

remedies as professionally as prescriptions are packaged. Sometimes, too, the effectiveness of the display is increased by well-worded display cards, giving a history of the constituents, the sources of supply, etc.

With specific preparations of the U. S. P. and N. F., which are in the professional group, promotion plans must be confined to physicians and other professional people. U. S. P. and N. F. preparations useful in the practice of an individual physician can be suggested to him tactfully and informatively from the pharmacist's own knowledge of the nature of this physician's practice. The very permanency of the pharmacist in his locality makes possible inexpensive detailing of this kind not only by personal calls upon physicians, but also in telephone conversations and upon their visits to the store.

THE RELATION OF PHARMACY TO THE PUBLIC.*

BY AMBROSE HUNSBERGER.

The radical change in pharmaceutical practice which the passing of the centuries has wrought is perhaps most strikingly evidenced in the retail field. The evolution of the latter-day pharmacist, from his prototype in the person of the humble dealer in crude drugs performing his circumscribed task of assisting the doctor of his day, to the present-day graduate with his high school education, four years' pharmaceutical experience, a pharmacy college diploma in one hand and in the other a certificate from his state pronouncing him qualified to practice, represents an advance, indeed. In proportion to the increase in his cultural attainments, the position of the pharmacist as a community factor became more important and his responsibility greater.

By virtue of the character of service which may be rendered by him, the pharmacist is brought into more frequent and intimate contact with the domestic affairs of a community than is any other single element in the social structure. Be the problem in question one concerning health, hygiene, church, politics, morals, ethics, finance, or what not, the assumption is a fair one that at one stage or another in its solution you will find that the pharmacist is consulted.

The duties involved in fulfilling his obligation are exacting and the responsibilities grave. There is no middle course along which to steer. Complying with all the requirements concerning licensure, registration, permits, etc., constitutes a primary detail of preparation. Then must be provided an establishment properly equipped with official records and formularies, journals, apparatus, stock, and competently manned. Supplies must be provided in sufficient variety to meet without delay emergency calls for any one of many thousands of medicinal substances, surgical aids or hygienic devices. Proper storage facilities must be available for the protection of articles susceptible of deterioration through exposure or age. Care must be exercised in the purchase and manufacture of preparations in order that the official standard of quality may be maintained. An alert and ready force of competent assistants to meet any demands upon these resources must be on duty during many hours of each day. Constant vigilance in the field

* Closing remarks of a Public Health Talk before Philadelphia County Medical Society.

of research must be exercised in order that new remedies may be made promptly available to the sick and suffering.

The responsibilities with which the pharmacist is charged place him in a somewhat unique position, since there is perhaps no other class of citizens given equal custodianship over the acts of their fellow citizens. The pharmacist quite naturally is responsible for his own errors and those of his assistants, as well as for the quality of drugs which he dispenses. He is further charged with responsibility for errors made by prescribers in ordering overdoses of dangerous drugs in prescriptions, and for the control of drugs which are habit forming; also for the sufficient medication of prescriptions containing alcohol and for restriction of the distribution of alcohol and liquors, for the genuineness of the form upon which liquor is prescribed, as well as for the good intent of the prescriber of liquor or narcotic drugs. Finally, he must satisfy himself that such alcoholic or narcotic preparations as he may dispense according to the law will not be applied to a wrong purpose by the purchaser. These responsibilities have been assumed cheerfully, because pharmacists as a class are primarily good citizens without inclination to shirk any duty which, if faithfully performed, promises a constructive result for the general benefit of organized society.

