

pharmacy and, consequently, the profession is not represented so as to bring the highest honors and recognition to our profession.

(5) Seeing that the hospital pharmacist represents professional pharmacy only in the character of his work the whole pharmaceutical body is interested in helping him function along the lines of progress and contentment in his work so he may reflect honor and dignity upon the profession as a profession. Where unregistered persons are allowed to perform the duties peculiar to the pharmacist, as is done in only too many small hospitals, each it is to be remembered having sick persons requiring the maximum amount of scientific care, the dignity and prestige of the whole profession of pharmacy suffers and the safety and welfare of our fellow citizens are distinctly menaced.

It is submitted that were every hospital required by law to employ registered pharmacists, always providing the proper kind of salaries were paid, there would not be enough good pharmacists left for stores; the badly conducted ones would pass out and those left, to quote from a recent letter of Dr. Robert J. Ruth, Chairman of this Section, "would be so busy doing a professional business that they would not find it necessary to highly commercialize their stores to make them pay."

#### ABSTRACT OF DISCUSSION.

H. J. Goeckel stated that the hospital pharmacists should have an association; the nurses, superintendents and others of the hospital organizations have. The dietitians have an association and are recognized in the American Hospital Conference and Association.

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#### RETAIL SELLING.\*

BY TURNER F. CURRENS.

In the last few years the term "Merchandize" has been broadened. To-day we hear that this or that thing "can be merchandized," or that "Smith is a good merchandizer" or "Brown does not know how to merchandise his store." There is a seeming desire on the part of some writers, or men interested in sales work, to throw an air of mystery over this merchandizing thing. Merchandizing is simply a present-day term for aggressive, intelligent selling. A live-wire druggist can merchandize his Prescription Department just as he can his candy counter or soda fountain, by playing up quality, care and accuracy; by impressing customers so that they believe prescriptions filled at Jones' are more likely to be right than if filled at Brown's. The druggist who so merchandizes his Prescription Department that people have this faith, reaps his reward in many ways.

However, many successful druggists to-day pay secondary heed to the prescription business, looking upon it as a necessary evil. In such stores, Retail Selling is generally given a greater study, with comparatively greater success. But aggressive merchandizing, or aggressive intelligent selling when applied to a prescription department, or any other department, in a store, always yields results in the way of increased sales and resultant profits. No matter what the nature of the store, retail selling is always more successful where the proprietor or manager has some idea of the direction in which he is heading.

To merely open up an attractive, well-appointed store, properly clerked, and

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\* Section on Commercial Interests, A. Ph. A., Buffalo meeting, 1924.

then wait for sales to be made, is one way to failure or, at best, to very mediocre success. A carefully planned Sales Policy backed by a definite selling program, built upon a study of the store's environment, cannot fail.

Sometimes a clerk with a downtown experience of quick service sales, and quick turnover, can take these methods into a residential section, or small town, and succeed. On the other hand, it is doubtful if a small town or neighborhood druggist would succeed if he tried to use his methods in a store dealing with transient trade, or a trade that wants what it wants, and wants it quick. It is generally best to plan to give a sectional patronage what it wants, rather than go contrary to its wishes. So after you know what your people want, your selling policy becomes easier to plan.

Stores enjoying the patronage of children should plan children's sales for Saturdays rather than on school days. In industrial or railroad centers, the best time to plan a sales day is on Pay Day. In country towns Saturday has always been a big merchandizing day, but now that most farmers own autos, Saturday has somewhat lost its punch, so we find evening sales advertised in papers enjoying local and country circulation.

Too many dealers have forgotten the logic of the old saying, "It's no trouble to show goods." Not that they do not have plenty of merchandise on display, but when the called-for item is ready for wrapping, right then should salesmanship enter and some item "shown," described, explained, and sold—and, if the proprietor or manager has planned ahead what to sell, nine times out of ten that sale will be made.

