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THE LEGISLATIVE PROBLEMS OF PHARMACY.*

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Our forefathers placed their trust in an over-ruling Providence; the present generation relies mainly upon the legislature.

Our grandparents believed that the best method of meeting the difficulties of life was by the cultivation of the habits of thrift, economy and self-reliance, and that the proper remedy for social evils was the development of higher standards of citizenship, and an enlarged appreciation of the individual's duty to the state: now we are taught that the various difficulties of human life can be eliminated, and all the ills of society cured, by act of Congress or General Assembly.

The American system of commonwealths was established upon the theory that the best government was that which afforded the citizen the largest field for individual initiative and the most untrammelled opportunity for working out his own ideals of prosperity and happiness. So far have we drifted from this ancient and wholesome doctrine, that we are now attempting to make each citizen a ward of the state, and to guard and direct his every act and ambition, as if he were an irresponsible and heedless infant. We are piling statute upon statute, adding bureau to bureau and official to official, until the liberty of individual action and the responsibility of the citizen, are becoming obscured in a maze of artificial duties and scheduled prohibitions.

For morals we are beginning to substitute the provisions of statute law; and

*An address delivered before the North Carolina Pharmaceutical Association, June 17, 1914.

for the dictates of conscience, the arbitrary rulings of some autocratic bureau-official.

The American people have become possessed of a perfect fury for legislating. No matter what the difficulty, whether of a particular class or of the body politic, whether economic, social or moral, whether the temporary difficulties, arising from the changing forms of industry or commerce, or the permanent difficulties due to the inherent qualities of human nature, the first, and almost the only thought, is to appeal to the law-making bodies for relief.

No member of any legislature can find the time to even read, much less to digest and understand, the provisions of all the measures upon which he is asked to vote, each one of which, if enacted, would seriously affect, in greater or less degree, the liberty and possessions of every citizen of the state.

The modern social-industrial-commercial system constitutes an enormous complex which defies comprehension or analysis. Every new law introduces new wheels and cogs, the ultimate effect of which upon the existing complex, it is impossible to foresee, which often throws "out of gear" some of the most useful parts of the social machine, these dislocations calling for fresh amendments, so that the legislation-mad reformers are continuously chasing themselves around a circle of their own blunders.

Granting that our highly complex society needs more regulation than the comparatively simple social organization of a century ago, it cannot be denied that the annual flood of new laws is far beyond reason or necessity.

The courts are clogged with the consideration of cases involved in an entanglement of obscure and frequently contradictory statutes, and then we prate about "the law's delay" and the "uncertainties of justice," when properly our censure should be directed to our system of machine-made jurisprudence that no finite intelligence can reconcile or understand.

While every occupation and industry is more or less adversely affected by this hasty and ill-considered legislation, our own particular calling happens to be one that offers especial and peculiar opportunities for legislative attacks. Drugs and medicines are things of mystery to the unlearned, who cannot comprehend how the same substance can be either harmless or dangerous, a messenger of health or an agent of destruction, according to the manner of its use; and it is this popular prejudice which makes it so difficult to combat the efforts of bucolic statesmen who seek to bridle us with ridiculous and useless provisions.

The wrong use or misuse of a drug is always more widely advertised than its proper and lawful use. The countless thousands of cases where drugs are properly and beneficially employed are never heard of, while the comparatively few cases of misuse are heralded far and wide until the reading public is led to believe that such misuses are of constant and regular occurrence, a situation which affords the savior-of-the-race-by-legislation-reformer the opportunity he most delights in, and serves as the excuse for the composition of bills which would either totally prohibit the sale of useful drugs or else impose such restrictions upon their sale as to amount in fact, if not in name, to practical prohibition.

If it were proposed to prohibit the sale of edged tools because they are sometimes the source of injury to careless users or may be employed for homicidal

purposes, the inadvisability of punishing the many for the doubtful protection of the few would be apparent to every one, yet the cases of accidental injuries from drugs or of their homicidal uses are probably much fewer in number than those which follow the general distribution of knives and razors.

Singularly enough, these restrictive measures frequently seem to be aimed especially at the druggist, regardless of how much of the same products may enter the hands of the public through other sources. Some years ago, while comparing the poison laws of the various states, I discovered that some of them applied in terms to druggists only, i. e., that while druggists were subjected to certain restrictions in the sale of poisonous substances, all other dealers were exempt from these requirements. Even now there is pending in Congress a bill which would impose very onerous conditions upon the dispensing of mercury bichloride by licensed physicians and druggists, but which would place no restriction whatever upon its sale by other persons, or in other words, the men whose learning and experience best qualify them to handle the substance with safety to the public, are to be hampered, while unqualified dealers are to be left free to do as they please.

