

Nova Scotia Notes.

The entertaining communication of your Winnipeg correspondent in your January issue suggests the idea that some account of pharmacists and pharmacy in this most eastern city of the Dominion would not be without interest to your readers. Halifax has about 50,000 inhabitants, and their wants in the drug line are ministered to at present by nineteen retail drug stores. Most of these are conducted by young men, with the exception of the veteran H. A. Taylor, the genial *doyen* of the Halifax druggists, whose humorous advertisements have long been "a feature" of Halifax papers. Indeed Mr. Taylor should not be made an exception to the general youthfulness of the trade, for he seems as young as thirty years ago. Prominent as ever in temperance and other philanthropic work, and in Scottish gatherings, he is still at his counter dispensing the famous lozenges, &c., ably supported by his son, who bids fair to worthily succeed him. A notable proportion of our drug stores are the lineal successors or branches of old established houses. Thus, the business now known as Apothecaries' Hall was originated by Dr. Avery in 1824, that of Brown Bros. & Co., by John Naylor, early in the thirties. J. Godfrey Smith, favorite vocalist as well as popular and successful druggist, continues the business known as Langley's thirty years ago—afterwards owned by George Johnson, now Dominion Statistician, Ottawa. Several others might be mentioned. With these claims to long descent there is no lack among our druggists of youthful enterprise and modern methods. The stores of Buckley Brothers and Irwin & Sons, are recent specimens of improvement in the direction of beauty and convenience. Hattie & Mylius, and Godfrey Smith have shops that would do credit to any city, and, located on Hollis st., close to the hotels, clubs, banks, and market, they enjoy, no doubt, the cream of the city trade. The latest addition is the new shop of Brown Bros. & Co. This firm, after being thirty years in one stand, seems to have taken a new lease of life, and has recently removed to a new store directly opposite the old one, and in one of the finest stands in the city, corner of Granville and Buckingham sts. The shop is beautiful in itself, and fitted up at great expense and in excellent taste, and reflects great credit on Mr. Hamilton, the popular and pushing junior partner and manager of this old established business house. Elaborately fitted in solid cherry, of very original design, with imposing dispensing case, tiled floor, handsome polished wood ceiling, lighted with electricity and heated with hot water. It is to be hoped the business done in this magnificent Temple of Pharmacy will repay such lavish expenditure.

The legitimate profits of the retail drug trade here are seriously lessened by the "cutting" of prices of all, or most, of the leading patent medicines and toilet articles. This vicious practice, introduced by

a firm of notion sellers from abroad, has been accepted and carried to an absurd length by all, or nearly all, of our retailers to their great loss—many of the articles being sold to the public at a mere fraction above wholesale prices. No tradesman more hardly earns or better deserves his fair profit than the retail druggist, and it is to be hoped our druggists will find a way to remedy the existing unsatisfactory state of things in this respect.

BLUENOSE.

British Columbia Notes.

Retail druggists throughout the cities of this Province report business as very satisfactory at the present time, and with those engaged in all other lines look forward to a year equally prosperous with the one we have just passed through. It is true, one or two drug businesses in the Province are offered for sale, but in each case good reasons are given for doing so. For instance, Mr. G. H. Blakeway, of Nanaimo, announces his intention to sell. Death entered Mr. Blakeway's home at Christmas-tide and carried away the fair partner in his joys and sorrows, and he has since decided to leave that city.

Mr. A. M. Herring, the owner of one of the first drug businesses established in New Westminster, proposes to sell out. Mr. Herring has "made his pile."

Among the new candidates for public patronage who have opened out in Victoria is Mr. Chas. E. Jones, formerly clerk at Moore & Co.'s. Mr. Jones is a young gentleman possessing popular qualities, and with a nicely fitted up and well furnished store, is sure to do a share of the Victoria business.

In Vancouver the new sign of W. E. McCartney has lately been hung out. Mr. McCartney formerly did business in Kamloops, but has decided to come down and join the majority on the coast.

The druggists of British Columbia, at the time of this writing, are engaged in forming themselves into a Pharmaceutical Association. They propose during the coming session of the Provincial Parliament to ask for the same legislative privileges as have been accorded to druggists in other provinces, and have some hope of success. Hitherto all efforts in this direction have proved abortive.

The Alcohol Test for Pure Castor Oil.

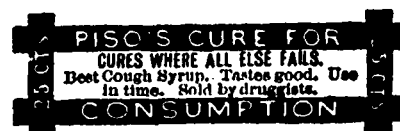
BY J. ARTHUR WILSON.

Castor oil differs in many respects from most fixed oils, especially in consisting largely of the glyceride of ricinoleic acid which is soluble in absolute alcohol. Hence this reagent can be used for the detection of impurities in castor oil. Like most other tests of a similar kind, it is not of much use for the detection of small quantities of foreign oil, owing to the solvent action of the dissolved castor oil on the small proportion of foreign oil that may be present.

The British Pharmacopoeia directs that pure castor oil shall be soluble in an equal measure of absolute alcohol and twice the measure of rectified spirit.

According to Mr. Allen ("Commercial Organic Analysis," vol. ii. 128) this is correct at 30° C., providing spirit of exactly 0.838 gravity be used. I have examined a number of samples of both commercial and medicinal castor oil, strictly at 30° C. and by a spirit of exactly 0.838 specific gravity, and find that at exactly 30° C. the oil is not completely soluble, but that the temperature of solution varies between 38° and 43° C. I may say that the oils I used satisfied all other requirements as to purity.

In carrying out the alcohol test it is best to operate as follows: One measure of the castor oil under examination is mixed thoroughly with two volumes of spirit of exactly 0.838 specific gravity, and then heated, stirring well with the thermometer till complete solution. In the case of genuine castor oil this will be between 38° and 43° C., possibly lower than the former; whilst if any foreign oil be present, the temperature will be much higher; and in gross adulteration, some oil may not be dissolved even at the boiling point of the mixture.—*Chemical News.*



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