

his prescription room preparations which he feels have been given the benefits of all pharmaceutical knowledge that is within him, and never to say to himself that is good enough, or that it will serve the purpose. He must consider that his duty is fully completed only when his conscience tells him that he did what was right and that he would not hesitate to apply the preparation to a member of his own family or even to himself.

THE COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGES OF PROPERLY APPLIED PROFESSIONAL PHARMACY.*

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When solicited by your learned Dean, Prof. Sturmer, to address you upon this topic I was prompted to reply in the negative to his request, but, upon second thought presuming that I may be able to present at least one thought that may prove helpful to uplift pharmacy—both professionally and commercially—I agreed to offer a brief discourse, for which I bespeak your charitable criticism.

Upon taking up this topic for discussion it is necessary to ascertain if it is possible to absolutely divorce commercial pharmacy from professional pharmacy. Can one view professional pharmacy in all its phases without taking into consideration the commercial aspects of the subject? I feel certain, in the light of our customs and the laws upon the subject, that it is impossible to ignore the question of reward for services rendered to society in any professional vocation, unless one is endowed with such an abundance of worldly goods that he can take up his professional work as an altruist; but there are very, very few of those of our calling who could afford, if they so desired, to join the ranks of those of our citizens who are so generously provided with riches that they can follow the lead of some others who endeavor to appease their troubled consciences by making donations to colleges, institutions, libraries and movements for the betterment of the society against which they have greatly sinned. Such being the facts we must be guided by the conditions that surround the great majority of those of our calling, and recognize the commercial side of professional pharmacy as a necessity.

At the outstart I do not wish you to confound commercial pharmacy as practiced today in many establishments with the commercial pharmacy of which I wish to speak, for they are absolutely incompatible. To some, yea, many minds commercial pharmacy means customs, practices and merchandising that are flagrant cases of misbranding when the name pharmacy is attached thereto, having about as much right to have that honored name appended to their trading as a clothes horse has to be recognized as a member of the equine family.

The topic under consideration would indicate that there exists such a calling or occupation as professional pharmacy. What constitutes such a vocation?

Professional pharmacy consists of the art and science of selecting, preserving,

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preparing and compounding drugs and medicines such as will serve as aids to the medical men in the cure, mitigation or prevention of disease.

Commercial pharmacy of the true type, consists of the proper methods of disposing of one's professional pharmacy efforts, in order to gain an honorable livelihood; and it stands to reason that the better the grade of professional pharmacy one has to offer to the medical men and to the public the greater will be the rewards received in a commercial way.

How is one to acquire the best quality of professional pharmacy?

In the light of experience of scores of years it has been proven that practical experience, coupled with a proper course of training in a first class college of pharmacy—in such as it is your good fortune to be enrolled—is the best manner in which to become proficient as a safe and skillful handler of drugs and medicines—one who can command the confidence and respect of the medical profession, and of the public; provided you conduct yourself and your establishment of business in a manner that will not offset and nullify your professional qualifications.

Now we have reached the point upon which I wish especially to direct your attention, and I will endeavor to point out the advantages, commercially considered, of the suggestions to be offered to you.

Quite recently I noticed in the daily papers an account of a reception tendered to Dr. Isaac Sharpless, President of the Haverford College, at which time and place he is reported to have given utterance to the following statement:

"The world today is becoming more and more professional and business is now regarded as one of the professions. Are we doing what we should for those who go into business? Business is a profession and there is an increased demand in that profession for college trained men, for it requires a highly developed intellect."

Certainly business cannot yet be placed upon the same plane as the three "learned professions"—Law, Theology and Medicine (of which last profession Pharmacy is a recognized special branch), but if it is to be classified as a profession, it most assuredly is incumbent upon the members of the learned professions to most carefully inspect their business customs and standards, as they certainly are expected to show due respect in their transactions with their fellowmen for the dignity of their calling. Unfortunately many of those of our calling have been careless and unmindful of these obligations, having followed the practices and customs of non-professional merchants, who have no respected standards to uphold and protect; but in many instances that I have observed in a quarter century's connection with this professional calling, such neglect has brought its own swift and sure results—dismal failure to the proprietors.