As druggists, we do not pretend to claim that our business interests should be preferred to the public safety, nor do we object to *reasonable* and *efficient* regulations regarding the sale of poisons or dangerous drugs. What we do object to, are the half-baked efforts of hysterical reformers, who are unable to comprehend that the measures which they propose, would interfere needlessly with the proper and legitimate use of such articles, without abating the evils at which they are supposed to be aimed.

Unfortunately for our peace of mind, the signs of the times point to even more attempted drug-legislation in the future than in the past.

Since the enactment of the Federal Food and Drugs Act—for which, by the way, the drug trade was largely responsible—the regulation of the sale of drugs and medicines, has been recognized by the politicians as a legislative “soft snap,” i. e., they have discovered that it is easy to appeal to popular prejudice, by proposing to legislate against some alleged enormous evil resulting from the sale of certain drugs, which alleged evils may be altogether imaginary or else mole-hills magnified by the sensational press to mountainous proportions.

Their perception that food- and drug-legislation affords a cheap and easy path to glory, has also been stimulated by their discovery that the drug trade has been willing to accept a tremendous amount of punishment, without striking back at its punishers, a kind of prey which the demagogue especially delights to pursue.

For the drug trade, legislation is no longer an academic subject that may be debated pleasantly at the annual convention, and then dismissed until the next meeting, but it is a live and vital topic which demands vigilance and aggressiveness throughout the year, if we are to avoid the gradual imposition of burdens that will, at length, make business conditions intolerable.

We cannot prevent the constant flinging into the legislative hopper of all sorts of meddlesome legislation, but must rely upon our efforts to prevent its enactment or to secure its proper amendment, and in many cases we shall discover that the only appropriate amendment is the classic one “to strike out all after the enacting clause.”

It is time that the drug trade should abandon its usual apologetic attitude when attacked in the legislature or by the sensational press, and demand proof for the asserted necessity for additional restrictive legislation. All drug legislation that does not originate with the State Pharmaceutical Association, or with its legislative committee, should be opposed on general principles. In other words, our attitude should be one of general hostility to all drug legislation proposed by outside interests, until its propounders have demonstrated its absolute necessity, that the demand for it is not based upon exaggerated and sensational reports which have no substantial foundation in fact, and that the restrictions to be imposed will bear *equally upon all* who handle or deal in the same or similar products, and not merely upon the class of dealers who happen to be known as druggists.

Not only must we present strenuous opposition to unnecessary new restrictive drug legislation, but it is equally incumbent upon us to seek the correction of the imperfect and sometimes inconsistent measures, which our past inertness and lack of interest have permitted to be placed upon the statute books.

The Poison Laws.—In some states, in addition to that which is specifically known as the poison law, there may be two or three, or a half a dozen other acts, relating to particular poisonous drugs, overlapping each other in their provisions. In some cases the confusion is so great as to make it impossible to decide which law should apply in a given case, as compliance with one, may make the druggist liable for the violation of another.. These laws should be consolidated and rewritten, and made so specific, that there can be no doubt as to their scope and application.

One consideration frequently overlooked when poison legislation is proposed, is that the bulk of lethal agents employed in the arts and in agriculture, immeasurably exceed the amount of the same or of similar agents handled by the druggist. Where the paint stores sell tons, the druggist sells ounces. If the existing laws make any distinction between lethal agents sold in the drug store and those sold elsewhere, the discrimination should be removed. If the druggist may sell poisons only on physicians' prescriptions, then the paint store and general dealer should be restricted in like manner.

Since almost any drug or chemical that is sufficiently active to serve as an effective therapeutic agent, will also be active enough to injure, if used to excess, there is always room for the fanatical reformer to declare it dangerous, and to propose legislation to prohibit its sale. If some check is not placed upon legislation of this sort, the drug-store shelves will soon be little better than a historical museum of the drugs which we were once permitted to sell.

