

Such printed directions save the pharmacist time as no verbal directions need be given.

Most of the chemicals or drugs needed to supply this trade are carried in stock in nearly every pharmacy, hence there is no additional outlay. Only the fact that some of these, like sulphur and copper sulphate, are needed in large quantities makes it necessary to buy in larger quantities to get every possible price concession so as to be able to sell reasonably.

DISCUSSION ON THE ANNUAL INVENTORY.

Chairman Mason proposed as a topic for discussion the taking of an Annual Inventory.

MR. NITARDY:—"Our firm is a large one with a quarter of a million dollars of invested capital, divided into six stores, a supply department and a manufacturing-department. The inventory of all of these is taken in one day, each department looking after its own. The office supplies inventory-books, the pages of which are printed similar to an invoice. The pages of this book are torn out as filled and then they are bound in a large volume together. Thus we always have a definite sheet or series of sheets for each particular class of articles. Our inventory usually contains between fifty and sixty thousand separate items, that is for the main store, and this work is finished in a week's time."

MR. SCOTT, of Detroit:—"We take an annual inventory and we try not to exceed seven days in taking the inventory of our seven stores. We simplify the taking somewhat by listing the goods we make at a certain figure which figure they had found did not vary much from \$10,000. This simplified the work and eliminated many objectionable features of it. The final figuring of the inventory is done by the office-force. The man who does not take an inventory does not know what he has in stock that is unsalable and which oftentimes can be exchanged for salable goods. An adding-machine we have found to be a very useful article in making an inventory. Much time can also be saved by massing certain things, such as, for instance, herbs. Taking an average price for such herbs, we find that we have one or two hundred pounds of herbs at a price of twenty-four cents a pound. This method saves detail. The same method can be adopted in the case of tinctures, elixirs and like goods."

The question being raised as to how depreciation of fixtures should be taken care of, Chairman Mason called on Mr. Barker to answer that question.

MR. BARKER:—"Soda fountains, carbonators and things of that nature depreciate about ten per cent. a year. Shelving and show cases about five per cent. Cash registers should be charged off at about ten per cent. It is well to allow a liberal depreciation on store fixtures, so that when changes have to be made they have already been allowed for."

In reply to a question Mr. Siebert stated:—

"I think it necessary, in the adjustment of fire-losses that the druggist should be able to state the actual cost of the articles for which he desires to receive compensation. To present an estimate of 'fluid extracts, so much' would not be acceptable to the present-day companies. That used to be the case, but companies have become much more particular regarding this. Many druggists do not take an inventory more than once in ten years and such men would find their case a difficult one if they had a fire in their establishments. The first thing asked for now by the companies is the inventory and if that is not forthcoming adjustments will be difficult. Annual inventories are absolutely necessary for prompt and satisfactory adjustment of losses.

MR. SHRINER:—"I have had a little experience with fire. The fire was caused by a person who had a position in my house, and as a result of it a garage burned down. The garage cost \$5,000.00 and it was insured for \$600.00 only. The fire insurance adjuster, who represented several companies, was a friend of mine, but when it came to adjusting the loss I found out that, friend or no friend, the adjuster wanted to know precisely about every item of loss. The insurance people looked the thing over and I was very much surprised at the system which they used in trying to make an adjustment to the satisfaction of their companies and the stockholders of the companies. The fire resulted in a total loss to me practically and I got my \$600.00, but the insurance companies were not satisfied to simply measure every foot of ground; they wanted to know how large the building was; they looked at the charred remains and everything else, and I noticed that it was all written down in detail, and I admired the system. It opened my eyes.

