

THE SALE OF POISONS.*

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The sale of any poisonous substance is always connected with more or less responsibility by those engaged in its distribution; and the legal restrictions placed about such sales are fairly well designated in our state law. Our law in this state (Missouri) is about as clear and complete as in most other states; and the list of poisons recognized under schedules A. and B. as extensive as in other states. Massachusetts' law sets out the most complete and extensive list and is a drift in the right direction. This, in my opinion, is a better law, and throws more safeguards about the sale of poisons. I hold that all substances that are of a dangerous or poisonous nature should be registered—their distribution or sale, I mean. As the Missouri law now stands, only a few of the most potent or powerful drugs or chemicals must be registered; while a long list of less potent, yet of dangerous character, can be distributed or sold almost *ad libitum*—the only requirement being that the purchaser be informed of their dangerous or poisonous character.

We all recognize that all drugs are more or less potent—otherwise they would have but little therapeutical value. Then why draw a line anywhere in controlling their sale to the laity? I, therefore, hold that no distinction should be made in listing substances sold by the pharmacist as "poisons" or "poisonous substances"; but that the sale of all should be placed upon the poison register. The argument that poisons should only be distributed through the physicians, and upon their written order, is rather weak and impracticable. The licensed pharmacist is better qualified to guard the sale of poisons than is the average physician. He, being directly responsible for the distribution of poisons, will naturally watch more carefully their sale.

The registration of all poisonous substances involves very little additional trouble and will simplify the whole matter. As new drugs, chemicals or substances are brought into use, they, if of a dangerous or poisonous character, can be added to the list. Such a change in our law will be beneficial, and simplify the sale of poisons while it will add to the pharmacist's protection.

COMMERCIAL PHARMACY—A TIMELY TOPIC.*

ALFRED W. PAULEY.

We are living in a day and age when we are obliged to recognize commercial pharmacy as a very important factor. First of all, let us consider the definition of commercial pharmacy. One of the best definitions that I can mention is this:—Commercial Pharmacy is a science that treats of mercantile transactions pertaining to pharmacy, or it may be defined as the business-end of pharmacy.

If it is true that commercial pharmacy represents the business-end of pharmacy,

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then we must recognize it and admit it into our professional ranks, in the colleges as well as the drug stores. It was my pleasure, not so very long ago, to listen to several very prominent addresses made before a body of men and women who were gathered in St. Louis for the purpose of promoting social, professional, educational and business interests. These men represented many states of our great country, and are noted the world over for their professional, chemical and pharmaceutical knowledge. One of the speakers in his address made a comparison of pharmaceutical classifications, which was divided into two classes; one whom he said studied pharmacy with a view of making it a profession, while others studied with a view of making it a vocation. He seemed to lay special stress on the professional student overlooking the importance of commercialism, which to my mind is absolutely essential in pharmacy to-day. In order to make a pharmacy successful professionally, we must use commercial methods. Now let us consider one of the causes for adopting commercial pharmacy. Can any one of us run a drug-store to-day as our forefathers did? We may but look back, to the days in which the professional pharmacists ruled and governed pharmacy, and before the time of the existence of the department-stores and commercial drug-stores; and we must give those men credit for running apothecary shops in an ideal manner; but isn't it likewise true that all progressive professional and commercial enterprises have applied themselves to the modern-day methods due to the vast changes that were forced upon them? Let us consider some of the reasons that caused us to take up the commercial end of pharmacy. We may, individually, remember that a diphtheria case in the neighborhood of our drug-store would result in considerable prescription work for the patient, and, usually, the patient required medicine daily for two, three or possibly four weeks. To-day one injection of diphtheria anti-toxin is sufficient in most cases. Thus the prescription trade is not obtained. Besides this, we have a number of other diseases which now are treated by the use of Vaccines, Bacterines, Phylacogens, Salvarsan and the like. Furthermore, we, to-day, have Christian Science, faith healing, the Fletcher System, Physical Culture, Psychology and many other things of similar nature that deprive the pharmacists of the prescription business that he formerly enjoyed. With this condition apparent, isn't it true that the commercial departments in the drug-store of to-day help reduce the prices that we would be obliged to charge for prescriptions had these commercial departments not been established, or in other words, the commercial departments have a tendency to cut down your overhead expense. Furthermore, let us consider with all due reverence to the professional man of former days, and ask this question:—Has he achieved success financially?—Has he reached his ideals? If he has professionally we must honor him. We, however, must have more than this professional ideal in mind, especially if we have families to support, or other obligations to meet, and therefore in order to make a financial success "which in my mind is absolutely essential," we must combine commercial pharmacy with professional pharmacy and get the professional educators willing to coöperate with us. Then combine their ideals and we will have commercial professionalism or professional commercialism as the one ideal for which to strive. There is a difference between commercial pharmacy and commercialized pharmacy. Commercial pharmacy, as its name implies, is the trading of commercial products for the benefit of the public

as well as for profit; while commercialized pharmacy, in my mind, would represent trading for the profit and disregarding the public. Commercial pharmacy has been scorned by a great many professional pharmacists, but I want to tell you that the commercial pharmacist is just as honorable and upright in his dealings as the professional pharmacist, and if this is true, then let us get together and make commercial pharmacy one of the important factors of the twentieth century, or sooner or later, we will have the universities encroaching upon the rights of the regularly instituted colleges of pharmacy and take from them that which they have worked so hard to build up.

