

MERCCK'S REPORT. (January.)

Viscose Sponges:—The viscose which forms a dough with Sod. Hydroxide is kneaded with hemp fibre, and Sod. Sulphate Crystals are imbedded; then oval cakes are formed and immersed in Dilute Sulphuric Acid, which hardens the viscose. Finally, the Sod. Sulphate Crystals are dissolved by means of water, thus leaving cavities, which give to the mass a sponge-like appearance.

BRITISH PHARMACEUTICAL JOURNAL. (Jan. 16.)

Magnesia Carbonate, absorptive power of:—The experiment reported consisted in placing pieces of camphor wrapped in three layers of paper upon a cube of Mag. Carbonate also wrapped in paper. After two months the Mag. Carbonate had only a feeble odor of camphor, but on triturating the Carbonate with water a stronger odor developed, and on dissolving the Mag. Carbonate by the addition of citric acid, the odor developed was equal in strength to that of Spirit of Camphor. Accordingly, it is reasoned that Mag. Carbonate, like Charcoal, must be kept in air-tight containers lest it become contaminated with volatile drugs.

AMERICAN DRUGGIST. (January.)

Peroxide Creams:—The article points out that animal and vegetable fats cause decomposition of peroxides, and that these fats are therefore inadmissible in peroxide cold creams. Petrolatum, starch paste, tragacanth paste, and also glycerin are recommended by the author as being unobjectionable, and suitable bases for such creams.

Liquid Petrolatum:—(February. Reprinted from the Report of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry of the A. M. A.) The article deals with the limpid oils used for atomizer sprays, and with the more viscid oils, obtained principally from Russian sources and used in intestinal stasis.

DRUGGIST'S CIRCULAR. (February.)

Spurious drugs:—An article well worth reading by John Uri Lloyd.

THE WOMEN'S SECTION AND WOMEN PHARMACISTS.

ZADA M. COOPER.

The first clause of the second article of the Constitution of the Women's Section reads like this: "The object of this Section shall be to emphasize the right and capability of women to engage in pharmaceutical pursuits as a means of livelihood." Other objects follow, all of them laudable, but this one statement is the basis for what I want to say. Under the circumstances, I suppose I cannot be altogether altruistic, but one very practical way suggests itself to me, one that I believe would benefit not only women pharmacists, but be of great value to women generally. I am also firm in the opinion that it would mean increased business to pharmacists, a fact that should enlist the interest of the women of this section who are not themselves pharmacists. But for its length, a better title for this paper would be, "How to convince druggists, now employing only men, of the need of women pharmacists, also."

To come at once to the point, the Women's Section might formulate resolutions expressing women's preference for drug stores where they can do business with women pharmacists; stating also their belief in the advantage to business; and requesting pharmacists to consider seriously the employment of women. If the resolutions should be approved by the Association they would eventually reach all

the members through the Journal of the Association. Perhaps the expense of sending copies by mail might be justified. Some other journals might publish them also, so that practically all druggists would be reached. At least, all that are worth reaching, all that we dare to hope to influence could be reached in this way. The druggist who takes no drug journal is unworthy of the title. He must be a mercenary individual or depraved and beyond reach of reform.

It would take generations to accomplish singly what the organization could do in a few years. Even if each woman were to say to the pharmacists of her community that she would like to deal with women pharmacists, it would have little effect. Men would think it only an individual whim, but if the Women's Section as a part of a great national organization so expressed itself, it would be taken more seriously and would have much greater weight. Men have known the powers exerted by organized effort for many years, but it is in comparatively recent times that women have learned the importance of coöperation. Club work is probably responsible for their getting outside themselves and overlooking minor differences sufficiently to make team-work possible. Evolution has taken us beyond the sociological stage where we "worked alone in tragic seriousness, unrelieved by a sense of humor." It has led us out into a broader usefulness where we are willing to coöperate with others. This is only one of the opportunities opening to members of the Women's Section for united constructive effort.