The Anti-Narcotic Laws.—Closely connected with the poison laws, and frequently forming a part of them, are the laws relating to the sale of habit-forming narcotic drugs. Like the former, they are often a patchwork of overlapping statutes and incomplete. In some directions they may be needlessly restrictive, and in other directions not restrictive enough. Where they do not already do so, they should be amended so as to restrict the handling of these drugs to legitimate channels, i. e., to the licensed pharmacist and physician, and a complete and accurate method for tracing the purchase and sale of the drugs should be provided

In this connection, we should guard against the disposition of those misinformed reformers, who would extend the list of habit-forming drugs to include nearly everything in the Pharmacopœia. Because a man has learned from experience that a particular remedy, most certainly, relieves him from a recurrent ailment or symptom, so that he commonly or "habitually" uses it, in preference to other remedies for that ailment, by no means renders it a habit-forming drug. To call such drugs habit-forming, is a mere play upon the words *habit* and *habitual*. It is doubtful if a drug can properly be called *habit-forming*, unless it is one the repeated use of which induces a craving, which only the drug will satisfy, its repeated use not being to relieve the ailment or symptom for which it was originally taken, but to relieve a condition which the use of the drug itself has created.

It may or may not be good policy to restrict the liberty of the citizen to select his own remedies, but it can scarcely be regarded as a proper policy to place restrictions upon popular remedies, by definitions specially created to suit the particular case, or by the verbal trick of calling them "habit-forming drugs."

Neither does it necessarily follow that the presence of a minute proportion of a habit-forming drug, constitutes a habit-forming drug of the mixture in which it is found. If the proportion of the drug present, is sufficient to create the drug-habit, when the use of the mixture is long continued, or if the amount is sufficient to satisfy a habit already existing, then the combination can properly be placed in the category of habit-forming drugs, otherwise not. The question is one of fact in every instance, and can be answered only by an impartial consideration of the evidence.

Both pharmacy and medicine are interested in legislation respecting the sale of habit-forming drugs, and representatives of both, should participate equally in the framing of such measures, and in appearing before committees of the legislature, to defend or oppose narcotic legislation when necessary. In fact, I might go farther, and say that physicians and pharmacists should cooperate in like manner upon all measures which deal with matters of joint interest to their two professions.

It is undeniable that a certain percentage of both doctors and druggists have been interested in the illegitimate traffic in habit-forming narcotic drugs, but it is monstrously unjust to charge either doctors or druggists with general participation in such traffic. It is only the exceptional physician who is careless in the prescribing or dispensing of these drugs, and only the exceptional pharmacist who desires or encourages the patronage of *habitues*.

But whether responsible or not for narcotic drug evils, both the conscientious physician and the conscientious pharmacist must give up some of his just prerogatives and must submit to some inconveniences in order that the traffic may be brought under proper control.

If the law is so liberal in its provisions as not to inconvenience the legitimate dispenser, it will not restrain those who participate in the illegitimate traffic, and if made sufficiently drastic to insure the detection and punishment of the latter class, it is bound to cause some occasional hardship to those who dispense narcotic drugs legitimately. As is always the case in the restraint of crime, the just

man must give up some of his liberty, in order to supply the means for the discovery and punishment of the criminal.

In this connection, it is well to have in mind the fact that the evils due to the improper use of narcotic drugs, have been enormously exaggerated. On an actual census of the *habitues* in almost any section, the "hundreds of victims" of the yellow press, will dwindle to dozens or even less. In one small community where an agitator asserted that there were at least fifty victims of the drug-habit, careful inquiry among doctors and druggists, developed the existence of two morphine *habitues* and a suspected third, without the discovery of a single user of cocaine. Doubtless the percentage of victims would run higher in some other communities, but, in most cases, we could safely deduct 90 percent from the stories of the sensational press, and still cover all of the cases discoverable by an exact census, and furthermore, in districts where the cases were most numerous, it would be discovered that the drugs were distributed, mainly, by persons who have no connection with either pharmacy or medicine, and whose supplies are obtained from a distance, through underground channels.

As a matter of course, we do not want to be responsible for even a few victims of the drug habit, but pharmacists and physicians should certainly defend themselves from the reckless charges, of wholesale debauchery of the public through habit-forming drugs, that have been disseminated by hysterical reformers and the sensational press.

The General Food and Drug Laws.—The food and drugs acts, or the statutes which fix the definitions and prescribe penalties for the adulteration and misbranding of foods and drugs, are, generally speaking, fairly satisfactory to the drug trade, that is their defects are rather those of detail than of general principles.

