

frequently brought forth expressions of thanks together with the books, as they had laid them aside carelessly, and having neglected to return them, the charges thereon were accumulating.

A list of those patrons who had proven themselves unworthy to be entrusted with the custody of a book was kept on hand for ready reference and their requests for books were treated accordingly oftentimes with beneficial results.

As some works of fiction are not of the class of reading matter that one would care to have found in his (or her) possession, it is wisest to prevent their finding a resting place upon the shelves. Care must be exercised that young maidens are protected from the baneful influence of reading matter of a suggestive character.

The high standing of the prescription and drug department should be reflected in the library, for then it will be a credit to your name and an aid to your place of business. I can recall a number of desirable, intelligent, profitable customers we gained through our library; hence it can readily be seen that its benefits extend beyond its own field of usefulness.

Care must be exercised that the books do not become the innocent carriers of malignant disease germs. Where no efficient board of health is provided to safeguard the public health, extraordinary caution must be used to see that no epidemic can be traced to your library.

If you take proper interest in a circulating library, treat it as a commercial enterprise, use the censor's blue pencil judiciously and play fair with all concerned I feel certain that you will find this a satisfactory side-line and one that will add materially to your income.

THE VALUE OF CONCENTRATING AND INDEXING YOUR DRUG STOCK.*

MAURICE P. SCHWARTZ.

Owing to the rapid development of the commercial end of the drug business, the prescription department, or back part of the store, is being called upon to carry practically all the drug stock, the front of the store being given over to the sale of soda, cigars, candy, magazines, photo supplies, stationery, drug sundries and various other side-lines. This condition has been largely brought about by the curtailment of the use of drugs, the employment of high priced preparations in the filling of physicians' prescriptions, and cut rates in general, so reducing profits, that additional revenues have been made necessary to meet the ever increasing overhead expense.

To remove the drug stock to the prescription department every available inch of space must of necessity be made use of, and the stock so arranged, as to be found as quickly as possible. The best method of course is to thoroughly index all the items in the prescription department, and in the case of those drugs and preparations having several common names, to list them under each of these,

* Read before Section on Commercial Interests A. Ph. A., San Francisco meeting.

and also to list the articles in the index alphabetically, regardless of classification, as often, when having several customers waiting, the classification the article comes under cannot be recalled instantly.

We are living in a swift age, people hardly take time to eat any more, and they are not willing to stand around, and wait for five or ten minutes before being served. Druggists depend entirely too much upon their memory in locating their stock. Owing to the thousands of different items carried, and the infrequent demand for a majority of these, it is impossible to remember where all the articles are, especially those which are difficult to classify. Another problem today is the retaining of good clerks and a great many sales are lost before the new clerk learns the location of the stock besides his wasting much valuable time and also causing customers to become skeptical of his knowledge of the drug business, or becoming suspicious of not obtaining that which they asked for. These conditions are overcome if you maintain a complete index. Numbered sections four or six feet wide, and from the floor to the ceiling are entirely too large to be of much benefit, as considerable time is consumed in finding the article after having located the section given in the index. The spaces numbered, should be reduced to a very small area.

Space in the front part of the store is entirely too valuable to take up with drug stock, which does not need to be displayed. By arranging artistic displays of toilet articles and various side lines carried, many sales will be made of articles which the public probably otherwise would not know you were handling.

Rental, and overhead expense in general, continue to increase yearly, and it is necessary to increase the volume of your business, to keep up with these growing expenses.

THE COLLOIDAL STATE OF ALKALOIDS AND THEIR PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTIVITY.

In the first stage of the investigation of this subject, the relation between surface tension, size of particles, and toxicity is dealt with. The aqueous solutions of free alkaloids whose molecular weight exceeds a certain limit are colloidal. The surface tension of such solutions is lower than that of water. The toxicity of the solution towards fish and tadpoles is proportional to the lowering of the surface tension, so that the degree of activity may be measured by a stalagmometer. In those alkaloidal solutions which are not stable, the size of the particles and the surface tension increase with a corresponding decrease in the toxicity. The surface tension is altered by change of temperature or by the addition of antagonistic substances, or of acids. Decrease in surface tension and in the size of the particles is accompanied by increase of reaction velocity and toxicity under the conditions of the experiments. Local action of alkaloidal salts is attributed to increased alkalinity at the area of contact causing liberation of free alkaloid in the colloidal state.—*J. Traube and N. Onodera (Intern. Zeit. phys. Chem. Biol.; Chem. Abstr., 1915, 9, 2,108.)*