

Canadian Druggist

Devoted to the interests of the General Drug Trade and to the Advancement of Pharmacy.

VOL. XII.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1900.

No. 1

Canadian Druggist

WILLIAM J. DYAS, PUBLISHER.

Subscription \$1 per year in advance.

Advertising rates on application.

The CANADIAN DRUGGIST is issued on the 15th of each month, and all matter for insertion should reach us by the 5th of the month.

New advertisements or changes to be addressed

Canadian Druggist,

TRADERS' BANK CHAMBERS

63 YONGE STREET,

TORONTO, ONT.

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Business and Fluctuations in Values During 1899.

The year just passed has been a phenomenal one in all lines of business in Canada. While druggists do not feel the prosperity of the people as quickly as do some other lines of trade, they have shared in the general prosperity, as the report from retailers is that it was the best year's business they have had for some time. We note that those druggists who have adapted themselves to the modern way of doing business are those that report as above, while those that move in the old channels find their business slipping away month by month. What we mean by "modern method" is simply that the time of enormous profits has passed and the successful ones to-day are those who make a large turnover at a reasonable advance. Many druggists in the large cities where the departmental store flourishes make the mistake of supposing that to compete with these stores it is necessary to sell all goods at cost; this, of course, in the light of common sense is folly. The cutter's plan is to lower prices on the articles largely demanded but get the full price on those little in demand; no wise druggist advertises all 25c. articles at 18c., etc. Use common-sense in these matters and push those goods on which the best profit is made, and the year 1900 will be the best yet.

The year has been remarkable on account of fluctuations in values on drugs as there have been many changes, nearly all in favor of the buyer, and now is the time, we believe, for the wise retailer to advance many goods which he should do on account of primary higher values, and it is easier to accomplish this when times are good. Values on many drugs during the year have been somewhat erratic. Quinine has been up and down in price. During June it reached the highest point it has touched for years. The following four months it gradually eased off in

value, and the closing months of the year found it stiffening up in price. The outlook is uncertain, as while the supply of bark has an effect on the value we feel the hand of the speculator is quite influential. Camphor at the opening of the year was higher than it has been since '97, and has gradually worked its way up in price until, at the close of the year, it was 50 per cent. higher. This, no doubt, will cause a demand for naphthaline and other substitutes. The higher prices are due chiefly to the Japanese Government taking control of the output of crude, and proposing to establish a monopoly for purpose of revenue similar to that of France, Italy, etc. Another help in controlling of present stocks has been the large contracts placed by the British Government for war purposes.

Carbolic acid on account of large purchases by the British Government, has advanced 50 per cent., and should the war continue, which seems at present very probable, much higher prices may be looked for. The advance on carbolic acid will also affect prices for salicylic acid and salicylates. Cocaine has shown a wonderful change in price, having advanced during the year fully 100 per cent. This was due entirely to the scarcity of crude material, the crop of cocoa leaves in Peru, the chief source of supply, was small and what was available was held back because of the difficulty of shipping to the coast owing to the revolution. Other articles that have materially advanced during the year are santonine, salicine, golden seal root, ipecac root, oil wintergreen, ergot, blue vitriol, quicksilver, and all mercurial preparations. Ammonia muriate, chloride lime, caustic soda and many changes are quite likely after the first of the year.

We think those who carried over a stock of Paris green last year will have the interest more than paid by the advance that must certainly take place some time before the season opens.