Perhaps the greatest defect of the state food and drug laws, is their lack of agreement with each other and with the Federal law of 1906. While following the same general pattern, no two of them are exactly alike in particulars. These differences, especially as to labeling requirements, are a constant annoyance, and occasionally may become a serious menace, to the retailer. The jobber or manufacturer, having labeled his products in accordance with the Federal law, may ship them into any state regardless of state law, but, after they have left the domain of interstate commerce, the products come under the control of the local statutes, and the retailer may be held liable, if they do not conform thereto. When propositions are made to amend these laws, the drug trade should see to it that they are brought more nearly into conformity with the Federal law, and should strongly resist all amendments that would tend to increase their present discrepancies.

Although representatives of the drug trade played a prominent part in the drafting and enactment of the food and drugs acts, one of the things which they evidently failed to foresee, was the importance of making a distinction between actual adulteration and a mere variation from the legal standard, without connivance or guilty intent on the part of the dealer.

The popular understanding of adulteration, is the addition of a cheaper substance to a more expensive one, as the addition of water to milk, or the withdrawal of a valuable constituent, as the removal of cream, both processes being

for the purpose of increasing the profits of the dealer at the expense of the consumer. By definition, however, any variation from the standard constitutes an adulteration, even if the quality of the product be superior to the standard fixed by law. The druggist who should sell genuine imported bay rum, would be guilty of selling an adulterated drug, because the standard of the law happens to be a fictitious bay rum. Thus the druggist may be legally guilty of fraud, when morally innocent, or morally guilty of fraud, and legally innocent. Again, nature frequently produces drugs of alkaloidal strength below the legal standard. The drugs are genuine, though deficient in strength, but if the dealer disposes of them as genuine, he is, legally, guilty of adulteration. Numerous other examples might be cited, where one might be held guilty under the law, when his acts were entirely devoid of evil intent.

Undoubtedly, fixed standards of quality should be established and enforced, but the *definition of the offense* should be altered, so that the dealer in drugs who innocently sells goods which vary from the standard, will be punishable only for his actual fault, and will not be liable to the disgrace of an arrest and conviction, for an act which, in the public mind, always involves the element of moral turpitude.

That this defect has not occasioned more hardship to the drug trade than it has, is due to the fortunate presence in the law of the so-called "variation clause," which permits the sale of articles which vary from the official standards, provided the variation is stated on the label.

If the variation clause should ever be repealed, as has been proposed, the situation would then become one of serious menace to the entire drug trade, for, under such conditions, it would be practically impossible to conduct a drug business without constant technical violations of the law.

Another serious defect of the food and drugs act, is that they fail to provide the means whereby the manufacturer or dealer may ascertain, in advance, that his labels are in accordance with the law, or, rather, that they are in accordance with the administrative officer's interpretation of the law.

In numerous cases, there is so much room for difference of opinion, that no one can state in advance what the decision of the department may be. On more than a few occasions, the manufacturer, after the examination of precedents and the taking of legal advice, has labeled his product in good faith, only to be later haled into court, as a dealer in misbranded goods.

Generally the administrators of the law, when appealed to, will voluntarily give advice as to the labels which they will regard as legal, but they may refuse this advice if they choose, and some of them have done so. Every food and drugs act should, therefore, contain a provision specifically requiring the executors of the law to pass upon the sufficiency of labels submitted for inspection, and prosecutions for alleged misbranding should be restrained, until after dealers have been notified of the insufficiency of their labels and afforded an opportunity for their correction.

Laws Regulating the Practice of Pharmacy.—The general pharmacy laws, or those regulating admission to the practice of pharmacy, are, in most states, in need of a general overhauling. Most of them were in the nature of experiments when passed, and only time could demonstrate their imperfections.

As a rule, these laws provide for two grades of licentiates, a Registered or Licensed Pharmacist, who may conduct or manage a drug store, and a Registered Assistant, who may perform any of the work in a drug store, except to act as the responsible head or manager.

I believe that experience has demonstrated the advisability of at least one other grade of license, namely, that of licensed storekeeper, to be issued to the keepers of general stores, and stores in towns where no registered pharmacist is located, authorizing the holders of such licenses to sell such common household remedies as are specified by the Board of Pharmacy. The license should be issued for a small sum; should be renewed annually, and should specify the drugs and remedies which may be sold by the licensee.

Some druggists have been inclined to oppose the granting of such licenses, on the ground that it is a recognition of the right of unqualified persons to sell drugs. The answer to this objection is, that it is always wise to recognize an existing fact. Unqualified dealers, already, have this right under the law, and we are not likely to live to see a legislature that will take it away from them. The conversion of these dealers into a class of licensees by themselves, is a step towards bringing the sale of drugs by unqualified persons, under the control of the board of pharmacy, and we shall be foolish if we do not accept the opportunity if it is offered to us.

