

thousand times No! Colleges are to set standards and to lead, not follow. They are to be true and faithful to the purposes for which they were established; to train men and women to become scientific, safe and thoroughly efficient pharmacists. There are other and better schools and colleges for commercial training.

It is proper for colleges of pharmacy to give limited instruction on subjects that would make students more intelligent in the conduct of the business connected with the practice of pure pharmacy. A few lectures by specialists on each of the subjects of pharmacy laws, contracts, agency, commercial paper, property, insurance, bailments, partnership, transportation and the like and an introduction to general psychology would greatly help the student in all business matters connected with his professional practice.

It is significant that not many colleges of pharmacy teach "commercial pharmacy."

A SQUARE PEG IN A ROUND HOLE.*

BY CHARLES W. HOLZHAUER.

This is a day of specialization. No matter what may be the nature of the career a man may choose for himself—professional, commercial, military, literary, artistic—be his calling what it may, his first aim and desire is to train himself so efficiently that he fits his job, and his job fits him. When he has achieved this "perfect fit," then, indeed, is his future success assured.

If you expect to make a man a good foot-ball player, you coach him in every intricacy of the game, teach him all the styles of play, prepare him physically at the training table, harden his muscles by systematic exercise—in short, the good coach tries to develop a finished product, capable of meeting any situation which may arise in the course of the game.

Pharmacy is not foot-ball, true enough, but some of the methods of foot-ball may be copied with profit to pharmacy, and it seems to me we should try in just this way to perfect our students of pharmacy for the actualities of the profession ahead of them. Our pharmacy courses are not comprehensive enough when we consider the future demands upon the student. Many of our graduates are "square pegs" and the work they are called upon to do proves to be the "round hole," *and they don't fit.*

But why this misfit? At the outset it might be well, perhaps, to define our ideas of what we expect our colleges to do. My own idea is this: the first consideration in shaping the course of instruction should be to make of the student a good prescriptionist—a capable and safe man to handle drugs. Naturally this is paramount. The second consideration should be to make of the student the most valuable and useful man behind the counter. Of course my view-point is that of the drug store, but is not that the very best view-point from which to consider the product of our schools? I have no figures available, but I think it is safe to say that at least 80 percent of our graduates spend their careers within the confines of the drug store, and if this is true, certainly the proprietor of a drug store ought to be as good a judge as any as to whether the young graduate measures up to his task or not.

* Read before Section on Commercial Interests, A. Ph. A., Chicago meeting, 1918.

Of what will the work consist which our graduate is called upon to do? Will he be asked, the very first morning he arrives at the store, to assay a sample of *nux vomica*? It is not likely. Will he be requested to keep his eye in the microscope, differentiating between pure drug and adulterant? I don't think so. Will the store want a chemical analysis of a solution? Hardly that. Of what, then, will his work consist? If it is an average store—and that is the one I am considering—he will be called upon to compound a few prescriptions (and we remember that about one-third of this work consists in transferring tablets and liquid from one container to another), possibly prepare a few simple preparations, and the remainder of his time will be devoted to checking up stock, pricing it, putting it upon the shelves, selling goods, thinking up and making window and counter displays, selling stamps and licorice root to the children, and at the same time serving as general information bureau for the neighborhood. Bear in mind, please, that I am talking about the *average* store. There are a few, and a *very* few stores, where these conditions do not obtain, but for the vast majority they do, and I don't think I have misstated the facts. A few stores in the large cities maintain prescription departments where men do nothing but prescription work, and some few have laboratories where preparations are made, but they are the exception rather than the rule, and I may say in passing, that there are not enough of these exceptions to accommodate all our graduates. A store was opened on Broadway, New York City, a little over a year ago. Its first window display was a United States Pharmacopoeia artistically set upon a bit of velvet in one window, and a mortar and pestle in the other. The interior was immaculate. The usual display cases were missing, the clerks wore snowy white uniforms, and fine furniture and easy chairs awaited the customer as he entered. Nothing could have been more ethical. But the store has ceased to exist and the man who bought the place is wondering whether he did not pay too high a price for what was left.

