

with the hospitals, a better understanding is brought about among the pharmacists and the medical men and a great deal more work is being turned over to the pharmacy of the hospital, aside from that which the school is doing. In addition, the physician, who has had hospital training under these conditions, when going into private practice, looks to the pharmacist to supply his needs. As a result, we have numerous queries from local pharmacists concerning formulas, which is, I believe, proof that the pharmacist, even in a limited way, may develop a better understanding with the medical profession and the public by showing originality along some strictly pharmaceutical lines. Eventually, two types of stores will probably be evolved—the pharmacy and the drug store.

FOLLOWING THE LEADER.*

BY ROBERT P. FISCHELIS.

Merchandising experts advocate, as one method of drawing trade, concentration from time to time on a single item or group of items which can be offered at attractive prices or in company with some special service feature. Such items or group of items are designated as "leaders."

It is not difficult to attract customers when the "leader" is a standard product offered at a greatly reduced price. It is more difficult to attract trade when the "leader" is an unknown product, even though its price is low in comparison with standard products of a similar character.

It may be still more difficult to bring customers into a store when the leader is a special product made in the store or a new form of service, although there is room for a difference of opinion here. There would doubtless be a sufficient number of specific instances available to prove the case either way.

What is the real test of the success of the plan to concentrate public attention on the "leader?" Undoubtedly the answer is "the number of followers." If the "leader" is not followed by an ever growing number of permanent customers it is largely a failure.

Every retail pharmacist can doubtless point to some items in his stock or to some service rendered by his organization which causes people to return to him for that item or that service and incidentally for other things. These are his "leaders" whether he recognizes them as such or not. If he keeps proper records he will recognize them and eventually capitalize them.

The object of this paper is to point to one "leader" that will insure a following greater than is possible with any other. I refer to prescriptions and I desire to cite only one incident of recent occurrence which gives indisputable evidence of the great power of Prescription Compounding as a "leader" for any retail pharmacy.

An establishment in one of the larger Eastern cities has had a slogan emphasizing prescription work for years. It never was a strictly prescription store but took full advantage of its transient location to build up a general drug and sundry business, with soda fountain, etc. It recently filled its two millionth prescription. A year or two ago this establishment was compelled to seek new quarters because of a demand from its landlord of an increase in rent amounting to five times what

* Section on Commercial Interests, A. P. H. A., Portland meeting, 1928.

was being paid. There was no other location nearby and it was necessary to move a considerable distance from the original location. The new location was "clocked" and it was found that only three-fifths of the number of people who pass the old location during a given period, pass the new location, and inasmuch as the main thoroughfare of the city intervenes between the two locations it was safe to assume that a large percentage of the people customarily passing the old location on their way to and from business would not pass the new location. In other words, it was to be expected that business in the new location would hardly be more than 50% to 60% of what was done in the old location.

A sufficient period for readjustments has elapsed and I have been informed that the drop in general business was nearer 25% than 50% and in the prescription business it was actually less than 25%. The leader—namely prescriptions—had developed a sufficient following over a period of years to continue to attract people to the new location even though in terms of modern transportation and convenience the location may be described as inconvenient. The management attributes its success to the character of its "leader" and no one will doubt that not a single other product or service that might have been selected as a "leader" for this particular store could have accomplished what emphasis on prescription service and the building of a clientele on this basis has apparently done. Surely there is a moral in this which will not escape even the most extreme merchandising enthusiast in pharmacy.

THE TEACHING OF COMMERCIAL PHARMACY AND ITS RELATION TO SCIENTIFIC OR PROFESSIONAL PHARMACY.*

BY C. E. MOLLETT.

During the last half century, due largely to the economics of quantity production by large manufacturing concerns, and partly to increased facilities for transportation, the retail pharmacist has become more of a distributor than a manufacturer but, fortunately, he is still a dispenser and an adviser of the public on questions of health and medicine.

Retail pharmacy furnishes an immediate opportunity for the services of the graduate, therefore many schools have overlooked the opportunity to even train for other fields. The inadequate two-year schedule of the past was so crowded with skeleton courses which could not be taught like other sciences that it forced schools to forgo the addition of subjects beyond the mere fundamentals of ultra-scientific pharmacy. This, fortunately, is being overcome at present by the lengthening of the minimum course.

Since retail pharmacy is so largely concerned in the distribution of products furnished by a great unseen corps of researchers in many laboratories, it is important that teachers of the science study the new and changed conditions in order to function properly and train the young pharmacists to meet these new conditions, lest thousands of these unseen workers be unable to gain a livelihood, and the public suffer for want of their services.

Let it be understood that the sale of commodities, not pharmaceutical or in some way related, is not commercial pharmacy, but pure merchandising. While

* Section on Commercial Interests, A. PH. A., Portland meeting, 1928.