On the other hand I can bring to mind many instances of fellow pharmacists who have conducted their establishments in a dignified and confidence-producing manner, fortified by a thorough professional training in pharmacy, who have triumphed in close competition with merchandising establishments misbranded as drug stores, and have built up reputations that will be life-long assets.

How can we most properly apply our professional pharmacy?

We can do so by acts of omission and acts of commission, also by precau-

tionary measures, to avoid and combat if necessary, harmful influences. Thoughtlessness and unguarded cooperation in the plans and schemes of sordidly selfish manufacturers is one of the chief causes for failure upon the part of pharmacists to get the full measure of benefits from their professional qualifications, as is evidenced by the following examples:

a—Using in one's work cheap substitutes for standard remedies prescribed by the medical men, or using impure or valueless preparations purchased from unreliable resources of supply just because the element of cost absolutely ruled the transaction.

b—Permitting one's store room and show windows to be debased and defiled by displays of goods of questionable therapeutic value, also using advertising placards that are good samples of certificates of qualification for membership in the Ananias Club.

c—Feeling a false sense of pride in having one's name and address appended to the advertisements of many of the nostrums that flood our markets today. Ofttimes, if you knew the true composition of the products and their therapeutic value (?) you would want to sue the man responsible for associating your name with his goods.

d—Because the degree of Graduate of Pharmacy or Doctor of Pharmacy has been conferred upon you, do not allow yourself to be deluded into the belief that it is synonymous with Doctor of Medicine, with the rights that pertain thereto morally and legally. Each has its place and special work to do, which the other one cannot properly fill or perform.

e—Encouraging the public to continue self-medication by offering it a full line of preparations labelled with suggestive therapeutic titles. An old adage states that he who has himself as a client in a case of law is a fool and how very appropriately can this be made to apply to one who is ill, when he endeavors to supplant the regularly educated and licensed medical practitioner.

f—Claiming to conduct a first-class, safe, reliable pharmacy, when it may be a fact that the assistants employed therein are not of a responsible age, have had no good practical experience and have not a sufficient amount of good common sense and education. Remember that bluffing and misrepresentation will not go unrewarded very long in these days of enlightenment and higher education; also that you will not alone suffer the consequences of such unwise, foolhardy and unfair customs, but the entire profession must stand the knocks of our enemies, for we assuredly have an abundance of the latter to contend with these days of license—mistaken for liberty.

How can we properly apply our knowledge designated as professional pharmacy?

a—The first thought that must be borne in mind is the fact that you have been trained and educated as a member of one of the learned professions, which places upon you obligations as well as it confers upon you privileges and honors, and you cannot shirk these obligations so long as you number yourself amongst the members of the pharmaceutical profession. If you have not heard of them kindly remember henceforth that a code of ethics has been supplied for each

one of the learned professions and their associated branches, and we are no exception to the rule.

b—As we are recognized as a branch of the medical profession it is self-evident that we should become well and favorably known to the members of that calling, and invite them to inspect our places of business, our equipment, our drugs and preparations, the evidences of our respect for their rights to be noted therein, the character of men employed to compound their prescriptions and dispense the commodities ordered by them for their patients.

c—Displaying your diplomas in a prominent place in your place of business, thereby showing to the laity and to the medical men your credentials, for which you labored so very hard, and possibly suffered many privations in your quest of them.

d—Demonstrate your qualifications as a Pharmacist by manufacturing your preparations of the U. S. P. and N. F., except in such instances where you cannot conscientiously properly prepare them. It is no disgrace to concede that some preparations can be better prepared by those specially equipped to manufacture them, in fact the U. S. Government permits a few of our medical agents to be prepared only in especially licensed establishments. Never allow your pride to deter you from supplying the very best medicine that can be produced, from whatsoever source it may come, for the needs of the diseased patient are paramount to all other issues.