These are the conditions we are facing today, have faced in the years just passed, and, as far as I can see, will face in the future. Whether we like them or not I am not arguing. No doubt they ought to be changed, but the fact remains that they are here, and we have to make the best of them. A man can not make a living in these times, let alone provide for his future needs, by confining his business solely to the sale of drugs and prescriptions and sick room supplies. It has been tried and found wanting. His knowledge as to whether quinine turns red or blue when a drop of nitric acid is added will not help a bit when the landlord says the rent is due. The knowledge that phenacetin is the monoacetyl derivative of para-amidophenetol isn't good and valid consideration for your payment at the bank of your loan. The druggist must sell other merchandise, goods the people want, if his store is to succeed and he is to become a power in the community.

To return to our young graduate and his work, we find, then, that his activities will be divided, let us say: 50 percent pharmaceutical and 50 percent commercial. I am sure it is quite safe to say that of every \$100.00 received in sales in the average store, at least \$50.00 of it comes from purely commercial transactions. I have carefully noted our sales at various times and I must admit that our side-lines play an important part in the total. If the pharmacist has ability as a business man, does that detract one iota from his other attainments?

Doesn't it add to them and doesn't he command all the more respect from his associates? I see no reason why a man can not be a good business man and a good pharmacist. In many of the lines we carry, and must carry, we are in direct competition with other merchants, and we must be just as alert and progressive as they are if we are to handle the lines profitably.

Conditions in the drug world have changed very materially in the past fifty years, and unless we wish to progress backwards, we have to change with the times. I have often heard my father say that sales on a Saturday night forty years ago consisted very largely of salts, senna and hair oil. These articles are not our main items to-day. He *made* compound cathartic pills by the barrel. We *buy* them to-day, and are money in pocket by so doing.

Since times have changed, we must concede the importance of the commercial side of our calling and give our students training in this branch to better fit them for their life-work. Let us take a glance at our Syllabus and see whether, in the matter of instruction, it approximates conditions as they exist. I find that out of a total of 1200 hours in the course, 75 hours, or $6\frac{1}{4}$ percent, are devoted to commercial pharmacy. The conditions as we find them in the store are 50-50, in the Syllabus 6.25—93.75. Is this as it should be? I think not. My plea is for increased instruction in commercial pharmacy. Our schools have added some instruction in this line, but it is not enough. The amount should be increased and the scope broadened. And isn't this right in line with other institutions of learning? Our universities have added such courses because they recognize the fact that their students need them, and the college is the place, best equipped, to give its men this training. Our large universities have even changed their entrance requirements to meet changed conditions. Why should not we change our pharmacy courses?

It is said that the pharmacy school is not the place for commercial training; that a man must acquire it through experience. It is true he will gain much by actual experience, but how many stores can give sufficient time or have facilities or *inclination* to give the young graduate the proper training? The school can do it and do it far more efficiently, but even though the student does gain business knowledge through the store, he will gain it at a far greater cost in time and money, and with greater difficulty than he would have gained it through the instruction of experienced teachers in college.

One very great result, it seems to me, would ensue if our students were given further training along commercial lines, namely this: it would actually increase the professional side of our business. What stores to-day do the largest prescription business? The *Bulletin of Pharmacy* tells us that the store doing the greatest volume of prescription business is also the one that sells the most tooth brushes, photo supplies, shaving accessories, soda water, etc. And it is true. About a year ago we moved into a new store. Our space was very considerably increased, also our facilities for handling a larger volume of business. We sought to increase our prescription department and various methods were suggested. Among others, it was suggested that we send prescription blanks to all the city physicians. I consulted several friends as to the advisability of this suggestion and received answers at great variance. One man said it was simply throwing money away. Determined to find out by actual test, we sent blanks with our card at the bot-

tom to all practitioners in town and awaited results. We sent pads of one hundred blanks each to every doctor. It didn't take long to find out that it was a paying investment, for in a little over six months we had our money back, and at this date (somewhat over a year) we have received a very satisfactory dividend. In compiling our returns we eliminated all prescriptions which we thought we would have received in the natural course of events. Our aim was to arrive at strictly new business. I merely mention this incident to show how commercial training may be turned to good advantage to develop the drug and prescription departments. Wouldn't an applicant for employment in the store be worth considerably more if he could write a series of letters and conduct a campaign of advertising to the doctor featuring drug and prescription service? If he could say: "This is the way we should catalogue and arrange our stock," and: "This is the easiest and best way to take our inventory," and if he could dispose of that gross of liniment that has been in the cellar over a year through an attractive window display. He would be worth more to his employer and command a good and ever-increasing salary, and in his own store earn a far greater profit.

