

COMMERCIAL TRAINING OUTLINE OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL SYLLABUS.

E. FULLERTON COOK, PHARM. D.

In the Pharmameutical Syllabus, First Edition, 1910, recognition has been given to the subject of Commercial Training. Suggestive outlines are offered and about 65 hours of work required in the total of 1000 hours for the complete pharmaceutical course. This 1000 hours of instruction is divided, in the Syllabus plan, into three groups; 300 hours are assigned to the general subject of *Materia Medica*, 400 hours to Chemistry and 300 hours to the laboratory and theoretical branches of Pharmacy.

Of the 300 hours devoted to teaching the special subject of Pharmacy, 25 are given over to the Theory of Pharmacy, 65 to Practice, 65 to Manufacturing, 50 to Dispensing, 20 to Latin, 10 to Arithmetic, 10 to Bookkeeping, 50 to Commercial Pharmacy and 5 to Jurisprudence. The last three commercial branches, totaling 65 hours, constitute about 22 per cent of the total 300 hours allotted to this division.

Opinion may differ as to the proportion of time, in a pharmaceutical education, which this subject deserves. The prophesy has been made by a well-known writer on this subject that the time is coming when 50 per cent of all pharmaceutical training will be commercial.

However, for present conditions, the framers of the Syllabus have apportioned as many hours for this work, in comparison with the allotment of the remaining 235 hours for pharmacy, as may be wisely given in a 1000 hour course.

Until a larger number of colleges bring their commercial course up to the suggested standard of 65 hours, or until the total hours of training are increased, there should be no enlargement of the proportional time now assigned to commercial training.

The present outline of the Syllabus is excellent in part. The outlines under Commercial Pharmacy, First Year, page 123, and continued for the Second Year, page 125, are helpful, although in many instances quite fragmentary and incomplete. There is some confusion about the teaching of Bookkeeping. Under "Pharmaceutical Arithmetic," page 106, 15 hours of didactic and 5 hours of laboratory instruction are assigned to a course of arithmetic which alone would demand the full time, if satisfactorily treated, while to it is added Bookkeeping—Single Entry—Double Entry—and Commercial Forms. The work required here is out of proportion to the hours.

Later, on page 125, under Commercial Pharmacy, Bookkeeping is re-outlined and most elementary training suggested, such as Theory of Bookkeeping and Necessity for Proper Books of Account, while practical bookkeeping is again called for. Apparently here the bookkeeping work is duplicated.

But the outline most impossible of accomplishment in the allotted five hours, is that on pages 128, 129, 130, 131, 132 and 133 on Pharmaceutical Jurisprudence. However meritorious this detailed course, covering six pages in bare outline, one must despair of teaching it properly in the time assigned.

The outline here again shows a lack of co-ordination in preparing the course, for subjects are duplicated which appear on pages 125 or 126, such as Insurance, Banking, Negotiable Instruments, Partnership and Corporations.

These brief criticisms will serve to call attention to some of the needed changes in the present Syllabus, in the Commercial outlines, but the suggestion of greatest importance here offered is the *method* of teaching. It is believed that subjects should not be taught disconnectedly; for them to properly interest and impress the student, they should be so arranged and grouped that their necessity and importance will be realized. For instance, a completed life history of a business, in miniature, should be experienced by each student; he should be led step by step through the conditions, as nearly as they can be simulated, in which he will need the knowledge; and taught the subject at the time when it can be applied. The facts will then be interesting and will lose their theoretical aspect. The following may illustrate more clearly what is meant:

The course can be started by assuming that the student is about to enter the drug business. This introduces the problems involved in establishing a successful store, i. e., capital, training, location, partnership, buying an established business, starting a new store, professionalism vs. commercialism, etc., and these questions may be discussed at once. Being now ready to assume the responsibility of proprietorship a number of other subjects naturally arise, as, banking, negotiable papers, relations with a landlord, and the lease, store arrangement, ordering supplies, buying to advantage, advertising, store management, salesmanship, letter-writing, insurance (fire, life and indemnity), licenses, establishing personal credit, allowing credit to customers, discounting bills, expenses and their relation to profit, etc., etc.