Let us consider the words of Cicero, who so wisely said:—"It is not the place that maketh the person, but it is the person that maketh the place honorable." Therefore, let us follow the footsteps of Atkinson who directs us as follows:—"Put in your own mind the existing condition which you wish to become real; then see the thing as you wish it to be"; and as Alex. Bell likewise gives us this valued advice in saying "Concentrate all your thoughts on the work in hand. The sun's rays do not burn until brought to a focus." Just so, the sun's rays of commercial pharmacy will likewise not burn until brought to a focus. Feeling satisfied that most of us are in accord with these commercial pharmacy ideas, let us proceed to take up the most important steps that are necessary in making commercial pharmacy a success. Most essential is that of salesmanship. Salesmanship is the scientific cultivation of good will. Another definition is that salesmanship is honesty, courtesy, tact bound up with an interest in, and a thorough knowledge of your stock, all resolving into the art of converting a transient patron into a steady customer. All of us, possibly, have seen the illustration of salesmanship conveyed by a prosperous business man to his son as he started out in life, which bears this inscription:—"Remember, Jakey, when you sell a customer what he wants, that is nothing; but when you sell him what he don't want, that's business." Some of the most essential factors in salesmanship are first:—A salesman must have a thorough knowledge of his merchandise and not attempt to sell winter merchandise in the summer, or attempt to sell ice skates for sake of example, in the Fiji Islands.

So that the most important thing is a thorough knowledge of the goods you have for sale. He should know of what it is made, how it is made, what it is for and all that. It will go to show the customer that you are perfectly familiar with the merchandise you have to sell. A good salesman must possess, besides this knowledge of his merchandise, all the attributes of a salesman. These three particular factors are essential:—

PUSH, POWER AND PERSONALITY.

Under the head of Push comes initiative, ambition, enthusiasm and tact. He must have power to convince. The fact is, that a salesman must possess the power to make a customer feel as he does about the product he has to sell, and *this is one-half* of the battle. His personality goes a long way in making the people feel they are welcome in his store. As I once heard a customer say, "I like to go into a warm store; not a steam-heated store, particularly, but a heart-heated store. The store where the clerks act as though they were glad to see you. I like to go into a store where I feel welcome. I like to go into a store where there is no unnecessary delay when I ask for an article. I like to go into a store that is cleanly,

and these points show personality." Then he must be optimistic. The next essential that I would consider would be that of:—

HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND HARMONY.

Health, as you know, is the greatest factor in keeping business going right. Happiness is a factor that keeps your organization in good running order like good oil used on machinery will keep it running right. The employee with a grouch can spread more dissatisfaction than the boy with the measles can spread the infection in a crowded room. Harmony is absolutely essential because no store, no home or factory can really prosper unless the employees work in harmony, and the proprietor should likewise work in harmony with the help. Who should the salesman work for, and who is the boss of the store? It is the customer that you and I are working for. It is the customer that you and I are here to please. It is the customer who pays your wages and mine. If it were not for the customer, you and I would be looking for a job and we might not get one as good as the one we have. Now, if you are sitting behind your counter doing nothing, and you see a customer (the boss) coming,—Jump.

The commercial pharmacist in his commercial field has a decided advantage. A well-known physician once expressed himself thus:—"A physician renders his service to the sick, the poor and the ignorant, while the pharmacist renders his service to the well, the wealthy and the wise." He infers that we are better off and can keep in better spirits when trading with that class of people. While I am not in accord with all his statement, yet I feel, to a degree, that pharmacy has its advantages. This being the case, let us be optimistic. Let us put on the smile of the optimist and discard the smile of the pessimist. Go forward to make every day count and if possible make some of them count for two, and let us not put anything in the way of the advancement of commercial pharmacy as we do not know how far-reaching it may be. Be kind to your fellow neighbor; do good whenever you can.

Remember the words of A. B. Hagemann which reads as follows:—"I shall pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness that I can show any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

THE CULTIVATION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS IN THE UNITED STATES.*

F. A. MILLER.

The cultivation of medicinal plants in the United States is only in the very earliest experimental stage. Whatever may have been done toward investigating the peculiarities of growth of this class of plants, has so far had little influence upon their commercial production. With the beginning of the work of the United States Department of Agriculture on the cultivation of these plants and the interest shown by colleges, scientific societies and commercial institutions,

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