But, it is also said, there are men who expect to be truly pharmaceutical chemists—men whose work will be in the laboratories of manufacturing houses—men who expect to be teachers of pharmacy—what about them? Even though their number may be small, we should give them the instruction they should have. The answer is easy. Our schools are amply manned in both men and equipment—barring war conditions—and the courses are open to men who expect to be really scientists. I note that some of our schools favor four years of high school work and then four years of pharmaceutical training. Of course such education would justify a B.S. degree, and anyone who wants it can obtain this degree in this way now, and I know of one school, at least, that will give a very full and complete pharmaceutical education in the four-year course. My thoughts on this subject refer to the Ph.G. course—the one that the man behind the counter usually takes. For the future pharmaceutical chemist this instruction is not nearly sufficient, and he should matriculate in one of the advanced courses. We need not worry about him.

In conclusion, it is fitting to ask how such a change in courses of instruction can be made. The course is overcrowded now and will bear no further extension. I answer frankly—I don't know. Whether it should be done by deleting some courses we now have, or by retaining our present course and adding more commercial training to it, I do not attempt to answer. I believe we are giving some instruction which has very little value to the student in his future work, but I do not know whether it should be discontinued. Nor do I wish to give the impression that scientific training should be sacrificed for the sake of commercial. It is of greatest value, and the world would be in a sorry plight if we had no further scientific education and advancement. Our present pharmacy course gives a man a splendid education and much useful knowledge whether he remains in the drug business or not, but I do insist that along with it he should be given a thorough business training of such quantity and quality as is commensurate with its importance in the drug store of to-day. If conditions change later, change the course, but graduate the students of to-day well grounded in both branches of our calling.

The man whose business is at a standstill, who never makes more than enough to get along, be his profession ever so scientific, loses respect for his calling as well as the respect of his neighbors. We all know how "Nothing succeeds like success." Let this same man turn his business into a paying proposition, become a "live wire" in the community, and watch his self-respect go up by leaps and bounds. He is still a "man of science," but he is also a man of standing. He unconsciously boosts his profession wherever he is seen or mentioned. Since we can not change the nature of the pharmacist's job to suit his training, why not change the nature of the training to fit the job?

Students well informed in both branches of our calling will have a far greater chance for success, will be far more valuable in the store, will be looked up to by their fellowmen, and will be a credit to pharmacy. Give us more commercial training, and instead of a square peg, give us a round one to fit a round hole.

ABSTRACT OF DISCUSSIONS.

Jacob Diner, in opening the discussion on Mr. Holzhauer's paper, cited some of the methods employed by the "ethical drug store" of his paper. In literature sent out from this store 95 percent of the druggists were charged with being substitutors. In another letter, directed to physicians, the charge was made that the physicians addressed evidently did not care what became of their prescriptions. Continuing, the speaker said:

"I do not wish to deprecate the need of commercial training in pharmacy, which is, perhaps, more largely commercial than any other profession or semi-professional calling, but I do believe that the primary function of the college of pharmacy—I emphasize the words 'primary function'—is to prepare a man to do that work which as a pharmacist he is called upon to do. It is desirable that that man should have some knowledge of commerce, some knowledge of merchandising and stock taking and invoicing, sending out letters, advertising, and all that sort of thing. A poor letter may destroy good business, but shall we make that the principal end of the training of a pharmacist? I do believe that a successful business man is practically born, and not made. The man who is not born a business man can acquire a certain amount of training. The department stores, which are purely and fundamentally commercial, have established in their own institutions training classes for their salesmen and salesladies. I believe that a solution of the problem would be a postgraduate course in commercial pharmacy rather than an undergraduate course in commercial pharmacy.

There is, no doubt, a great deal of truth in what Mr. Holzhauer has said, that at least fifty percent of our business is commercial, but I am sure that he will admit that it would be a mistake to take fifty percent of the curriculum for commercial pharmacy. I do not believe that boys and girls, when they come to the pharmacy school, are in a position to grasp the principles of commercial pharmacy as readily as the principles of theoretical pharmacy. I believe that the commercial end can be learned more readily by experience after passing examinations and when they can devote their entire attention to the subject of commerce. Such training can be obtained in a store. Let us have well-trained commercial pharmacists, but not at the expense of the professional education and training, of which there is so little in the ordinary drug store.

