

Are Druggists Business Men?

A prominent representative of an English house recently asserted that druggists were a petty class to deal with and that but few of them possessed any real knowledge of business. Upon being asked his reasons for the statement he said that as a rule they bought from hand to mouth and apparently without considering whether it would pay them to buy a staple article in any larger quantity than would suffice for a few days at a time. This, he said, did not apply merely to those who could not afford to buy otherwise, but also to those who could, if they were only calculative men, buy to much better advantage in larger quantities. He had no fault to find with their intelligence in a general way, but was sure that but few of them were business men, solely because they were engaged in an enterprise which did not require calculative ability to insure a livelihood, and in consequence were not possessed of a prior business training.

The enquiry at the head of this article is one of very considerable moment at the present time, especially when it is becoming more difficult each year for druggists to control a profitable business. The good old days of full prices are a thing of the past and it certainly requires natural ability, if training is lacking, to make successful headway under present conditions. Personally, we believe that every young man should possess at least primary training in business matters. A thorough knowledge of bookkeeping and of the theory of business conduct will often prove of more value to a wide-awake young man than the cash his parents or relatives loan him. A short course in a good business college will enlarge his ideas and give him confidence in conducting a business which requires trained brains to run to a successful issue. Training in this way would undoubtedly do a great deal to dispel the impression of incompetence which critically practical men seem to entertain of the druggist, and we doubt not would aid very much in securing for druggists a rating in Bradstreet's or Dun's reference book somewhat better than photographers, with whom according to these books they seem to be on a financial par.

Druggists as a class are markedly intelligent and should be good business men. Are they, or are they not?

A drop or two of a solution of atropine, B.P. strength, is recommended as an excellent remedy in earache.

Unjust Interference.

It has frequently come under our notice, and doubtless under the notice of every druggist who has had considerable dispensing to do, that physicians have thoughtlessly and very unjustly stated to their patient that the prescription they had written would, or could be dispensed for, naming the sum, which in their opinion would cover the cost of the drugs contained in it. The druggist, not being aware of the action of the doctor, has frequently been startled by the remark, "Oh! the doctor said it would not cost more than so and so," frequently less than half what the druggist had asked, although the price did not exceed the tariff rate. The physician has no more right to tell his patient what the druggist should charge for his compounding skill than the druggist has to tell his customer what the physician should charge for his prescribing ability.

Each has a right to conduct his own profession as he sees fit, but neither has a right to interfere with the other.

"Live and let live" is a motto which finds a parallel in the advice to "do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

We feel assured that if the matter was brought to the attention of the members of the medical profession who unthinkingly wrong the druggist in this way the habit would be discontinued. It certainly should be, as no druggist desires or deserves to be placed in this false light before his patrons.

A polite little note to the physician drawing his attention to the matter would not be out of place, and might be the means of averting the reputation which no druggist desires to have—that of being a man who takes advantage of the ignorance of his customers of the value of the products he supplies.

An Attractive Drug Store.

There are few places of business that can be made as attractive and imposing as a drug store, and none, which for a similar expenditure of effort can be kept as neat and tidy. The druggist who is too close in his business calculations to expend a few dollars in painting, papering, etc., deserves to lose the business that a young energetic and enterprising druggist comes in and deprives him of. Let any druggist in town visit a larger one and note the fact that he, personally,

is more inclined to go in and purchase in a bright, neat and well-lit drug store than he is in the dull, dingy, and ill-lighted store of a competitor. He will then learn that human nature is the same and the public are influenced in the same way that he has been. The appearance of the store indicates the business nature, habits and ability of the proprietor. The man whose store is up-to-date in appearance is apt to be up-to-date in his business. His customers are at least apt to judge him, primarily, along those lines, and nine times out of ten they are almost certain to be correct in the impression formed. In our business experience we have yet to note any business expand steadily which has maintained a dead and rapidly decaying look, but we have frequently noted that some bright, well kept and attractive little store has outgrown its use and the proprietor has secured both means and customers to warrant him removing to more commodious premises.

We would like to see all our Canadian drug stores models of attractiveness. Our young men are usually well educated, intelligent, and possessed of taste, and we would be glad if any suggestion from us would help them to supplement their knowledge and ability by a better appreciation of what an attractive store would do for them.

Business Policy.

Every man on going into business has or should have a policy or plan of the lines upon which he intends conducting that business. Without a well-defined line of proceeding and an adherence to it as far as he finds he is justified, he is perfectly at sea, liable to be knocked hither and thither by every new proposition, or to be left completely stranded by the indefiniteness of his action. A man naturally goes into business with an object in view, that object as a rule being to make money, and whatever plan he adopts is looking towards that end.

There are many who, however, are short-sighted in their business policy; it may be through business inexperience, and by this we mean a total lack of knowledge of commercial life or the very rudiments of business training, or possibly it may be from a too optimistic view of business, a calculation of profits without sufficient thought of the necessary expenses, and sometimes it happens from a very wrongly conceived idea that he can command business where others make a