"I have been in the drug business for about thirty years, and during those thirty years I have taken an inventory twice (laughter). I started to take an inventory nine years ago, and it took me six months to finish it (laughter), and when I finished, I had to commence over again because I had bought a whole lot of things in that time, and we had used a whole lot

out of the different containers. I tell you it was a proposition—it was a job! Everything was accurately measured. My son and I, we worked like beavers to get everything summed up. I said to my son, 'Al, get everything and mark it down so many quarts, so many gallons, and so forth. Let's start in and get graduates and measure it off.' So we measured it off, and after we had proceeded a while, I said, 'By golly, we are up against it, ain't we?' (Laughter.) And Al said, 'Well, you have got to know what you are worth here, you are always saying you never know what you have in this store.' Says I, 'Certainly we should.' 'You are getting all you want, ain't you?' 'Well,' says I, 'I wish we were through.' 'And just now you said I could go on alone and finish this job! I haven't had a Sunday for two months since this has been going on!' Well, my friends, that is all right. When it was all over, I was considerably pleased, for I found that I was worth a few thousand dollars more than I thought I was, and I said to Al, 'See what your father has done!' (Laughter.)

"I run my store upon the 'European plan.' Everything is alphabetically arranged, and there is not a thing in the house that I cannot lay my hand on, even in the dark, although another fellow might not find it so well, because they do not understand the system. There is not a shelf that is not arranged alphabetically. But I have noticed, sometimes, when I got a shelf mixed up a little, I had an awful time finding things again (laughter). You know, I would be using two or three bottles in making a prescription, and place them back on the wrong shelf (laughter.) Still, we haven't had much trouble in that way.

"But as I said, I hardly ever took an inventory, and this insurance gentleman said, 'Now, Mr. Shriner, how about that inventory?' I says, 'I took an inventory about five or six years ago.' He says, 'Do you think that would stand in court?' I says, 'I don't know, I can't tell you whether it will stand in court.' He says, 'It will never stand in court, if it was made six years ago. You must take an inventory every year and you must itemize these things, because when you are called upon, you are supposed to show what you had in stock, and you must be pretty sure you had the things in stock so that the amount of the loss can be determined.' 'Now,' says I, 'I am going to take an inventory right away,'—but I haven't done it yet. (Laughter.)

"As I said, I have been a druggist for thirty years, and I have never believed in mixing other lines with my drugs in these thirty years. I have kept exclusively drugs. They are the important things, and no side lines,—no candy, or anything. But my son has just graduated from college, and that is where the trouble begins. He came home one day, and there was a family gathering. I says, 'What does this mean, everybody being here; what is the matter?' You see, I commenced to 'smell a mouse' somewhere (laughter.) My wife says, 'Al has something to tell you; he has something he wants to talk over with you.' I says, 'He wants to stay with me doesn't he?' 'Sure, he wants to stay with you.' Says I, 'He wouldn't leave me now after I had educated him, and I have been sending him to school for so many years? I think I would like to get some help out of him.' And she says to me, 'Surely, but under a certain condition.' 'How?' And she said it again, more emphatic than before. 'Well,' says I, 'what is it?' And Al says, 'Well, you know the way you have been running this store.' 'Now,' he says, 'this won't do any more. It won't do to be in the back room all the time, and when somebody comes in the store, crawl out of that back room.' (Laughter.) Says he, 'This has got to be changed.' 'Changed?' says I. 'Don't argue with me,' says he, 'I am doing the talking.' Says I, 'What are you going to tell me?' 'Well, I will tell you, we are going to get a soda fountain.' 'A soda fountain,' says I, 'what do I want a soda fountain for? I suppose I will be going in the confectionery business next.' 'No use arguing about it.' 'Well, what else do you want?' Says he, 'And we are going to put in a line of candy.' Says I, 'Are you going to make a Huyler's store out of this place, what else do you want?' 'Get a high grade line of candy,' says he. 'What else do you want?' 'We want some kodaks,' (laughter). 'I never looked through one in my life,' says I, 'how could I sell a kodak?' 'I will do that,' says he, 'we will get them in stock.' 'Anything else you want?' 'Yes, we want a good line of paint.' 'Well,' says I, 'that is pretty near the limit, do you want to start a wholesale house?' 'Don't mind,' says he. And then mother spoke up, she says, 'Yes, you will have to do something. There is no use talking,' she says, 'you want to keep Al with you, and he is going to make this his life work.' Says I, 'Now let's talk this thing over. Where did you get all those foolish ideas?' 'Why, foolish ideas—' and he commenced to bristle up, and I was surprised. I never saw him with fight in him before. Says I, 'Is that what you learned in college?' (Laughter.) 'Now, look here,' says I, 'I want to conclude myself. We never want that kind of stuff, and we want to put in our time with pharmacy and *materia medica*, and everything else, and I never heard such kind of business from my professors when I went to school. I can't understand how you learned all this, and bring it up here in my own house, and expect me to go in and trade in different things I don't know anything about,' (laughter.) Says he, 'The times have changed.' 'Yes, I am very well aware of that, that the times have changed,' says I.