The most important licentiate is, of course, the Registered or Licensed Pharmacist, or the licentiate who is authorized to act as the responsible head of a drug store, either of his own or for another owner. If the responsible head or manager, the man who buys the goods, directs the daily conduct of the store, and determines the general policy of the establishment, is properly qualified in character, by education and experience, the public safety will be well guarded, and the main purpose of the pharmacy law accomplished.

Of late years the proposition to require graduation from a reputable college of pharmacy, before admitting candidates to examination for the license of Registered Pharmacist, or what has come to be known as the "graduation prerequisite," has become a question of importance. Several states, already, have such a requirement in the law, and several others have practically the same requirement, by virtue of a rule of the State Board of Pharmacy.

Naturally such an advance over the requirements once thought necessary, has provoked controversy.

One objection offered to making college graduation a requirement for registration, is, that it would tend to reduce the Board of Pharmacy to a subordinate position and make it subservient to the colleges, is an entirely unwarranted conclusion. Its effect would be exactly the opposite, because the Board would have power to name the requirements of the colleges whose graduates it would admit to its examinations, and the colleges would thus be brought under the direct and permanent control of the Board of Pharmacy.

Another objection which has been urged, is, that it should make no difference to the Board of Pharmacy how or where the candidate obtains his qualifications, provided he has them, and this is an objection the force and cogency of which cannot be denied. The fact remains, however, that there is no place and no method, for a complete and systematic training in the theory and art of pharmacy,

equal to that provided in a properly equipped and properly conducted college or school of pharmacy.

But cannot the Board, by its examination, ascertain whether the candidate has had the requisite systematic training? No, it cannot. Examinations have a useful and necessary place in the educational system, but they have their limitations. Mental growth or education, like physical growth, requires regularly supplied *pabulum* and proper exercise. The examination of a human stomach might determine what the subject had for his last meal, but it would not show that he had received the continued nourishment and exercise necessary to the production of a well-developed and properly-trained human body.

The board-examination may determine what the candidate has in his memory at the time of the examination, but it cannot, except to a very limited extent, ascertain whether this information was gained in such a regular and systematic manner as to render it probable that it has become a part of his permanent mental equipment or whether it is a medley of miscellaneous information gathered haphazard, and retained by a feat of memory.

Experienced educators recognize the fact, that even the final college-examination is not a sufficient test to prove that the candidate for graduation has gained the proper benefit from his college work, and, therefore, the student is tested from day to day and from week to week, and unless his daily and monthly record has reached the required standard, the result of his final examination will not secure him the coveted diploma.

My thesis is, that two kinds of training are necessary for such a complete and well rounded education of the future pharmacist as will make him a safe guardian of the public health, and a creditable representative of his profession, namely, a sufficient period of actual experience in the drug store and the systematic training of a reliable college or school of pharmacy. This statement is made with full recognition of the fact, that there have been many pharmacists who have been conspicuously successful without the benefit of college training, and also that there have been college graduates who have been conspicuous failures. The college cannot supply deficiencies in mind and character: it can only cultivate and train the qualities which are provided by the candidate, but the future pharmacist, who misses this training, will have missed something that would have added completeness and finish to his career, no matter how successful he may otherwise become.

Another argument offered in opposition to the graduation pre-requisite, is, that it would act as a deterrent to many who will prefer to take up some other occupation or line of business, on the ground that the rewards of pharmacy are at present not sufficient to justify the time and expense necessary to secure a college education.

This may be true, but if so, I do not see why the contingency should worry the present race of pharmacists. If no new drug stores should be started within the next quarter of a century, the existing ones would, very likely, be able to supply all the probable demands for drugs and medicines, and then, perhaps, the rewards of pharmacy would be sufficient to justify a college education.

It should be kept in mind that the graduation pre-requisite would not apply to those already qualified to practice pharmacy, but only to future candidates, and

also that it would not apply, either in the present or in the future, to clerks or assistants, but only to those who desired to become managers. Under a pre-requisite law, the non-graduate would have every opportunity to perform the functions of a pharmacist that he has now, except to become the responsible head or manager of a drug store.

The law would also, necessarily, have to allow a reasonable length of time before the graduation requirement went into effect, to permit the full registration of the non-graduates who were previously acting as clerks or assistants. In other words, the law would, in any case, apply only to those who in the future should desire to enter pharmacy, and not to those already within its ranks, whether proprietors or clerks.

