

MUST A PHARMACIST BE A PSYCHOLOGIST?*

BY ALICE-ESTHER GARVIN.¹

This topic was selected in order to learn what we may do to correct some of the evils, not in sales psychology, but in the pharmacist's knowledge of himself. Why, for example, did you select your family physician? Because he lives near you? Because you went to school with him or because of his reputation? Why does a customer select a particular pharmacy? Because it is near him? We know perfectly well that many people walk past six or eight stores in order to reach the one they have selected. Why? What has one store, or one pharmacist, that another lacks? They may all have graduated with honors from a college; passed the State Board examination with superior grades; been an officer of a local or state group. Why is one selected and the other passed by? Of course we hear a lot about service so I won't mention it except to say that I believe there is such a word. I'm going to deal with the more intangible topic, personality.

What for example, does it profit a man to have a beautifully lighted, streamlined, meticulously clean store, and then to forget that his coat hasn't been laundered for a week, and he hasn't shaved since day before yesterday? Has a well-worn blue sweater any place in a Prescription Department? It seems a little incongruous, but women customers are fastidious, and in the stores where they trade they demand cleanliness. How about the smoking of cigars or cigarettes while compounding prescriptions? I've seen men do it; so have you. The radio, gaily emitting a dance tune which the pharmacist hums while glancing at the ingredients specified on the physician's blank, does not add to any customer's confidence. Nor does the carrying on of a conversation with a pal while a woman is waiting for the medicine, and the pharmacist is talking to some one else about the National League, or the stock market, or a party that has gone or is coming. It is decidedly unflattering to any person who is buying, for instance, a clinical thermometer, to have the pharmacist say, "This is a very fine one—what time did you get in last night, Tom? Two fifty. What did your wife say about that?"

Another feature which takes customers past your store is its being used as a rendezvous for your family. I can think of some stores, at the moment, where wife, brothers, father, mother, move right in at 11 A.M., sit at the fountain or at a table, and remain there until closing time. I have seen the proprietor's wife nursing the baby in the prescription room; I have seen a daughter washing the family poodle there. Meals are served, cards are played. The place for one's family and friends is away from one's place of business.

We encourage the doctors to be our customers, and then we greet them with "Hello, Doc.!" than which there are few greater insults. No physician likes to be called "Doc.," and those of you who are Doctors of Philosophy or Doctors of Pharmacy will admit that you prefer the entire title. . . . We do a lot of talking about back to Pharmacy, or on to Pharmacy, or whatever you prefer, and then we sell ourselves short in what it takes. We need discipline in our stores; a clerk should never, no matter how well he knows the manager or proprietor, call him by his first

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name when customers are present. A pharmacist, even in the neighborhood stores, should try to avoid the "Hi Babe, how ya doin'?" Our stores need dignity and discipline; so do our clerks, and so do many of us. Where can we learn it, and how can we teach it? The kind of psychology that a pharmacist needs is, "Know Thyself."

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ALLIED PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO THE PHARMACIST AND TO THE COMMUNITY.*

BY JOHN N. MCDONNELL.¹

The pharmacist has a two-fold duty in the proper practice of his profession. Although the chief function of the pharmacist, that phase of his practice that has been handed down to him through the centuries, has been to supply drugs and medicaments to the public for the cure of disease, there is a secondary service required of him. This may be best expressed as "the duty to impart information regarding the preservation and betterment of the public health."

The pharmacist is the community information bureau in matters pertaining to the above. He is closer to the layman than the medical, theological and law professions. Laymen know the pharmacist best; they trust him and they believe in him. They feel free to place their confidence in him, for they feel that they understand him and he, them.

Much has been said in the past regarding the many phases of diversified activity that make up the proper conduct of prescription pharmacy practice. Service to the physician, better comprehended as a means of greater coöperation between the professions, includes far more than is included within the scope of prescription compounding alone. Service to the community, inextricably bound up with the pharmacist's service to the medical profession, finds its outlet in efforts on behalf of the public health and welfare, and in a large measure, brings unexpected monetary returns to the dispenser.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES.

With the rapid development of preventive medicine, as a result of the discoveries in the field of the micro-organisms, there has arisen a greater appreciation of the important place pharmacy holds in the public health field. Preventive measures are not a recent innovation for since the dawn of civilization wherever people have gathered, there strict regulation has been propounded for the protection of the general welfare. During the past years, as science discovered ways and means whereby bacterial infectious diseases might be combated, medicine fought the battle and pharmacy supplied the weapons. Now, we are called upon as never before to aid in the eradication or alleviation of all diseases, contagious or otherwise, serious or simple, wherever they appear, and to provide against recurrence.

A century ago, the age span of man was approximately forty years. To-day it has increased to nearly a decade and a half more than that figure, and the emphasis in the planning and building of hospitals has swung to hospitals for the

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