

and expensive to enforce.<sup>1</sup> One user of Fair Trade contracts plaintively writes "... We cannot sue 200 or 300 retailers. Frankly, the legal expense is beyond our means..."<sup>2</sup>

Possibly, after all this legal travail, many retailers will place slight reliance on Fair Trade Acts, amendments, injunctions, voluminous briefs and learned but conflicting judicial decisions. We find editorial reference to the "... universal complaint of Fair Trade manufacturers that retailers are not showing enough interest in the Act to return contracts, and the lack of support of Fair Trade items by retailers; the apparent divided opinion on the part of manufacturers regarding the advisability of refusing to sell retailers who do not sign Fair Trade contracts."<sup>3</sup>

There is no provision in the Fair Trade Act that the minimum retail price named in the contract shall be high enough to insure a profit to the retailer.

There is no requirement that products be sold to all retailers at the same price.

There are many types of disastrous competition that cannot be reached by Fair Trade legislation. It does not limit the *producing* units—factories, laboratories, etc., with duplicating machinery. It does not limit the number of *distributing* units with their duplication of facilities. Nor does it limit competition between substantially the same product under an unlimited number of trade names. It does not limit the number of competing retail stores, as new stores are permitted to open at any time regardless of the public need for such stores.

More sweeping legislation is needed to correct the difficulties confronting the retail druggist.

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## THE PLACE OF COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS IN THE PHARMACY CURRICULUM.\*

BY NEAL B. BOWMAN.<sup>1</sup>

No one will deny the fact that there is an ever-increasing trend toward specialization in almost every field of endeavor. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that the drug business is concerned with various proposals concerning its possible reconstruction. This reconstruction was given impetus by the increase in course requirements and the demands brought about by changes in the business relations of the pharmacist, and the question suggests itself, "What is the place of commercial subjects in the pharmacy curriculum?"

Each teacher of commercial subjects, quite naturally with intellectual honesty, will champion his own subjects, feeling justified in so doing by virtue of the fact that he is the one charged with the responsibility of teaching those subjects.

Society is so constituted that every member of it, after he has passed his

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<sup>1</sup> Blumenfeld, Juliet, *Retail Trade Regulations and Their Constitutionality*, 22 California Law Review, page 86.

<sup>2</sup> L. B. Laboratories, Inc., "An Open Letter to the Druggists of California," *West Coast Druggist*, April 1935, page 17.

<sup>3</sup> *West Coast Druggist*, July 1934, page 12.

\* Section on Commercial Interests, A. PH. A., Portland meeting, 1935.

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor of Economics and Commercial Pharmacy in the School of Pharmacy of Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa.

formative period, takes up a certain phase of its activity, which constitutes his vocation. Hence, one of the important needs of the individual is preparation to perform his vocational tasks efficiently, because they represent the largest part of his work in life. This preparation might come partly by placing the individual in his industrial environment at the same time that he is pursuing his studies. But of the higher vocations, like pharmacy, which demand the exercise of the highest powers of the mind, experience cannot be left wholly to the apprenticeship system, but rather should it require an extended period of special theoretical education.

Teachers of commercial subjects are faced with the very important problem of integrating and correlating the various commercial interests into a composite whole with such a synthesis of content as will develop the very best offering. The work offered should be designed to "bring education down to earth and make it vital in its application to living." Or, to put it differently, the subject matter should be so patterned as to vitalize practical education.

The difficulties of the problem have been augmented by a very definite realization of the fact that business itself moves so swiftly, and assumes such a multiplicity of forms, that the mere exigencies of curriculum planning make it very difficult to keep pace with business. These are rushing, tumultuous times. The tide of world affairs runs high; trifles and petty worries and hurries hem them in on every side. Never has there been a greater need for an understanding of business institutions, their functions and their influence on the social structure. Never before has there been such a need for building in the minds of those who will control business a consciousness of proper ethical business conduct as right now.

Add to this the further fact that students for whom the subjects are intended have changed. If the capacities and potentialities of the students have been carefully analyzed the teachers are faced with the realization that the average student has limitless ambitions—he is hungry and insatiable for life with its rich experiences and sensations. He has freshly awakened interests, all of which represent an influence that may no longer be denied.

The satisfactory departmentalization of subject content is also perplexing, for the most part. Those who are charged with the evaluation of subjects taught should be schooled in the relative usefulness and uselessness of certain subjects in terms of student needs. A critical analysis of college catalogs will disclose the fact that the commercial subjects now offered bear a very definite relationship to contemporary business requirements of the pharmacist. Were free choices manifested, some students would, in all probability, elect certain subjects in preference to others; or they would evaluate subjects in terms of personal likes and dislikes.

Carrying this idea a step further, there might be some students who, with measured dignity, assume that the subject of Advertising should find no place in the curriculum since they have been nurtured in the belief that it is unethical to promote one's activities. But the majority of the students are cognizant of the statement, "To the man who never heard of you, you don't exist." Professionally, a graduate might be the town's best pharmacist—commercially, he might own the town's less frequented place of business. Granting that some do know the pharmacist and his qualifications, the value of constantly keeping his name before the public is vouched for in the biblical exhortation, "A new King grew up who knew not Joseph." The subject of Advertising teaches one how to seek public favor, and how to hold it as

well as to win it. The old bromide—"the public will make a beaten path to your door" is still a workable theory.

