

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

C. B. JORDAN—CHAIRMAN OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, A. A. C. P., EDITOR OF THIS
DEPARTMENT.

At the last meeting of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, there were quite a number of papers presented before the Pharmacy Section on the subject of the prescription. I have decided to run those papers in a consecutive series so that they will form a sort of symposium on prescription work. The following on "Finishing the Prescription" by Dean Newton is one of the series.—C. B. JORDAN, *Editor*.

FINISHING THE PRESCRIPTION.

BY HOWARD C. NEWTON.*

The most evident and therefore the most common criterion for judging the care with which a prescription has been compounded is the physical appearance of the finished product. Not only the layman but the physician, the nurse and even other pharmacists, are influenced largely in their opinion of the excellence, or lack of excellence, of a compounded prescription by the manner in which it is dispensed. In teaching students to dispense prescriptions we must not ignore these facts. It would, indeed, be difficult to devote too much time in our classes to this important subject of putting the finishing touches upon the products of the prescription counter. The compounding of physicians' prescriptions is the fundamental function of professional pharmacy and it is the one phase of the practice of pharmacy, the duties and privileges of which are universally restricted by law to the pharmacist. The welfare of the public demands that restriction. Since the compounding of prescriptions is looked upon by the public as a highly professional practice, differing greatly from the many other phases of his work, it would seem proper that the pharmacist should make the products of this practice highly distinctive, differing markedly from all other materials that he may distribute. I believe that you will agree with me in this thought and yet when we see the products of some prescription counters we cannot but wonder why those pharmacists should take so little care in the finishing of their prescriptions. It almost seems as if they were purposely trying to avoid the enjoyment of one of the chief advantages of pharmacy—the professional atmosphere which places it above the rank of a trade.

For those who may be inclined to doubt the extreme importance of the physical appearance of the compounded prescription I will make this statement: the most successful prescription stores of this country are those in which the details of finishing the products of their prescription counters are the result of much study and the execution of these details is a matter of continual concern. To prove this I have gathered specimens from successful stores throughout the country, illustrating the care which these stores give to the finishing of their prescriptions. For the purposes of this discussion I shall divide the finishing of a prescription into the following elements:

* Dean, Creighton University College of Pharmacy.