All these subjects are closely linked with the bookkeeping which will be required, and if the items of business are properly selected, the necessary business facts can be introduced as the course proceeds and explained and illustrated at the proper time.

In so far as legal training is concerned a few principles in the field of general law is about all that a student of pharmacy can safely use. It will be wiser to trust a reliable lawyer when a real need arises. However, in the special branch of laws relating to pharmacy and pure drug legislation, he should be thoroughly grounded, so that no doubt of duty and obligation can exist.

This paper has not been offered in any unfriendly spirit; the value of the Syllabus in bringing about more harmony in Pharmaceutical education is appreciated. The suggestions are presented with the hope that they may aid, by instructive criticism, in the development of a more perfect outline in the next edition.

DISCUSSION.

Prof. C. B. Lowe said he believed criticisms such as those presented in the paper were helpful, because the Syllabus, while a good thing, is a new departure and is not a well balanced book; too much time is allotted to some subjects and too little to others, while the matter in some of the departments has not been wisely arranged. Any one who has taught physiology realizes that the nervous system should be reserved until the end of the course and not at the beginning. In his opinion the one who mapped out that course had never taught physiology to pharmaceutical students, though he may have taught medical students. We had not yet arrived at the point in pharmaceutical education where pharmacy students could take up dis-

secting, and there are many things concerning physiology which cannot be understood without practical work.

Mr. Harry B. Mason said that the framers of the Syllabus did not regard it as a work of perfection but welcomed the most severe criticism. The work had been offered as merely suggestive of what might be brought about in the future. The Syllabus movement, however, when completed will be one of the best steps ever taken in behalf of pharmacy. It means nothing less than the unification of the work of boards and colleges of pharmacy throughout the country. It is a difficult work to get the colleges and fifty-three boards of pharmacy to agree on a definite schedule. The fundamental idea is an excellent one and the details will work themselves out in time.

He had been requested to furnish suggestions to the chairman of his sub-committee, and had directed his criticism exclusively to the section on Commercial Training. He had made the point that nothing had been said about profit and earnings, and no provision made for teaching the student to conduct his business accounting so that he would know how much he made; nothing was said about percentages of gross profit and expense.

Dr. E. F. Cook said that one of the criticisms which must be made of the Syllabus Committee is that in asking the boards and colleges to adopt the Syllabus, it had not been made clear that the work was regarded as being in a constructive state. All would agree that when the Syllabus was perfected we should ask the boards and colleges to adopt it; in its present stage they cannot adopt it in full.

Dr. H. L. Taylor replied that the criticisms made were exactly what were wanted, especially constructive criticisms such as those made by Dr. Cook and Prof. Lowe. He thought there had been general misapprehension of the fact as to what approval by a board of pharmacy meant. He wished to emphasize the fact that the Syllabus was recognized by the committee as being in a crude or formative state. It had been the work of many men and many minds, and further time would be needed to harmonize and correlate their views.

DRUGGISTS CO-OPERATIVE CIGAR MANUFACTURING.

ERNEST BERGER.

Druggist cooperation is not a new proposition,—probably the beginning of it was when the American Pharmaceutical Association was organized,—and from professional cooperation has grown commercial cooperation and the numerous commercial cooperative companies organized by druggists, which, by the way, have been more successful than any other line of business. Fire insurance, wholesale drugs, pharmaceutical manufacturing and others all are financial successes. Why not cigar manufacturing?

The retail druggist can make his cigar case a paying proposition by cooperating in the manufacture of the goods handled.

As a rule, the cigar case in a drug store is looked upon by the smoking public as a side line, with the cigars of an inferior quality, which fact is sometimes accentuated by flashy premiums or trade inducers which are strewn over the showcase, or hung about the walls, or from the ceiling. The average druggist in a small town will not pay over \$30 for a five-cent cigar, but will pay \$35 per 1000 for a fancy cigar lighter, electrolier or humidor, or some other premium. The same argument applies to goods which are to sell at ten cents.

A discerning smoker knows quality, and he also knows that he is not getting his money's worth in tobacco when he sees all the jim-cracks on display which were sent along as part of the cigar shipment. The discerning smoker generally patronizes a cigar store. He believes that the exclusive cigar store handles the best goods—that the owner knows tobacco and relies upon his judgment.