

The city neighborhood newspaper is fundamentally the same in its objectives and purposes as daily and weekly newspapers in small communities. The appeal of the daily or weekly newspaper in small communities is its emphasis upon local news. People are familiar everywhere with small communities, many of them close to large cities and in which the newspapers of these large cities circulate extensively; yet in these communities local daily or weekly newspapers occupy a place and furnish a service which cannot be replaced by out-of-town metropolitan newspapers.

Neighborhood newspapers in large cities justify their existence for the same reason. Sometimes large cities are formed by a consolidation of a group of small adjacent communities. The community interests of the former separate sections persist. The local or neighborhood newspaper continues as a tangible expression of this interest.

In Seattle, for instance, a city of nearly 400,000 population, the *West Seattle Herald* is a weekly devoted to the local interests of one section of the city. Probably the best known and largest development of the neighborhood newspaper is the *Bronx Home News* which serves primarily the local interests of that huge section of the city of New York north of the Harlem river. In Philadelphia, the *Olney Times* has existed for more than 20 years as a local newspaper of one residential section of the city. Other neighborhood local newspapers in Philadelphia have even longer histories.

It will be seen, however, that the community interest obtainable by a newspaper serving a neighborhood section of New York, Philadelphia or Seattle is not as great nor as unified as this interest would be in a more isolated community.

When a drug store proprietor considers a newspaper advertising campaign in a city neighborhood newspaper, it is necessary, therefore, for him to assure himself, first of all, of course, that the circulation of the newspaper corresponds to the trading area served by his store. More important, it is necessary for him to assure himself of the reader interest which exists in the city neighborhood newspaper. There is likely to be much more variation in this reader interest among various city neighborhood newspapers than there is in local newspapers serving more isolated communities.

Other advertising media available for advertising campaigns for drug stores in city neighborhoods and in other localities will be the subject of the next article in this series.

PROFESSIONAL PRESTIGE.¹

BY H. O. TIEGEN.²

A profession is defined as that of which one avows or claims an intimate and thorough knowledge, also a collective body of persons engaged in a calling.

Prestige is used in the sense of its meaning, as an influence derived from character or reputation.

Professional prestige then would be the character or reputation of an individual or a profession based on the influence of the person or profession with regard to the service rendered to humanity.

¹ A paper presented before Minnesota Pharmaceutical Association.

² Moorhead, Minn.

In the last decade or two, we have been engulfed in a wave of commercialism, high pressure salesmanship, where the main objective was to sell goods; to make a profit was the principal consideration. Volumes have been written on how to separate the public from its money, pleasingly and without the use of an anæsthetic—painless extraction. What has it left us?

With the coming of an era of depression, we find that the methods that were so successful during boom times are no longer as effective as of yore. Our community bargain days, special sales, giving away free, merchandise that formerly constituted important sources of income to the retail druggist such as tooth pastes, tooth brushes and safety razors, no longer have the customer appeal that they once possessed. Probably the fact that you save the customer from buying these articles is rendering him a service, but is it?

Economists tell us that a business transaction should result in a mutual benefit to both parties, but I fail to see the benefit to the dealer in giving away merchandise that would and should bear its share of the burden of overhead or expense.

A century ago the philosopher Comte said, "Every person who lives by any useful work should be habituated to regard himself not as an individual working for his own benefit, but as a public functionary working for the benefit of society; and to regard his wages of whatever sort as a provision made by society to enable him to carry on his labor." The philosophy of Comte considered the remuneration for the service rendered as part of the transaction, the result—a mutual benefit. In business as in mathematics, one side of the equation should balance or equal the other side.

The result, as I see it, of this departure from mathematical and economic methods of procedure is an uncertain mental attitude on the part of the public toward retail methods of distribution, and a false idea of the relation of costs and profits. Considering the vast differences in the selling price of staple commodities, it is only natural that the public should believe that everything must be profit, or else the quality must be poor; most people being convinced that retail profits are large. This is the natural consequence of an era of price appeal instead of quality or service appeal.

