

### Legally and Morally Wrong.

We cannot but feel aggrieved and in some measure annoyed at the continual effort made to place the onus of substitution on the drug trade as a whole. That the wrong-doing of the few should be blamed on the many is neither charitable nor just, and is not only misleading, but also, in this case, is untruthful.

But while we deny the imputation on behalf of the trade as a body, we regret that there are those amongst the drug trade who are guilty of this unwarranted practice. We say unwarranted, but a stronger term is, perhaps, more applicable. To deliberately substitute an article in the place of the one called for, whether in a prescription or on a mere verbal order, is deliberate and wanton fraud.

The druggist should be, and is, except where he abuses the confidence, looked upon as the safeguard of his customer. If a physician makes an error in writing a prescription, it is the duty of the druggist to see that it is not dispensed if he thinks it inimical to health or excessive in dose, etc., without first consulting the prescriber. If poisons of a certain class are asked for, the State, in effect, says: "You, as custodian of the people's health and the licensed vendor of these goods, shall not sell them without taking additional precautions." Thus the druggist is the person to whom the State, the physician, and the public look for the proper and safe preparation, as well as sale, of medicine. If, therefore, any druggist in the pursuit of his avocation deliberately substitutes or "puts in place of" the article ordered, some other preparation, whether through a desire to increase his profits, or from not having the prescribed article in stock, or from any cause whatever, he is guilty of deceit and fraud of the worst description. It is a betrayal of the confidence bestowed on him by the State who licenses him to handle the goods, the physician who depends on the accurate filling of the prescription for the expected cure of the disease, and of the general public, who look to the druggists to give exactly the medicine ordered.

How any one with a spark of self-respect or common humanity can thus trifle with life is certainly very surprising, and no penalty can be too strong for the person who would thus be guilty of intentional fraud in this most glaring wrong against the well-being of a fellow creature.

There is another phase of this question

also which suggests itself. It is the great wrong done to many manufacturers who have placed in the market, and by continuous effort have induced physicians to prescribe, and in many cases, the general public to enquire for, preparations which have distinct names and are used for special complaints.

The demand having been created, the manufacturer certainly is entitled to have his goods supplied, or at least that no other preparation, no matter how similar in name, appearance, or supposed therapeutic properties, should be substituted for his. Allowing that the article used would prove equally as beneficial as the one ordered, there is no justification whatever for its substitution, and thus committing a commercial fraud, a fraud not only on the customer, but also on the manufacturer.

We maintain that substitution, pure and simple, selling or dispensing an article in the place of the one designated, and which the customer expects and is entitled to receive, is wrong, morally and legally, and should be discontinued by the entire drug trade.

If a druggist cannot make money without such practices, that is, if he cannot be honest in business, it is better for himself, for the profession to which he belongs, as well as for the general public, that he should find other business channels than the one chosen. Let the public still feel that druggists are true to their interests, and are to be depended upon, especially in the time of illness, and the confidence which has to some extent been shaken by the unwise and uncalled-for general charges of substitution, that confidence will be restored, and there will then be less of that feeling of uncertainty as to the future of the trade that has been prevalent in many quarters.

### Sunday Closing.

The agitation amongst the drug clerks of Montreal against the practice of keeping open drug stores practically for the whole day on Sunday, is one that should be encouraged.

The druggist or his clerks should not make themselves or allow themselves to be made perfect slaves without some good reason, and certainly all the reasons heretofore brought forward in support of keeping open on Sunday the same as any other day, are not justified by argument or experience.

It is quite true that there is necessity for a partial attendance on that day in all cities and in most towns throughout the country, but if it were generally recognized by the druggist himself as a necessity only for the purposes of dispensing or selling such articles as would probably be required for immediate use, and a general refusal to sell articles outside these lines, the public would soon recognize the fact that the druggist opened his store on Sunday only through a desire to serve the public in reference to actual necessities, and not for the purpose of general gain.

There is no doubt that in some quarters the anxiety to keep open is due to the fact that a trade is cultivated that is entirely unnecessary, and for that matter we believe unlawful in many cases, and the main idea is to make the Sunday trade foot up in receipts, regardless of the law of God, the law of the land or the laws of nature.

A man's duty to himself, leaving aside all higher considerations, demands at least one day's rest in seven, and the druggist who does not take this rest, or as much of it as possible, and also sees that his clerks have the same, is working against the laws of nature, and must inevitably pay the penalty. Why should we as a class be considered only as general purveyors to the wants of the public, at their "beck and call," at all times night and day, seven days in the week? It is unreasonable and uncalled for, and the druggists owe it to themselves, their wives and families and their clerks, that this hardship should cease to exist, and that only such attendance as is necessary for actual requirements be given. It may be claimed that such an arrangement is very difficult to carry out. No doubt there will be difficulties, but they are not insurmountable, and we believe a general understanding could be arrived at between druggists in certain localities and the physicians, that fixed hours of attendance could be maintained at which their stores should be open and at no other time on Sunday. "Where there's a will there's a way," and if the question is properly taken up by the trade a solution of any difficulties will soon be made.

Alcarnose is German, and is put up in egg-shaped capsules, one of which, dissolved in a cup of water, makes a cup of bouillon. The best thing of this kind we have met with in this country is maggi, which makes very fine soup, and simply requires hot water.