

THE SALE OF POISONS.*

WM. MITTELBACH, PH. G.

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,

* Read before St. Louis Branch, January, 1915.