"Well, to make a long story short, what do you suppose I did? I ordered the soda fountain; I ordered some cameras,—a monkey business (laughter).—and I made a contract with a paint house, and got a high grade line of paints; and then I looked around for a high class of candy. Well, it is all right! (Laughter.) Then I did not stop at that. I took up all the fixtures that were in there and put them in the back room; all of those things with their glass covers,

and put them in the back room, and ordered new fixtures for the store. And here is the thing I want to talk about,—the old prescription case, that dear old friend of mine, always behind it, you know (laughter), and I had commenced to love it too, and that is a fact, but my son, with his new fangled ideas said it had to go, and he had made up his mind that he was going to have a prescription room. Oh, the times are changing! By golly (laughter)! there is no use talking about it! My son said, 'I am going to make a prescription room in the rear, and it is going to have hot and cold water.' You know, I had never had hot water before in all my life in the store, always had cold water, but we have hot water now (laughter), and in this prescription room we are going to have nice shelves, all under cover, with all the chemicals, and everything else that is necessary for prescription use and we are going to have show-cases from the top to the bottom,—going to do it up brown while I am at it (laughter). And behind this old prescription room there used to be a wooden partition,—my gracious! I will never forget the trouble that gave me when I had it torn down from the plaster and dirt, and everything else, and we are going to have an ice cream parlor there now (laughter). I have ordered five or six nice tables, with glass tops, so that everything is sanitary, and about thirty or forty chairs. I said, 'I am going to do this thing up right.' (Laughter.) I says, 'I have been operating under the old system for thirty years, but we will have the new system now.' Everything will be thrown out of the store, and we will put on new wall paper, and get new fixtures, and everything else, and get these dimmed lights that throw the light softly down from the ceiling. I am going to put them in (laughter).

"And talk about your sanitary business! I have given an order for a show window that will be closed entirely, and be made out of nice quarter sawed oak from top to bottom, so that no dust can get in there, and in the winter time, in case it gets cold, the window will always be clear, and now I am getting steam put in the building. The landlord kicked and kicked,—oh, didn't he kick. He said it would cost him \$45,000.00 because he would have to put it in the whole block, as the other tenants would want it, and they won't want to pay any more rent, but after a while the tenants all agreed they ought to have steam and were willing to pay for it. So that little town is going to boom now, I tell you, and so far as that goes, I don't know whether I am going to make a success of it or not, but if I don't make a success, I am not going to worry. The goods are there, and we are going to sell them, and that is what my wife said. My wife, you know, is my partner in everything, only I haven't got anything to say. That is all. (Laughter.) But we want to give the boy a chance. She said, and I don't know, 'They say we ought to have these side lines in, and all like that.' And if we have got to have them, well, we will. It is a question to my mind whether they belong to the drug business or not. I have always considered the drug business as a profession, and not a commercial business, and I have spent many hours trying to do well to the public in general, and I may have done some good in my small way, but I can't do at all as I used to. Years ago,—twenty-five or thirty years ago, people would come to us, and ask our advice, and we would give them something that would help them, with very few exceptions. This thing is changed, and the doctors now prescribe for this thing and that, and people rarely go to the drug-store now. It seems to me as if the physicians controlled the public in general now and we are forced, without any doubt, to go into different lines. These are things we have got to think about, and think about very seriously, and certainly the best thing to do is to stock up on things that will sell, and will not lose their value, and will not spoil on our hands. This is a thing that ought to be given deep serious consideration. We drug men in general do not get together enough, and there seems to be a difference between them when a druggist meets a druggist. There is not the comradeship that there should be, and we do not greet each other with out-stretched hands as we ought to do. We are not kind enough to one another. There is something strange about it.