Some students, steeped in tradition, might join forces with those who, because they are not gifted with an analytical mind, would voice their disapproval of any sort of Accounting on the grounds that it would never be necessary to know any of the principles and practices because they don't intend to spend their time "keeping books." Accounting forces one to face facts. It has disciplinary value—it trains in construction and exercise. It teaches self-reliance, necessitates truthfulness, encourages neatness, stimulates resourcefulness and develops self-control.

Many students share the opinion that Salesmanship cannot be taught. Salesmanship can be taught and from a broader point of view than merely that of preparing for the selling of goods. The thought can be emphasized that all persons are salesmen and that characteristics which constitute successful salesmanship are as applicable to the profession of pharmacy. Special attention can be given to the importance and development of character. Salesmanship has been defined as "Selling goods that won't come back to people who will come back" and the definition has just as much significance to selling of prescriptions and professional services.

The same influence which might cause a student to be intellectually uncongenial to the other subjects mentioned might condemn Merchandising on the basis of the subject being too broad and general to justify the time spent studying it. Years ago intensive merchandising was as unnecessary as it was unknown, but today, merchandising, or aggressive "store-keeping," as it is sometimes called, must be in tune with modern trade practices. To-day pharmacy is more than a profession, it includes a business of modern merchandising.

The drug store is now beginning to be a crystallization point of innumerable human wishes, wants, desires and needs. The modern pharmacy is a typically American institution which has evolved to meet these demands. With its varied activities, covering a multitude of services in addition to its primary health aspect, the American pharmacy has come to fill an integral function in our community life, which though it may overlap with that of other institutions in part, is nevertheless largely unique. Pharmacy to-day is competing with many trade outlets. The social evolution of the pharmacy offers an interesting commentary on modern civilization, and it could well be termed one of the most important nerve centers for up-to-date merchandising. To-day the pharmacist is forced to merchandise the front of his store as well as to professionalize the rear of it. He is forced to handle many items heretofore, perhaps, not in keeping with the policy of conducting a pharmacy and the pharmacy has become, in a few strides, "the greatest service station in the world"—an integral part of the distributive system of the community. No matter how it may alter in superficial form, the pharmacy, in all probability, will remain the best agency to minister to the many miscellaneous wants of both the sick and the well, young and old, rich and poor, all creeds, all colors, every day and all day. The pharmacist is really the purchasing agent for the community he serves. His interests are varied and his problems are multiple.

It seems idle to condemn the multifarious activities of the pharmacist of to-day, or to suggest a return to the old days—when the pharmacist adhered to the strictly limited field of compounding and dispensing of prescriptions and proprietary remedies. Though such a move would enable a greater "professionalism" of the phar-

maceutical industry, in the limited sense of the term, it would also involve a decided social and economic loss on the part of the community.

Current changes in economic conditions indicate that current changes in business education are imminent. The subject matter and teaching techniques of the various courses in the commercial field should not be bookish, abstract and artificial. It is imperative that the work and methods of the class room parallel as far as possible the actual conditions of the business world of which the students are integral parts. Careful planning on the part of the teachers and whole-hearted cooperation on the part of business leaders will bring about the necessary revision. Business education must remain flexible, and subject to modification in the light of existing conditions in the community. It might be mentioned, at this point, that the writer is now engaged in a project which is designed to study practices in Commercial Pharmacy curricula in order to learn to what extent the Commercial Pharmacy curricula and courses are in conformity with the actual requirements of practicing pharmacists, as evidenced by personal interviews with employing pharmacists in selected and representative districts of Philadelphia and its environs.

The business teacher who has kept in touch with tendencies in the field is fully aware of a real need for general business education in the schools of pharmacy. He must not cling tenaciously to old ideas nor must he go to the other extreme and impulsively adopt each suggested innovation. The efficiency in knowledge of the subject matter must not only be tested but rather the ability to use and apply the underlying principles of the subjects of business as tools of learning and for shaping judgment in matters of everyday experience. Naturally an impelling and abiding interest in the commercial subjects must be created. Should not the commercial teachers hold the demands of business in as high esteem as the demands of the professions?

One cannot read the daily press or converse without meeting a situation which requires a background of business behavior. Because the whole social life is so interwoven with business activities, one needs an understanding of these activities and their effect on the social and political life in order to understand and interpret the happenings of contemporary living.

It is the opinion of the writer that the commercial subjects have a very definite place in the pharmacy curriculum and should not be mitigated in the least. He maintains the point of view that the main objective of commercial training is to augment, *not supplant*, the professional training of the student and thus better fit him for profitable employment after graduation. For surely, "They profit most who serve best."

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"THE ASSAY OF ORGANIC MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS CONTAINING ARSENIC."\*

Presenting a brief review of the available methods for the estimation of arsenic in organic compounds. The details of the various methods are classified for the purpose of making a comparative study of the analytical procedures. The tendency toward improved technique is noted, while the difficulties encountered in applying a number of details are also indicated. Suggestions are offered, on the basis of experimental data, with the idea of developing greater uniformity in a practical and dependable method for the assay of organic arsenicals, particularly those containing pentavalent arsenic.

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\* Abstract of a paper before Scientific Section, A. Ph. A., Portland meeting, 1935—by Edward J. Hughes.