e—The proper preservation of drugs, chemicals and their preparations is recognized as being very essential to their activity being conserved, hence vigilance and intelligence are ever-more demanded of the dispenser.

f—Pricing of prescriptions is one of the most vital questions to be considered in the practical application of professional pharmacy, as it is the compensation we receive for materials supplied and for services rendered. A universal code of marking prescriptions has been prepared by one of our national associations, which is a very fine system to be guided by, provided an intelligent and well-posted party estimates the charges to be made. Ofttimes I have observed a total absence of these qualifications, judging from the figures marked upon the copy of the prescription. Do not make it a custom to gratuitously give the patient your services, making a charge only for materials used at a fair profit. If you employ a first-class prescriptionist you must (or should) pay him a goodly salary and you are certainly entitled to receive the cost of his services to you plus a reasonable profit together with the legitimate charges for the materials used.

g—I have touched upon the question of the clerk in the above paragraph but I wish now to elaborate somewhat upon this subject as it is a very vital one in the proper application of your professional pharmacy—as you will soon agree with me I feel certain. To each of you embryo pharmacists the question will soon arise: shall I become a proprietor or shall I seek employment in the store of some other pharmacist? Before hastily coming to a conclusion in this matter, I would advise that you carefully investigate the commercial conditions that exist today, the percentage of failures that are recorded in the life-time of the average business man, the tendencies of the members of the medical profession in the treatment of disease and the new force that must be contended with in the form

of the Parcel Post, which certainly works to the advantage of the established, large corporations and firms at the expense of the smaller dealers. I ask you to seriously consider these factors because they all have their influence upon the standards of our professional calling, for it is a well known fact that a superabundance of any sort of laborers or professional men leads to practices that are not conducive to good business ethics or legal practices. Evidence of the verity of this can readily be found in recent newspaper accounts of cases appearing in our federal courts.

h—I cannot conclude these words of suggestion and advice without reminding you of the fact that we are living when everywhere is to be seen progression in all lines of activity; hence when you have received your degree from your Alma Mater, which indicates that you have completed a designated course of study, do not deceive yourself by thinking that your course of study has been completed for your life-time, for, if when you graduate you should know all that has been stored up by generations past for your benefit (which fact I doubt very much), you will soon become a back number, qualified to be included amongst "the old fossils," unless you continue your studies by a system of home studies, from the pens of the best workers in pharmacy circles—professional and commercial.

Where and how shall you economically, conveniently and advantageously find this course? The course has been provided for the past half century by an association of pharmacists, which has ever been active in the best interests of an honorable, dignified and enduring profession of pharmacy, a member of which every respectable votary of pharmacy should become without delay. I refer to the grand, old American Pharmaceutical Association, of which association the majority of your faculty are active members. With the advent of the Journal of the association a most convenient form of sending you the course for home study has been provided, and you will find it over-running with golden nuggets of knowledge of practical value to every one of you.

Membership in this association is a most valuable asset if one does not abuse it, does not become a passive member only and if he directs the attention of the medical profession to his membership therein, as it maintains most cordial relationship with its sister association, the powerful and useful American Medical Association.

Do not forget that the cooperation of the medical men is a very, very valuable aid to one's success in this calling. It can be acquired and retained by merit and straightforward dealings one with the other, as an honest man to an honest man, and you know that an honest man has been said to be "the noblest work of God."

You may deem these statements overdrawn, or only the theoretical deductions of an imaginative mind, but I can assure you that I know them to be undeniable facts based upon an experience of somewhat over a quarter century's time, and this verity is demonstrated more clearly every year to one who observes the rewards of society for services rendered by its servants—whether it be good or whether it be otherwise.