

They might go even farther and take upon themselves the task of solving some of the problems that are involved in conditions which at present threaten the reputation and stability of pharmacy. I refer specifically to the disgraceful condition of ex-saloon-keepers being permitted to secure store licenses to open pharmacies ostensibly for the sale of drugs but in reality for the sale of whiskey, and there is no provision in the pharmacy law today to stop it. It may not be out of place here to offer the opinion that any legislative remedy sought for this condition lies not in the amendment of the State Pharmacy Law but rather in an amendment to the State Excise Law prescribing how and by whom beverage spirits may be sold. If it was required that the holder of a license or permit to dispense beverage spirits on prescription must be a licensed pharmacist and the sole owner of the pharmacy a stop would be put to this abuse of the privileges granted our profession.

In conclusion the writer desires to express the view that the board of pharmacy examination in this sixth group of subjects has brought about a broader teaching of them in our colleges and has compelled the students to give them the serious attention they have always deserved.

The result will be that the coming generation of pharmacists will be better business men, more law-abiding citizens because of their intimate knowledge of the laws pertaining to their profession, and better able to give to the public that expert service expected of all professions.

A FEW FUNDAMENTALS OF COMMERCIAL PHARMACY.

BY P. HONOROF.

In the absence of a definition for Commercial Pharmacy, some of the functions included or listed may be considered. Here opinions will differ. I name cleanliness first. It is an economic necessity, a moral duty, and an essential of success to have a Pharmacy clean. I suggest that a course in Pharmacy include instruction in the handling of the three brushes—the window brush, the floor brush and the bottle brush. The ability, knowledge and willingness to handle the aforementioned brushes will, in most cases, contribute to the success of the retail druggist.

This does not mean the turning of a pharmacist into a porter; the application is, when show windows are clean the pharmacist will most likely display some of his wares, which, no matter what they are, will attract the passerby's attention, and the latter will very soon habitually look for the window display. Therefore, through intelligent handling of the window brush one will soon indulge in window trimming, which gives consideration to all sides of the business and will have a wonderfully stimulating effect on the commercial as well as the professional part of it.

The Floor Brush.—The knowledge and desire of handling the sweeping implement will assist greatly on the inside appearance of the store. When people come into a public health institution, they expect it to be somewhat superior to the ordinary mercantile establishment—the first guide to health is cleanliness.

The Bottle Brush.—Step behind the prescription counters of some drug stores. What are the characteristics of this most important and fundamental part of the business—the medical kitchen, where prescriptions are carefully compounded by

the pharmacist, to which the public, from time immemorial, has been accustomed to look as a life-saving department of the institution called a Pharmacy, and through which the side-lines often connected with the prescription counter are looked upon as better and more reliable than similar wares bought elsewhere.

In fact it is the spirit of pharmacy. Without this small space called the prescription room the store would not be called a drug store. Yet the fact remains that the stock, shelf bottles, fluidextract bottles, etc., of some stores are often not cleaned for months; dirt and filth are the dominant characteristics of the prescription rooms of such places. In my opinion, Board of Pharmacy inspectors should be clothed with authority to check up and grade the degree of cleanliness of stores, and give them the proper publicity, if deemed necessary.

Herbert Kaufman, the man who has done more to recreate downhearted humanity than any other writer, tells us that "Tomorrow's greatest asset is today's junk and rubbish." If Mr. Kaufman would take a trip through the cellars, back rooms and attics of *some* of our drug stores, he would find a world of "assets."

How many thousand dollars would be saved by the druggists if they were taught scientific bottle washing, and thus resurrect used bottles into usable ones for the dispensing of commercially used drugs such as turpentine, linseed oil, denatured alcohol, etc. It would mean not only the saving of dollars and cents, but it would also teach the young apprentice, and the recent pharmacy graduate, care and thrift.

When a professor of a reputable school of pharmacy "downed" his college toga and donned a white coat behind the counter of a retail drug store, he did not display any shrinkage of brain matter, but an abundance of it; he demonstrated broad vision and an ability to comprehend, grasp, and read the writing on modern Pharmacy's wall. He went out to see Pharmacy in action, in reality, in life; not as in the book. He has realized that if Pharmacy as a profession is to survive and create for itself a place among the family of professions, it must prove that it is of real public benefit, and the only way it can be done is by giving the apprentice and beginner in pharmacy a real training course.