This is a matter which each state must settle for itself, and it would be better to proceed too slowly than too quickly, or at least to proceed no more rapidly than is justified by the progress of sentiment among the pharmacists of the state, but it should be kept in mind that, to admit that college training is *desirable* for the preparation of the future pharmacist, is, in effect, an admission that it is to that extent a necessity.

The question is one which has two sides to it, and we should not be too dogmatic either way, but I believe the weight of argument is in favor of the graduation pre-requisite, and that the sooner it is universally adopted, the better it will be, both for the present generation of pharmacists and for those who come after them.

In this fragmentary and somewhat disjointed review, I have aimed to sketch, in very broad outline, some of the legislative problems to which we must direct attention, and, especially, have I aimed to emphasize the thought that, as a general policy, we should oppose all additional restrictive legislation until convinced of its absolute necessity, either to correct existing laws or to enable us to meet the artificial conditions that these laws have created.

But whether we are to oppose or to support proposed new legislation, our only hope to do so successfully, lies in our ability to concentrate the efforts of a thoroughly united drug trade to that purpose.

The Needed Solidarity of Pharmacy.—One of the greatest needs of the drug trade—*perhaps its very greatest need*—is a more decided craft spirit, or craft consciousness; a clearer realization of the fact that all of those connected with the production, manufacture or distribution of drugs and medicines, constitute a solidarity, in which the interests of every unit radiate to every part, so that an injury to one is an injury to every unit within the circumference,—something like the *esprit de corps* that prompts the soldier to identify himself with the honor of the flag or the reputation of his regiment.

In times not long since, there was no more coherence in the drug trade than in a heap of sand, which changes its contour with every wind that passes over it. There was no fixity of purpose, and but little, if any, spirit of craft loyalty. The actual, if not expressed, motto was that of the trade corsair, "Every fellow for himself, and the devil take the hindmost"—which he usually did—and so successful was he in the capture of the rear guard, that the front ranks began to crowd a little closer together for mutual defense, which has brought about the condition of half-hearted organization that now exists.

Retailers, manufacturers, and wholesalers have all, at times, been ready to sacrifice the interests of each other, and of the members of their own class, for the sake of some temporary personal advantage. It must be confessed, with shame and humiliation, that the reason why the earnest attempts of some proprietors to protect the advertised retail prices of their goods, have not succeeded, has been that there have always been some retailers ready to betray their class by surreptitiously supplying the trade-demoralizing price cutter. During the past year a member of a concern which has been unable to buy certain proprietary articles from their manufacturers, told me he had no difficulty whatever in procuring abundant supplies through retailers who, openly at least, pretend to be supporting the proprietors' plans for price protection.

No policy can absolutely prevent the presence of traitors within the ranks, but a well-developed and constantly-stimulated spirit of Craft Loyalty will discourage treason, and minimize its effects, when it does occur.

The Necessity for United Action.—The experience of the past few years, should have convinced us, that we can hope to make headway against the flood of obnoxious legislation by which we are continually threatened, only by united and unanimous action all along the line, from the largest manufacturer and wholesaler, down to the smallest retail dealer in drugs.

The rivalries and differences, that have at times disturbed the peace between the several divisions of the drug trade, are petty and insignificant, when compared to the larger interests which they have in common, and nowhere are these common interests more in evidence, than in matters of legislation, whether state or national. Unless we can present a united front to the attacks of the sensational reformer, or of the notoriety-seeking administrative official, anxious to magnify the importance of his office by the discovery of mares' nests in the drug business, we can only expect to be beaten in detail.

Neither manufacturers, jobbers nor retailers acting alone, can successfully defend themselves from the destructive legislation of the hysterical reformer, nor from the attacks of the sensational press, which furnishes his ammunition. But each division of the trade can exert a force and influence of its own, and these forces and influences, when united, can be well nigh irresistible.

According to the ancient fable, when the woodman requested permission of the forest, to take a small tree to make a handle for his ax, the intended victim insisted strenuously upon its rights as a member of the community, but the big trees said, "It is only a miserable little sapling, let the woodman have it."

The ax was helved accordingly, and it was not long until the whole forest was prostrated, before the instrument, to the perfecting of which the rights of the insignificant sapling had been sacrificed.

Any branch of the drug trade which consents to the invasion of the just rights of the smallest and most insignificant members, either of its own or of any other branch of the trade, is consenting to a thing that is wrong in principle, and in the end must suffer a part of the penalty.