CHARLES W. HOLZHAUER: I do not undervalue professional pharmacy; I say that the first consideration should be to make a good prescriptionist, a capable man to handle drugs. I did say, and I do say, that if we give our men more commercial training they will be more valuable and useful in a drug store and they will make a greater success of their business and of their lives than under the present conditions.

HARRY B. MASON: The educators have said, and probably always will say that we ought not to teach commercial pharmacy; that if we teach commercial pharmacy or recognize its existence at all, we magnify the evil. Now, is not that a fundamental fallacy? Of course, we have the high ideals that our men are to be trained scientific pharmacists. The schools have always laid emphasis on scientific work, but it does not make so much difference what you teach, conditions in actual life will differ from the economic conditions. You can not stem the course

of a river by saying so. Let us have done with that if we hold up high ideals we will change the source and course of the stream. We are facing a condition and not a theory; we have the retail drug business as it exists to-day. Mr. Holzhauser says it is fifty percent commercial and fifty percent scientific. I would be inclined to say it is seventy and thirty. We have heard a good deal in the last twenty years about vocational training. We have it in all other vocations, but they are not training the young men to-day, and never have trained them, to go out and practice the drug business, with the condition of the drug business as it is actually conducted. For the last ten or fifteen years I have paid a good deal of attention to the subject of business accounting, and I have conducted a large correspondence with druggists all over the country, and I know that the average druggist and his clerk are untrained in business. Mr. Diner says that the business men are born and not made. If a man is a born business man he ought to know after nineteen years how to assimilate what he is born with. You might as well say that a lawyer is born, so do not trouble him with a law course. You have to train a man for any occupation, whatever it may be. I agree with Mr. Holzhauser that the statement is fallacious, that if you send out a man with a commercial training you will lessen his interest in professional matters. I know it is a fact that most of the commercial stores, large stores, are the ones that develop their prescription business. Not all of them, but most of the larger stores which are commercially successful, develop their prescription business and have four or five or six or eight prescripionists who do nothing else but dispense prescriptions.

Now, let us do away with the idea that if we train a man commercially we will lessen his interest in the professional aspects of his business. It seems to me that it all harks back to the fact that we are facing a condition in the retail drug business through evolution, and we must recognize it and prepare the young men for it. I echo Mr. Holzhauser's sentiments that an educational institution, if it is worth its salt, must keep pace with changing conditions and should not educate a man to practice his calling as it existed forty years ago, but to practice his calling as it exists to-day.

LEONARD A. SELTZER: Mr. Mason is the high-priest of business in pharmacy; as the editor of one of the leading journals he has done a very great deal in educating pharmacists throughout this country in business methods. But it seems to me that the things he has told us just now, while true in themselves, are misleading, because while business in pharmacy is absolutely necessary, the question we are discussing is where shall that education be obtained. Now, is business training any less necessary in a grocery store or dry goods store than a drug store? I venture to say not. And yet we have no schools for dry goods or grocery stores or meat markets. There is only one place where we can learn the business and that place is not in a school. I have had, under my training, men who have gone to business college, and it has been necessary for me to show them the principles of business. I did not get my business training in a school and in less than six months I took charge of a set of books.

There is only one place where we must gain our technical knowledge, and the only one chance we have to get it is in our pharmaceutical schools. Let us devote our time in the pharmaceutical schools to learn these things and we will gain our commercial training in actual business, if we ever get it at all.

JACOB DINER: Mr. Mason misunderstood my statement or misinterpreted it. I said a good business man is born, but I also said that a certain amount of business training could be acquired. I agree with Mr. Holzhauser that the best postgraduate course is behind the counter, but if the young man needs some theoretical or practical knowledge on commercial subjects, by all means give it to him. Provide for it in the postgraduate course. But let us not take away the fundamentals.

CHARLES W. HOLZHAUSER: The theory that a man shall get his experience in business life, of course, is fine. The only trouble is, it does not work. How many stores have the facilities, or how many men running drug stores are competent to give their clerks that training?