The store experience, or internship as some choose to call it, must not be looked upon as giving the proprietor of the retail drug store cheap help. This sort of help is far from being cheap—really it is the most expensive. The proprietor is paying the beginner directly a wage for competence, and indirectly for his incompetence, negligence, and sometimes for misconduct. In some of the European countries apprentices work a period without pay, and even pay for the privilege of receiving the store experience. Their work is not limited to the brainy kind alone; they do everything there is to do, be it rubbing, scrubbing, or bottle washing. They are like those who choose a military career. Entering West point, their goal is a commanding position, but they must go through the training process, which includes keeping their rooms clean, cleaning and polishing equipment, currying their horses, etc.

We have read contributions in our pharmaceutical press from members of faculties that "The apprentice, who is content to work around a drug store polishing fountains, washing bottles, is brainless, and the store experience has no other value except to supply merchants with cheap help." I am certain that such unthoughtful

propaganda has no constructive value; it creates a feeling of dissatisfaction; it spreads seeds of antagonism; harmful to apprentice, clerk and proprietor. It leads to one thing, and that is sabotage.

Buying. We often see what would otherwise be a good-paying drug store turned into a failure, because the buyer, while a first-class pharmacist, was not aware of the fact that a dollar invested twelve times yields larger returns than twelve dollars invested once; that a six months' supply of one article takes exactly as much capital and room as thirty days' supply of each of six articles; yet the latter will show sales six times as great. Success in retail drug stores depends on the turn-over, not only because frequent turn-over brings better returns but because it keeps drugs fresh and salable.

Selling. The store—invitingly clean, its goods well displayed and with an unlimited amount of courtesy—will do the Selling.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LOCAL BRANCHES

"All papers presented to the Association and its branches shall become the property of the Association, with the understanding that they are not to be published in any other publications than those of the Association, except by consent of the Committee on Publication."—By-Laws, Chapter X, Art. III.

Reports of the meetings of the local branches should be mailed to the Editor on the day following the meeting, if possible. Minutes should be typewritten, with wide spaces between the lines. Care should be taken to give proper names correctly, and manuscript should be signed by the reporter. To maintain its activity and representation each Branch should see that at least three of its meetings during the year are reported in the Journal.

BALTIMORE.

The May meeting of the Baltimore Branch of the American Pharmaceutical Association was held at the Emerson Hotel on Thursday evening, May 28, 1921, Mr. J. C. Krantz, Jr. presiding. The minutes of the April meeting were read and approved.

Dr. Hermann Engelhardt addressed the meeting on the subject, "The Evaluation of Vegetable Drugs." A brief abstract follows:

Vegetable drugs are assayed by two different methods, the *chemical* and the *physiological* or *biological* methods. In the chemical method that active principle or group of active principles is estimated which is present in the drug in the largest amount and which can be most easily and conveniently isolated; thus, alkaloids, glucosides, resins, esters, acids, volatile oils, etc., are determined. However, the other constituents of the plant, which up to the present time are considered as ballast or reserve products necessary for the up-building of the plant, are not estimated, although it has not been proven that they are therapeutically worthless. It is advocated that, whenever feasible, substances like quina-tannic

acid, meconic acid, caffeeo-tannic acid, etc., should be estimated also. Furthermore, it is not correct to estimate only the morphine of opium, because it has not been proven that the other alkaloids in opium are always present in the same proportion to the morphine. In assaying drugs chemically we can obtain only comparative or relative results, because it has never been proven that the amount of active principle estimated is in the same proportion to the therapeutic activity of the drug.

In the *pharmacological* or *biological* method we obtain relative results also, because the toxicity of the drug, the rise of the blood pressure, the contraction of the muscles or whatever may be determined, is, as far as we know, in no definite proportion to the therapeutic activity of the drug. Furthermore, we are still lacking that animal in which drugs produce the same action as in men.

Since by both the chemical and the pharmacological methods only relative results can be obtained it is suggested that only such methods be adopted by the United States Pharmacopoeia, National Formulary, etc.,