There has been a decided trend toward a return to fundamental principles in pharmacy and to a utilization of the unique advantages inherent in the scope of the practice of pharmacy. Pharmacists are beginning to see the benefits that can accrue through intelligent and persistent efforts to enhance and increase the professional phases of their business. The strictly professional side of pharmacy cannot be built in a day or a week. It takes time, work and may entail a certain amount of sacrifice.

The controversy between commercialism and the professional attitude in life is recognized and discussed by prominent sociologists. Ross says:

"There is no surer sign that current American civilization is unripe, provisional and destined to be profoundly modified than our habit of applying business standards of success in situations where they ought not to be applied. Only time will tell whether the big outstanding tone-giving business men can be persuaded to turn their backs on mammonistic standards of achievement and to apply to their colleagues more worthy social and satisfying standards of success. The increasing prominence of capital in the practice of an art or profession tends to subordinate the artistic or professional conscience to profit. The fact is the path of man's advance is strewn with discarded

commercialisms. One might almost sum up the moral side of social progress as the expulsion of the profit motive from those parts of the social order in which it has no business to be."

What has this to do with pharmacy? If the philosopher, sociologist and economist are right in their deductions, then the only enduring phase of pharmacy is the professional aspect. Our ability as merchandisers may be essential, but it is no different from that of any other merchant. What gives us special privileges, special recognition, is our ability to render a service to our fellow men which other merchants cannot do. This does not mean that we must cease to merchandise, but rather that we should make the most of the scientific basis of our business, build up a professional attitude and spirit, capitalize our scientific connections, background and traditions.

Strictly commercial organizations are strong for this scientific service appeal to humanity, linking up their products with great scientific discoveries in the hope that those who hear and read will draw the conclusion that their products are of a like nature, a great benefaction to mankind. These stories of the discoveries of great scientists make interesting and fascinating copy, attract attention and hold interest whether in newspaper or over the radio. Why not use this setting where it belongs, with medicine and pharmacy?

I have listened with a great deal of interest and fascination to the weekly dramatic radio programs setting forth the important medical and biological discoveries and the invaluable services to mankind that have resulted from the works of these patient, tireless, hardworking men of science, who devote all their time and often sacrifice health and even life to further their researches that humanity may be benefited.

Lister, Pasteur, Koch, Jenner, Banting, Ehrlich and others have left in our care a priceless heritage, and what do we do with it? Throw it in the discard as so much rubbish? No. There are a few minds that are still endeavoring to keep alive this spirit of truth, this devotion to service, to fan the ember in the hope that it may blaze forth as a bright flame to illuminate mankind and spread the gospel of service that goes with it.

There are many ways in which the pharmacist may render professional service to the community, enhance his reputation and gain much favorable prestige. In the field of biology and bacteriology there are many opportunities for interesting and profitable contacts with physicians, as well as the general public. Pasteur laid the foundation of preventive medicine through his researches in bacteriology. Many of the former scourges of mankind are now rare or unknown due to the work of a comparatively small group of men. The physicians and the pharmacists are the two groups of men who should sell the public the idea of prevention of disease as well as the alleviation of ills that do occur.

The preparation of sterile solutions, ampules for hypodermatic and intravenous use, clinical laboratory work such as the analysis of blood, urine, gastric contents, water supply, etc., are within the scope of the pharmacist's work and should be performed by him. This would deter the founding of clinics often with dispensaries connected with them. The compounding of a prescription in such a manner as to bring forth the greatest benefits from the remedy constitutes a very important part of the work of the pharmacist.

I recently read the report of one of New York's leading dermatologists who made the statement that he always specified ointments made by certain manufacturers because he knew they were free from irritant, gritty particles which were so often present in the same product when prepared in many of the drug stores. Such condemnations are damaging.

Tolstoi uttered a profound truth when he wrote, "Every person to act must consider his or her activity to be important and good. Consequently whatever the position of a man may be, he cannot help but form such a view of human life in general as will make his activity appear important and good."