"I am sure that all the organizations should come together, even if we do not know each other. As long as we are druggists, and have confidence in each other as men, and as students of human nature, and so forth, we ought to talk to one another, and be kind to one another, and if we do that, we are going to succeed as well as is any other business in the country, and we are going to have coöperation, and we are going to have an organization that we can all get behind. We druggists should not be afraid to tell one another about our business, and what we are doing to a certain extent. We should be friends. Of course, there are all kinds of druggists, as well as customers, and we should be like contractors going after a job; if they don't get it, they try to get another one.

"My one hope and wish is that the druggists can be more democratic with each other, and that they will not slight each other as much as some have been. There is no reason why we as druggists should not succeed, and I hope that we will find some way of making a memorandum of our stock without the necessity of spending six months to do it. (Laughter and applause.)"

MR. SCHAFER:—"The question of inventorying drug-stores in detail is clearly an impossible one, without getting up something which is untrue and incorrect and which will not stand in the courts. The proper way to avoid this difficulty is to eliminate the clause in the insurance policy requiring the taking of an annual inventory and to insert in its place a distinct statement that such inventory is waived. Only one company had declined to accept a policy of

this kind and they formerly accepted such policies, discontinuing that practice about two years ago.

In order to meet the situation and in view of the fact that the National Board of Underwriters were experts in their line of business and knew the difficulties of making a drug-store inventory, I offer the following resolution:—

“That a Committee be appointed to take this matter under consideration and to have authority to present it tentatively to the National Board of Underwriters, for the purpose of getting some satisfactory clause in the insurance policies which would apply to the drug fraternity.”

CHAIRMAN MASON:—“It should be understood by the Section that the motion if adopted would but express the views of the Section. The matter would then be obliged to go before the General Session for their action.”

The motion was adopted.

DISPLAYING CONFECTIONERY AND COUGH DROPS IN BULK.

FRANKLIN M. APPLE, PHAR. D.

This is an age of intensive advertising, which includes displaying one's wares to the greatest possible extent, so as to catch the eyes of the shoppers and create in them a desire to purchase the goods exposed to view.

Whether it is proper or improper to thus display one's merchandise depends upon the nature of the goods, and the care taken to protect them from destructive or contaminating influences.

I am led to pen these lines by practices that have come under my notice, and by comments that have been heard concerning customs that are followed by some of those of our calling, as the intelligent, observing members of society of to-day are becoming more and more critical in their standards of cleanliness and hygiene.

It may be proper to display, unprotected from dust and dirt, such goods as are not intended for consumption by mankind, those which can readily be cleansed by using a brush or duster, such as building materials and supplies for stables, but to offer for sale in an unhygienic and uncleanly condition commodities intended for internal consumption by mankind, is a very reprehensible practice that will not fail to unfavorably react upon those merchants who so flagrantly disregard the health and interests of the public.

This is especially true of those of our calling, who are looked up to by the public as being possessed of greater knowledge concerning hygiene and bacteriology, and who are presumed to be a higher class of merchants than those who have no educational standards to respect or maintain.

From the March, 1914, issue of Huyler's Hints I will quote as follows:—

“People are very exacting as to what comes from a drug store; not only must the goods be of the best quality, but the packages in which they are put up must appeal to the sense of neatness. The dry-goods clerk, the shoe clerk, the grocer—in fact, salesmen in all other trades—do not care much about the appearance of the packages they send out. A sheet of paper twisted or rolled around the article, a piece of string, and the thing is done; and nothing better is expected. But with the druggist it is different. We wonder how many druggists appreciate the effect of a neatly-tied package or a simple, neatly-printed label, upon their customers. And yet we know of people who prefer a certain store to another for no other reason than that the goods sent out of it are neater than those coming from the other.”

What has been most truly stated by this editor concerning the containers and