

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

the labels for confectionery is unquestionably true concerning the confectionery itself, including in this class of merchandise medicated confectionery, known under the trade name of cough drops.

There has arisen a custom to offer for sale cough drops contained in a wooden box, which has no provision for protecting the goods from dust, dirt and filth, which method of displaying such goods should be made a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine for both the manufacturer of the goods thus displayed and the vendor thereof.

One manufacturer and distributor of cough drops, displayed in such a container, furnished by them, also offers for sale sponges packed in containers which are thus described:—"Packed in an attractive box with transparent top, suitable for counter display; keeps the goods on view and free from dust, etc."

This appears to me to be inconsistency of the highest type—protecting "from dust and etc.," a commodity that can readily be cleansed (and which usually is well-wetted before it is offered for sale, in order to add to its selling value), and sending out another commodity, intended for internal use, that cannot be cleansed before ingestion—and some of such goods that I observed on sale in drug-stores were so dirty and filthy that they were absolutely unfit for any use.

Upon interviewing the manufacturer of these cough drops, and directing his attention to this reprehensible practice, also calling his attention to the manner in which they packed their sponges, I was informed that it was impossible to pack the cough drops in a similar container, as the extra cost of the protecting, transparent cover couldn't be added to the cost of production, for the price charged for these goods was not sufficient to warrant any further addition to it, and competition compelled them to maintain their low price, as the retail druggists would not pay the small extra cost of the more sanitary containers.

Can it be possible that the true cause for this state of affairs lays at the doors of the retail druggists?

Are they not perfectly willing to pay the small extra cost of a cleanly container, if they want to make use of a box for displaying such goods?

I, for one, have refrained from handling these goods owing to the nature of the display container—and it arouses in one's mind a question as to the regard for the rules of cleanliness and hygiene observed in a factory sending out such goods.

It is argued that a large display, in bulk, of merchandise is very helpful in disposing of it. This may be true of certain classes of goods, sold in certain classes of stores, but when retail druggists consider this method of increasing their sales, they must not lose sight of the moral effect such a practice will have upon the minds of the public concerning their professional work, of which their neighbors can only judge by their observations of their commercial customs; and judging from comment made by some of our patrons concerning some proprietors and their methods of conducting their business establishments, the public is becoming more exacting critics of one's method of doing business than we suspect.

Another custom that is followed by a number of druggists is to fill their show windows with a large supply of jelly eggs about the time of Easter, allowing them to remain therein unprotected for weeks. As these goods are somewhat hygroscopic you can well imagine the magnet they make for dust and filth. Just stop for a moment to think from whence comes the material that is deposited upon

these confections, and I cannot believe that you would have any desire to eat any of such sweetmeats were I to offer you some at this time.

The windows have been stated to be the eyes of the store; and, by the public, are considered to be an evidence of the policies that direct the establishment; hence, when confectionery is observed in one's windows that is unfit to be used as a food or confection, what do you suppose is the opinion of the public concerning the remoter recesses of our stores, where their medicines are manufactured, compounded and dispensed?

The advantages of displaying wares in a cleanly manner has been observed by leading manufacturers in many lines of trade, as witness the improved methods of exposing cigars for sale, with their transparent, cleanly cover-plates attached to their boxes, and the display containers that constitute the fixtures of the up-to-date grocery-store.

In a recent conversation with the manager of one of a chain of over two hundred grocery stores, I was surprised to learn how much thought was given to the question of hygienic displaying of goods by the owner. He bids for and receives the patronage of the best class of trade that purchases its supplies at this class of stores—the result being largely, because of less sanitary methods being employed by the other competing chains of grocery stores, in one of which my informant previously labored. He noticed the advantage his present employer has over his competitors, soon after entering his employ, and had learned from customers the reasons why they give their patronage to his present employer.

The proprietor of a well-conducted hennery, appreciates the monetary advantage of a cleanly kept establishment; and the higher price he receives for his eggs if they are perfectly clean, with no evidences of filth or dirt attached thereto, makes him, automatically, an apostle of cleanliness and hygiene.

Inasmuch as we have a reputation as professional men to protect, it is incumbent upon us to take the initiative as business men to practice cleanly methods in displaying merchandise for sale to the public, thereby demonstrating our knowledge of and respect for hygiene and bacteriology; and it cannot fail to have a beneficial moral effect, leading the public to look upon us as a superior class of merchants to whom they will turn when in need of first-class, dependable goods.

I would suggest that we make it an unalterable rule to never sell any commodity to anyone in a condition that we would hesitate to accept as clean enough for our personal use; and if we make this humanitarian decision, we will not display confectionery or cough drops in a container unprotected from dust, dirt and filth.

Were we to view, with a high power magnifying glass, the character of the material that constitutes the dust that invariably is deposited upon all exposed goods, we would hold up our hands in horror, to think that we had been guilty of supplying cough drops and confectionery contaminated by such offensive material.

Kindly remember that the crusade to "swat the fly" resulted from a close study of the material that he carried from place to place, the offensiveness of which was not suspected until science told us the true tale.

Let us demonstrate that we are abreast of the times and prove the fact that we are firm believers in the old adage: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."