An analysis of our business shows that we are a combination of the commercial and professional man, with most of our activities stressing the commercial phases of our business, to the neglect of the fundamental basis which differentiates us from other mercantile establishments.

Recently the announcement appeared in the newspapers stating that a certain chain grocery magnate had installed a prescription department in one of his stores. He evidently sees opportunities in the linking up of the professional with the commercial phases of his business. You may rest assured that his interest will not be passive. He will stress this service department of the store, while the independent druggist through his indifference to the professional and his interest in the commercial, loses much of the business which should be his.

A contrast of medicine and pharmacy is interesting. A group of physicians get together and talk about the interesting cases they have had, improved technique in operative procedure, new combinations of drugs they have found effective in alleviating the ills of mankind. They stress the service rendered and endeavor to increase their usefulness to humanity. When pharmacists gather, the gist of the conversation is too often the price at which this or that commodity is sold.

It seems to me what we need in pharmacy is the development of the professional attitude or spirit so that it occupies a place equally as important as the commercial; the adoption as a part of our business policy of an ethical attitude and adherence to a code of ethics; what one writer calls Professionalization. I am quoting at length from E. A. Ross, an authority on sociology, because what he says is pertinent to the subject under consideration.

"The patron of the artisan or tradesman is presumed to be competent to look out for his own interests. Bad wares he can reject, and poor service he can refuse to pay for. But the patron of a calling which involves the use of highly technical knowledge, since he is not qualified to judge the worth of the service he receives, he has to take it on trust. One will hesitate to commit one's dearest interests to such men unless one believes them to be worthy of trust. There is need, therefore, that a calling of this confidential character be restricted to men of honor acting with reference to a high standard. The means of bringing this to pass is to elevate the calling into a profession.

"The expert cannot raise the tone of his calling unless he is shielded from the withering competition of bunglers, quacks and charlatans. So the first step toward the creation of a profession is the exclusion of the unfit. This is sought by forbidding the practice of the profession to all save those who have been licensed by some agency authorized to examine and pass upon the proficiency and character of the applicant. Along with this goes often the power to expel from the profession the practitioner whose conduct is such as to bring it into disrepute.

"It is not enough to bar out unworthy persons. It is necessary that the calling attract to itself men of good breeding and high spirit, for such will contribute most to set and fix an exacting standard of professional conduct. To this end the law generally accords the calling some official recognition.

"The natural effect of fencing the field and attracting into it superior men is the growth of the professional spirit, which is the very antithesis of the commercial spirit. In a true profession the pursuit of gain is subordinate to the aim of service. This implies for one thing that the practitioner will have but one grade of work, namely, his best. The cobbler may patch according to the pay, but no physician will be respected who from carelessness botches a charity case. Again, the practitioner will be loyal to the interests of his patron even to the extent of opposing the patron's wishes. He will quit rather than render what he knows to be a disservice rather than a service. As counselor in the intimate matters of life, the professional man must command the implicit confidence of his patron.

"In consideration of the protection, recognition and rights enjoyed by the professions they generally acknowledge their obligation to practice with due regards to the interests of society. While architects and engineers are at liberty to patent their inventions, the medical profession has always set its face against secret remedies and the patenting of means of relieving human suffering; insisting that it is part of the physicians' honor not to restrict the use of medicine for the purpose of private gain, but to give it freely to the world. The doctors' fight with the makers of proprietary medicine is a war to the knife between the professional and the commercial spirit."

Implicit confidence is one of the prime requisites for success in pharmacy as well as in any of the other professions. A man's integrity, his devotion to truth, his willingness to serve humanity faithfully and honestly, rendering only one grade of work, namely the best, and vending only merchandise of known quality are some of the requisites to obtaining the implicit confidence of one's patrons, and the building up of a professional prestige that commands the confidence of one's fellow men, professional as well as laymen.

