale by a manufacturer than to have a dentist write to the Council asking for information about a product a pharmacist tried to sell him. Such a condition was actually experienced. A member of the Dental Council brought the case to my attention urging me to advise pharmacists against recommending secret preparations to members of the dental profession.

The Council on Dental Therapeutics asks only that a product have some scientific or therapeutic reason for its existence; that the material does what its makers claim for it; that its advertising is truthful and that it meets the other requirements of the Council as to composition, test and origin. That is the basis for my urging pharmacists to make intelligent use of the findings of the Council and be the distributors to the dental profession for only such products as will help perpetuate the dentist's faith in drugs and preparations medicinal.

Permission has been granted by the American Dental Association to publish the following list of Accepted and Non-Accepted Drugs and Preparations. This list does not contain information concerning all the drugs sent to the Council for consideration, but it is complete in so far as the Council has published reports on Accepted or Non-Accepted Preparations to date. Subsequent additions will be made to this list as reports are published by the Council. Detailed analysis of the preparations and claims may be found by referring to the bibliography after the title of the preparation.