

in such a situation for either store and, as these facts become apparent, it may lead to a greater common sense in establishing new stores. It is usually the case, too, that far more and better opportunities exist through the purchase of established businesses than with the establishment of new drug stores.

The two basic reasons which, in my judgment, make impracticable or even impossible the limitation of drug stores in the United States are as follows:

If any one disagrees with my premises or conclusions, I hope they won't hesitate to say so in plain and frank language.

The first reason is the distribution of the more than 120,000,000 people who live in the United States. Although a large proportion of these people live in the large cities, it is none the less true, at the other extreme, that close to 50 per cent of the people still live on farms and in towns of under 2500 population; limitation would mean a great inconvenience for those who live in the mountain states, and in other thinly populated sections.

The other basic reason that limitation of drug stores "is impracticable, if not impossible," is that it is a legal impossibility to establish selling restrictions only on a relatively small group of the items which are stocked to-day even in the professional drug stores, or pharmacies, and there is and can be no restriction upon the sale of many other items which are commonly accepted to-day as drug store items.

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### "PINE BOARD" COMPETITION.

BY PAUL C. OLSEN.

One of the newest of the directions from which competition is felt in the retail drug business is the so-called "Pine Board" stores. This competition takes its name from the nature of the fixtures in these stores: plain shelving, few or no show-cases and none of the other expensive accompaniments of the modern drug store to-day. Usually, also, there is no prescription department corresponding with legal requirements and the necessity of employing registered pharmacists at salaries considerably above those at which ordinary retail sales people can be obtained.

Competition of this kind has so far developed to the greatest extent in several California cities. The reason the competition is felt so keenly by established retail druggists is the policy of these "pine board stores" to limit their stocks to the relatively small number of items which are well known and readily salable and on which price competition is keen. It is the policy, also, of these stores to pick up job lots of distress merchandise and, also, to obtain standard merchandise at sacrifice sales and auctions of drug stores in trouble.

The result is that this popular merchandise frequently is offered at prices astonishingly low and in many cases below wholesale cost.

There is no denying that competition of this kind where it exists (and it may spread) is keen and calls, therefore, for alert thinking and aggressive action.

One druggist, situated two doors from such competition, found that after the early novelty of his "pine board" competitor had waned, his regular customers and new ones, too, gradually returned to him.

Why? The answer is found in the incomplete stock of the "job-lot" merchant, which necessitates the purchase by the customer of items with which he or she is not acquainted and, usually are found to be of inferior quality. There is the opportunity for the established drug store to assert its superiority. Its stock is complete. People soon become aware of the disappointments sooner or later to be felt in attempting to deal continuously with establishments which characteristically have incomplete stocks.

This doesn't deny, however, that price competition is a decidedly important factor in the business of the established drug store. It is fortunate indeed, that when price competition makes it necessary, the selling prices of popular merchandise can be reduced below the customary levels to a considerable extent without running the risk of disastrous losses. This is possible because of the volume of sales on such merchandise and the rapid turnover.

The survival of the established drug store in the face of this and related competition is indicated, also, because of the opportunities it has to sell merchandise which is not, and in many cases, cannot be included in the stock of this new type of competitor. This means, particularly, merchandise associated with the professional side of pharmacy. Thus is indicated once more how important, valuable and profitable the professional side of pharmacy is to the conduct of retail drug stores to-day.

#### RETROSPECT OF FIFTY YEARS AGO.

A small plantation of fourteen acres of *Cinchona Ledgeriana*, set 5 feet apart, planted in 1862, was first cropped in 1872. In the seven succeeding years it yielded 26,825½ kilos of bark, which sold at 5 fr. 30 c. per ½ kilo, or 141,766 fr., or 1448 fr. per acre during the whole life of the plantation. Mr. Moens has kept a register of the history of a number of trees. The most remarkable tree in the East is No. 67, a *Calisaya Ledgeriana*. It is eighteen years old, and its bark has yielded 13 per cent of pure quinine. No. 78 comes next in order of merit, its bark yielding 10.5 per cent of quinine, and no other alkaloids. It is of the same species and age, and grows in the same garden, but the bark is very rough, the leaves are broad and green and the flower is pure white. A *succirubra*, fourteen years old, is 63 feet high and 3½ feet in girth.—*Chemist & Druggist*, August 30, 1930.

#### MODERN MEDICINE BEGAN WITH PASTEUR.

In a recent address, Surgeon General Cumming said in part: "Modern medicine really began with the work of the great Frenchman, Louis Pasteur, which was carried on from 1857 to 1885. Pasteur successfully disproved the belief which was almost universal at that time,

that putrefaction, fermentation and similar processes were the result of what was spoken of as the spontaneous generation of lower forms of life; *i. e.*, that such forms could originate *de novo* from inanimate matter. Pasteur's work included the discovery that certain diseases both in man and certain of the lower animals are due to the growth and countless multiplication in their bodies of microscopic plants (as a rule they are classed as plants) known as microorganisms or disease germs, or bacteria."

#### PASTEUR MEMORIAL LIBRARY.

Well-known Americans, some of them residing in France, are taking active interest in the Pasteur Memorial Library at the University of Strasbourg. This undertaking is intended not only as a monument to the illustrious scientist, but also to strengthen the bonds of friendship between France and the United States. Several hundreds of valuable books, some of them in choice bindings, already have been contributed.

#### NEW RADIUM SPRING IN BOHEMIA.

In the little village of Tiefenbach near Joachimsthal in Northwest Bohemia, where Madame Curie first discovered radium, a new radium spring has been found which is said to rival even the famous Joachimsthal springs.