It is not necessary that one cease to be a merchandizer in order to increase one's professional reputation. Why not make a hobby of your prescription department? You play golf, tennis and participate in other sports in order to become acquainted with the people who enjoy these sports and incidentally sell them their sporting goods supplies. Cultivate the friendship of physicians, dentists and nurses on a basis of rendering scientific service to your fellow men. Pharmacy offers greater opportunities for this than almost any other profession.

Convey to your customers the information that when a prescription leaves your store it contains drugs of known potency, compounded so as to give the effect the physician wants. When, as is often the case, a person asks for some remedy that you feel it is unwise for him to use except under the physician's guidance, inform him of the fact. You may lose that sale, but the confidence inspired will repay you for it later.

The physicians should be informed that this is part of your business policy. Detail the physician and dentist that they may feel you are interested in their activities, are willing to provide the remedies they need for their part in life's work. Study their peculiarities, likes and dislikes, and cater to them. Serve them as they want to be served, for they, like ourselves, are human beings and respond to favorable service.

Adopt a similar attitude toward all your customers, for after all it is human beings to whom we are selling whether merchandise or service is involved.

In closing, I wish to quote from an article on "Pharmaceutical Education" that appeared in the February number of the *Journal of Chemical Education*, written by W. F. Rudd of the Medical College of Virginia. He says:

"It is evident to even the most optimistic that in spite of the legal restrictions and vastly improved educational opportunities for pharmacy, all the problems that have so seriously beset

it for a century are not yet solved. There are still among us many who see the pharmacist as just another high-powered salesman. . . *They* must die and *their* places gradually be filled by men devoted to the ideal that the only reason for the existence of the pharmacist at all is the same as that for the physician, dentist or nurse; *i. e.*, that he is a worker in the larger field of public health. We have a long way to go, but there are signs everywhere that we are already on the way."

The training of the professional pharmacist of the next generation and the future leaders of our profession is the task confronting our colleges of pharmacy. That they will meet it, especially if we give them our coöperation, you may rest assured.

USE OF FLUIDEXTRACTS DURING THE PAST 50 YEARS.*

BY E. N. GATHERCOAL.

The following tabulation of data on the use of fluidextracts in prescriptions presents a vivid picture of the decrease in use of this important line of galenicals. This is one of the very striking studies developing out of the U. S. P.-N. F. Prescription Ingredient Survey.

The U. S. P.-N. F. Prescription Ingredient Survey of 1930, which has been in progress for nearly a year, but is now rapidly nearing completion, will present a nation-wide view of the items used in prescriptions in the United States and the number of times each one occurs in ratio to 10,000 prescriptions.

This Survey has been based on the findings of the Prescription Count Survey. The Prescription Count Survey will indicate in a general way that from one-third to one-quarter of the prescriptions filled in drug stores in this country are dispensed by high class prescription type drug stores, or by stores which do a large prescription business. About one-third of the prescriptions are filled in stores of a middle class so far as the prescription trade is concerned, and about one-third in stores in which the prescription trade is relatively small.

We find that in the very large high type prescription stores, that the greatest assortment of prescription items is called for. That is, the actual items called for in a definite number of prescriptions (10,000) will be high. In the second group of stores this list of items in 10,000 prescriptions will be considerably reduced; and in the third group this list of prescription ingredients will be quite markedly reduced. While this reduction is evident in all types of prescription ingredients, it is, perhaps, least marked in the proprietary type, and most marked in the U. S. P. type.

The Survey is centered about four cities, namely, New York, Baltimore, St. Louis and San Francisco, though it spreads quite widely throughout the respective states in which these cities are located.

The Survey in New York State, embracing 40,000 prescriptions, has been completed, and advance has been made in the other cities, though the data is not fully tabulated.

In addition to this new survey work being done over the year 1930, we have tabulated data from six other surveys of similar nature that have been made during the past 50 years. Therefore, we not only have a picture of present-day conditions, but an opportunity to study the trends of medicine over a half century of time.

* National Formulary Bulletin, February 12, 1932.