

AS A MAN THINKETH SO WILL HE ACT.*

BY EDWARD SWALLOW.

There is a man in Detroit, Mich., who is doing some mighty good work by spreading his practical ideas of teaching the young children of America to act right by first thinking according to reason. Mr. J. F. Wright is this constructive philosopher who dares in this day to challenge our system of education as being wanting in the background of reason and common sense. Mr. Wright believes in educating the child to think out for itself the thing that is best for it—use its reasoning powers so as to grow up with greater chances of success and what constitutes good living generally.

We pharmacists have passed through a period of thinking during the past two or three decades nothing short of a revolution as far as the professional part of the calling is concerned. Broadly speaking, we began some years ago, to think more and more along commercial lines, and less along those lines that have to do with our science and art. This has not been the fault of the colleges of pharmacy or those journals that really represent American pharmacy—these have bravely stuck to their guns in defending the profession against the onslaughts made upon it by commercial interests and the increase in the number of drug stores throughout the land—this latter thing being, as many think, the main reason why pharmacy seems to be attenuated in America, so to say.

The pharmacist of thirty years ago was already suffering from the effects of too much competition, both in regard to the business end of the drug store and the purely professional part—too many professional cooks were already “spoiling the broth” of the prescription business.

This crowded condition in the drug trade produced thoughts, naturally enough, of which was the best and easiest way to survive. Alas, for the idea of making pharmacy one of the learned professions second only in importance to that of medicine, the average pharmacist began to think about side-lines and anything which he might turn into his register some much needed profits. He, the much too-crowded druggist, as it were, “treading on the other’s corns,” began forgetting to draw upon his knowledge and science to help him keep his head above the waters of commercialism that threatened to destroy him financially; like a drowning man, he grasped at the first thing to keep him from sinking out of sight.

Professional pharmacy began to be less thought of among the army of druggists, an ever increasing one, and the time came when the average pharmacist engaged in retailing allowed himself to think very little of his science and art and more about his side-lines—goods that were entirely foreign to the drug store of thirty years ago. We hear and read a whole lot of complaints from druggists who claim justly enough that there is now very little professional business attached to the average drug store. We might pause awhile between the selling of alarm clocks or ladies’ stockings, and ask ourselves how we have become super saturated with the amazing number of side-lines and miscellaneous merchandise finding room upon our shelves to the exclusion of our own made preparations *which nowadays we have thought out of existence.*

* Specially written for the JOURNAL OF THE A. PH. A.

The question might well be put: Have we been thinking right in regard to our profession, its opportunities for creating profit with dignity to ourselves?

Have we been thinking of how to make a dollar by selling and distributing side-lines that belong to other trades, the grocer, the hardware store and the restaurant, and in some cases, the toy shop?

Can it be that we druggists, registered pharmacists, with a fair kind of scientific knowledge and training, have gotten our gray matter, those wonderful cells within which lies the power of thought, into such a state of inertia that we cannot think of anything but how best to sell side-lines in competition with almost every other trade?

A profession generally is no better than its individual unit, and as it takes thought to lead to action, we American pharmacists are functioning according to our thoughts—we cannot get away from this fact. If we have any cause for complaint, we must blame ourselves, each one of us—we are all “in the same boat,” a boat that some surmise is leaving the good old ship of Pharmacy to carry none but the hospital pharmacist, and the manufacturing pharmacist supplying us with preparations that we are too lazy or indifferent to make for ourselves.

As the Mr. Wright alluded to believes, “the man who changes the standard of his life for the better through reason is a stronger, safer and happier man than the one who changes through fear of punishment.” As a man thinketh, so will he act. Have we lost the ability to think about such things as biologicals, urine analysis and the making and selling of our own preparations?

COD-LIVER OIL STOCKS TESTED FOR VITAMINS.

During 1927 the Department of Agriculture conducted an extensive survey of extracts of cod-liver oil and of various products alleged to contain the vitamins of cod-liver oil found in interstate commerce. A biological examination for the presence of vitamins A and D in these products showed that many of the extracts and concentrates examined were virtually devoid of vitamin A and that few contained any material amount of vitamin D. Several of these articles have been used extensively in the manufacture of so-called cod-liver oil compound tablets and other preparations.

Products represented as concentrates of cod-liver oil should contain vitamins A and D in concentrations reasonably higher than those of a good grade of cod-liver oil. State-

ments regarding the therapeutic effects of the preparations should be limited to those that can be fully substantiated by the consensus of present-day medical opinion. Investigations of this class of products will be continued.

Compilation of Food and Drug Laws. Published by Standard Remedies Publishing Company, Washington, D. C., E. F. Kemp, Editor. Price \$5.00.

This is the eleventh edition of the compilation and has been brought up-to-date. The volume contains 1116 pages and constitutes a digest of State, Federal and Canadian laws relating to foods, drugs, pharmacy, poisons, narcotics, insecticides, fungicides, caustic acids, weights and measures, sample distribution, stock medicines, alcohol, prohibition, advertising, trademarks and trade practices, and a synopsis of Latin-American drug regulations.