The Owl Drug Company dramatize this idea by planning and staging "The Second Item" on certain days or weeks; every clerk is taught all about the Second Item, and instructed to put his sales ability behind that one article. Results are enormous because any intelligent salesman can sell whatever he concentrates on.

An Advertising Agency does some mighty good work for retailers who subscribe for their service. Many proprietors do not have time to plan store cards or store displays, and wisely take advantage of this service and, even where the proprietor or manager does have the time and ability, he can profit by taking suggestions from specialists. The same thing applies to window dressing. Many clerks are good window dressers; many are not, so that window dressing services are often well worth their cost. Window and Inside Displays and Cards should all be planned and made to line up with a pre-studied Sales Policy.

Publications are doing very good work for the drug trade at large. Through the medium of Display Topics, dealers all over the country, cities and small towns, are taking advantage of this coöperation.

It is said that 75% of drug store merchandise is sold by clerks, and yet I believe nearly all clerks selling this merchandise are working on flat salaries, with no incentive to do more than an ordinary job of selling. Plan equitable salaries for clerks, and then give extra commissions for the sale of extra-profitable items, and watch the result. Every human being likes money, and drug-store employees are no different. Plan carefully what should be sold; study the seasons; study current events. Know which are the long profit items which sell readily, and the occasional sellers. Plan occasional quick turnover sales on a narrow profit margin, cross-fire sales—like a baseball pitcher crosses his pitching.

An inventory is often looked upon as a troublesome thing which must be done once a year, but every inventory is really a valuable instrument in successful retail selling and can be used to excellent advantage, if carefully studied. An inventory should be carefully extended, and profitable, quick-selling items indicated with a plus check; the slow-selling, unprofitable items indicated by a minus check; and merchandise in the store arranged so that the profitable, moving items are prominent, and the slow goods otherwise. Clerks and sales people should be taken into the dealer's confidence so they know what he is planning. And to repeat, make it interesting for them.

The up-to-date retailer knows his competitor, and knows what he is doing. The "old fogey" refuses to "get acquainted with that competitor down the street." If competitors would meet on common ground they would find all to be about the average kind of fellows, honest, of clean ideals, and generally willing to meet halfway. It does not take neighborhoods long to take advantage of retailers' petty enmities. In our efforts to get druggists to take their rightful profits, we are generally successful in getting druggists to bring their price up by calling back and forth in certain districts, and in this work we repeatedly find dealers being buncoed by their customers. A woman will ask Brown the price of an item, and on being told it is 45 cents will say "I can get it at Smith's for 40." Time after time we see Brown fall for the deception, and sometimes go Smith one better. If Brown and Smith were friendly they would "stand pat."

We often hear of elderly maiden ladies telling mothers how to bring up their children, and such advice is taken generally as theory or "busy-ness." While I am not a retailer, what I have said here is not theory. I have endeavored to present a few simple observations which, if followed out, should pay in real cash. Oftentimes, looking from the outside in you can see more clearly than when your vision is dulled by a too close observance of your own little business, and its problems.

I'd like to close with a strong plea to you who are retail dealers. Put your clerks on an equable salary, plus extra commissions on certain items you desire pushed. Get acquainted with your competitor. Get out and see what is going on about you. Join every national pharmaceutical organization, as well as state, county and local; if there is no local organization, organize one even if it is made up of only one or two competitors and yourself.

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### PLAIN FOOLISHNESS IS CREDULITY'S TRUE BADGE.

BY EDWARD SWALLOW.

"O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do! not knowing what they do!" Shakespeare, had he been alive in these days when we are flying through the air, listening in to radio discourses, operas, sermons, advertisements broadcasted hundreds of miles away; when we are counting atoms just like so many peas in a pod; when we buy our music by the yard or mile, according to the length of our pocket-books, and sit around hearing a nice-looking machine produce the masterpieces of artists who earn money by the wagon-load for singing a few songs; in these wonder-working times William Shakespeare would still