Without doubt there are some men who are honestly opposed to women pharmacists. They may perhaps admit a woman's abstract right to enter the profession if she so wills; they may even admit her value in *some* stores, but personally will have nothing to do with her. Even if all the women in America were to express themselves as preferring to do business in a pharmacy where there was a woman, still they would employ only men, either because they want only men's business or else because they do not want a woman about the establishment. We shall not quarrel with them, that is their privilege. On the other hand, there must be quite a proportion of druggists who have not given the question serious thought, at least from the point of view of their women patrons and the advantage in the way of increased business. It might be only necessary to bring the subject to their attention, to let them know that women are thinking about it, that women want it. Fair-minded individuals would be likely to investigate and honest consideration would convince some, not because they are so eager to grant women's requests, but because it is a plain business proposition. Women would not make such a request if it were only a passing whim. They believe that the druggists would reap some benefit as well as please them.

It is only right that it be made plain that eighty-five *per cent.* of the general merchandise sold is purchased by women and that something like the same percentage could hold with a druggist's wares. In the face of such a fact, druggists ought to see the importance of pleasing women; if a woman pharmacist is a factor in making satisfied customers, there should be no hesitancy in employing her. It is unquestionably true that lack of women pharmacists drives women to department stores for all sorts of sundries like toilet articles and toilet preparations and rubber goods that are legitimate sidelines for a druggist. Once there, they are led to buy drugs also. The pharmacy that numbers among its employees

a woman should get both the drugs and the sundry business of these people. There could be no objection to a druggist advertising the fact that his force includes a woman. Of course, it should not be sensational in character, but it is certainly proper to call the attention of women patrons to her presence. Possibly an announcement by letter might be excellent. It would only be necessary to say in a few well-chosen sentences that she is a competent pharmacist and that she is there to serve the woman patrons.

In any appeal to men-druggists, the Women's Section should assert the belief that every pharmacy in America employing more than one clerk, and even some of those should have a woman. We must concede that a druggist in a small town where paints and oils and wall-paper are handled, must have a man, unless he wants to do all that work himself. But if he does not deal in sundries requiring for their handling considerable more strength than women possess, even in a village a woman pharmacist would be desirable. In fact, I am inclined to believe that country women and women in small towns might appreciate a woman pharmacist more than their city sisters because they are possibly more reticent if not more modest than women of the cities. In the larger pharmacy employing several people, the proprietor can have no good excuse for not having one woman—no good excuse; he may offer many that seem good to him, but if he is conducting a decent honorable business, that very business would be increased by having a woman. If his business is not honorable and clean he does not need a woman, for he will have few women patrons. Women soon learn to avoid the saloon drug store or the one that has had a reputation for catering to "dope fiends"—usually one and the same.

Now and then I hear the statement that women are not loyal to their own sex, that they do not have faith in their professional ability. For instance, it is said that a woman who is seriously ill wants a man physician, even though she is in the habit of consulting a woman physician for minor ailments. If this be true, then it would be natural to conclude that women would not have faith in the capability of the woman who compounds her prescription, for the medicine may involve life or death as truly as the physician's diagnosis. Following the reasoning to a logical conclusion, all of the preceding appeal is in vain, but of that I cannot judge. If the idea has merit, it may bring results; at any rate, it may do no harm.

SENNA DRUG TRADE DIVERTED.

The export of senna from Egypt has been prohibited except to the United Kingdom and France. This measure is expected to center in London the trade in this useful purgative drug. The United States has been importing 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 pounds of senna leaves yearly. The Alexandrian senna commands the highest price, the March, 1915, quotations in New York City being quoted at 35 to 40 cents per pound for whole leaves. The Tinnevelly leaves from India are quoted at 16 to 17 cents, while pods are priced at 6 to 7 cents per pound. The Egyptian senna leaves are derived from *Cassia acutifolia*, which grows in Nubia and Kordofan, while the Indian or Tinnevelly leaves are derived from *Cassia augustifolia*.—*U. S. Commerce Reports, No. 63.*