Despite the wonderful progress which has been made in shaping the practice of pharmacy into a useful, constructive and efficient factor in community life the complaint of the Sixteenth Century pharmacists applies to-day because of the continued prevalence of the "ignoramus who imagines himself qualified to engage in this traffic." There is, perhaps, no occupation subject to parasitic competition more frequently than pharmacy. By parasitic competition is meant that great horde of dealers in no way connected with pharmacy which bolsters up its volume of business by exploiting many of the commodities which are rightfully a part of the pharmacist's stock in trade. These parasites contribute nothing to pharmaceutical advancement, render no special service to the public, assume no responsibility for and have little knowledge of the products they handle, do not safeguard the public, acknowledge no obligation to the sick in a community, and yet take away millions of dollars' worth of business annually from the pharmacist who measures up to all of the foregoing requirements. Among those poachers in the field of pharmacy are department, cigar and grocery stores, news-stands, auto supply stations, barber shops, beauty parlors, millinery shops, feed, hardware and general stores. Maledictions are often hurled at the pharmacist because of the many side lines he carries without consideration being given to the fact that he is in but a small way compensating with his side lines for the loss of business he is suffering through unwarranted encroachment upon his field of operations by this multiplicity of interests. Solution of this problem in so far as the sales of harmless drug store commodities is concerned must come through an increasingly better service, education of the public to the need of supporting the pharmacist in time of weal, so that his services may be available in time of woe.

Throughout the length and breadth of our great country there are thousands of conscientious, upstanding, independent pharmacists, who, despite the harassments of unfair and unscrupulous competition, stand ready to fulfill their obligation to the public. They are community factors of first importance. They will not exploit your misfortunes. They represent the second line of defense in the

contest with disease. They help to build churches, schools, clubs and other community enterprises. They know you and yours. Their interest in your welfare is that of a neighbor. They work in intelligent coöperation with the regular medical profession. They do not use high-power and blatant methods to explain useless nostrums. They carry in stock the tried and tested remedies which your doctor may see fit to prescribe in your hour of need. They do not sacrifice service to expediency. These men and women in conjunction with upstanding and conscientious members of the medical profession dedicate their lives to the preservation of humanity's most precious asset, namely, its health.

And that constitutes pharmacy's true relationship to the public.

PHARMACEUTICAL PRACTICALITIES.

BY ROBERT J. RUTH.

In the "Comprehensive Standard Dictionary" the word "practical" is defined as follows:

1. Pertaining to actual experience
2. Derived from practice
3. Being such in fact or effect

The title of this paper, "Pharmaceutical Practicalities," is then appropriate inasmuch as retail pharmacy will be considered from the standpoint of the conducting of same, and illustrations based upon actual experience derived from practice will be used freely in the discussion.

First let me quote a splendid article published in the *Literary Digest*:

"WHAT MAKES A DRUG STORE?"

The answer to this question propounded by an editorial writer in *The Druggists Circular* is undoubtedly—drugs. Without them it would be something else. Then why not feature them, he asks, instead of laying all the stress on soft drinks, candy and light literature? He writes:

Pharmacy is what makes a drug store a drug store. Remove it from certain stores and they would then differ but slightly from a mixture of beauty parlor, news and cigar stand, confectionery store, telephone office and "five-and-ten." Candy bazaars, tobacco shops and the rest possess strong attractions, each for its own clientele, but no one of them has that universality of appeal that is, perhaps, the drug store's chief commercial asset; in its more-or-less professional aspect lies the drug store's drawing power.

So thoroughly recognized is the magnetism of the mere words, "Drug Store," displayed over the door of a place of business, that many non-pharmacists have adopted them as a part of the name of their small department stores—stores in which no pharmacy is practiced. Drugless drug stores, however, have proved to be more of a delusion than a snare. They lack one thing which they invoke to bring them customers—they lack pharmacy, a professional side, an air of superiority over the ordinary marts.

This, however, is a digression. The main idea is that pharmacy is the stackpole around which many a successful mercantile business is gathered. Without pharmacy the business might and probably would, go to pieces. Pharmacy, then, is entitled to the fullest recognition as the main support of the business it has built up and holds together. As such, it should be kept in evidence at all times. It is not enough for the druggist merely to say he is more than a merchant;