

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIAN AND AMERICAN DRUG STORES.\*

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A Yugoslavian drug store, called "apteka" or "ljekarna," is a place where nothing but drugs are sold. This constitutes the main difference between a Yugoslavian and an American drug store—in this country the drug stores sell many articles of merchandise.

A Yugoslavian drug store is in arrangement and appearance like any other European drug store. There is a large hall in the front of the store, which is the largest and main part of the building. The front of the store has an appearance like that of any American drug store; that is, there are show windows and the main entrance to the store. The hall or large room to which I refer is similar to the front room or large room of any American drug store. In this large room there are cabinets and show cases standing around the walls the same as in an American drug store; the shelves of the show cases are full of suitable containers of characteristic shapes; these hold various pharmaceutical preparations, such as tinctures, ointments, liquors and powders. In suitable drawers there are stored medicinal roots, rhizomes, leaves and flowers; each drawer or shelf bears the name of the respective drug, in Latin; the drugs are arranged alphabetically.

There is one shelf that contains cosmetics, and still another one that contains patent medicines; also there are two cases with all the narcotics—these two cases of potent drugs are kept locked, and are opened only by the registered pharmacist for filling of narcotic prescriptions. The registered pharmacist, the master, is responsible for the use of narcotics. This same rule will apply, I think, to the pharmacist in this country.

On the floor in front of the prescription counter there are a few chairs for the patients. Often the customer is requested to call after a certain time for his medicines, the check system for prescriptions being used, as in American Drug stores.

There are in the large room, standing close to the show window, two office tables, one for the pharmacist—used by him for his personal affairs at leisure times, and the other for doctors who may visit the pharmacy. The doctors, as a rule, have their own offices, but they visit the drug stores very frequently.

The large front room is decorated with statues of Aesculapius, Venus, and some of the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, such as Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Virgil and others. Besides statues there are some draperies, pictures and other objects of art, responsive to the æsthetic taste of the master pharmacist.

Next to the large front room is the laboratory (laboratorium). In front of the entrance of the laboratory is a large marble table or counter; on each side of the table, usually, are placed decorative objects, statues or else vases with colored liquids. Each laboratory has one or two analytical balances, a cash register, a recording desk for all prescriptions and a section of pharmaceutical books. The laboratory is well supplied with all chemicals and important apparatus. There

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\* Section on Commercial Interests, A. Ph. A., Baltimore meeting, 1930.

is an especially large work table equipped with all necessary apparatus for the preparation of pharmaceuticals, and another for filling prescriptions.

Close to the laboratory is found the stock room, where drugs and chemicals are kept; also an herbarium for the plant drugs. All the preparations are manufactured by registered men, or one registered pharmacist and two or more assistant pharmacists.

There are in Yugoslavia two state universities where the would-be pharmacists attend classes and are prepared for their careers, but as a rule the pharmacists receive most of their training at foreign colleges. The pharmacist in Yugoslavia is subject to a rigid state examination, and after he passes that examination he is through with such tests. Of course, there are legal regulations concerning the sale of narcotics, for the sale of which the pharmacist is held responsible.

Most of the tinctures and fluidextracts are prepared by the pharmacist; these preparations are rarely imported. All chemicals used in pharmacy are imported from Germany, Great Britain, France, United States and Tchechoslovakia.

Yugoslavia has a state pharmacopœia, but the English and the French pharmacopœias are used also as standard and reference books.

The doctors usually write their prescriptions in Latin.

The pharmacist treats minor ailments and injuries. In his drug store the pharmacist is the master—he conducts all business transactions, carries on correspondence, orders chemicals, supervises the preparation of all pharmaceutical compounds in the pharmacy and the filling of prescriptions. He is responsible to the public and the municipal authorities for everything that happens in his drug store.

Usually the drug stores are open between 6:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. There exists a night service system. This system is arranged by the pharmacists in coöperation with the city government, in order to give night service to the public. A schedule is made with the dates and addresses of all the drug stores in the town. This schedule is arranged to show the nights on which each drug store is to be open in order to give service to the public; it is announced every week through the press.

The doctors of Yugoslavia do not fill prescriptions; they prescribe, but it is the pharmacist who dispenses the medicine. There exists a state pharmaceutical association similar to those in this country.

In conclusion, I would like to repeat the main difference between a Yugoslavian and an American drug store—in a Yugoslavian drug store are sold only medicines and nothing else; whereas, in an American drug store one can buy not only medicines but also many other articles. The American druggist sells many patent medicines, while in Yugoslavia very, very few are sold. The pharmacists, as well as the doctors, in Yugoslavia, oppose the selling of patent medicines. This opposition is, perhaps, due to personal economic interests.

When I came to this country, I wondered why American drug stores sold so large a variety of articles, but upon investigation, I came to the conclusion that in this country there is such intense competition between the drug stores that, consequently, the druggist is obliged to sell many articles of merchandise in order to cover the running expenses of his store and make a fair, reasonable living.