

more into demand every day, and are becoming a necessity to a large proportion of our people. Seeing this, and recognizing the fact that where intelligence and competency are required the druggist comes to the front, we are of opinion that optical goods, that is to say, spectacles, eye glasses, opera glasses, microscopes, and all that go to make up the optician's stock in trade, should form an important feature in every well-kept drug store. Easy to handle, requiring but a short time to become thoroughly acquainted with the fitting of sights, etc., yielding good profits, and making a nice display when properly shown, they not only make up for many of the "cuts" which the drug business of the present day has to suffer from, but build up a class of trade which, if properly looked after, will prove a source of remuneration in more ways than one.

There are several points which we would impress on those who have not hitherto handled these goods. One is, handle only first-class goods. Cheap goods, although seemingly profitable at first sight, do not pay, for they do not give satisfaction, and are in fact detrimental to your trade. Keep the stock of numbers well up, so as not to have to substitute one number when perhaps a higher or a lower would be more suitable, and make a striking display of your goods. In fact, make it one of your "specialties."

FLUCTUATIONS IN IODINE.

The following letter, which has been sent us for publication, shows the cause of the recent decline and subsequent sudden advance in price of iodine and its preparations:—

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 6, 1889.

DEAR SIR,—As a number of our friends have written to us regarding the recent most unsatisfactory fluctuations in the price of iodine and the preparations of iodine; and as there appears to be a misapprehension as to the real position of manufacturers, we desire to briefly give the facts in the case.

The price of crude iodine is entirely under the control of a combination, composed of makers of iodine in South America and Europe.

We are in no way connected with the combination, but are separate and distinct from it, and subject to its decision as to how much and at what prices it will sell.

Within thirty days the price fell more than fifty per cent., and then abruptly advanced to the old figures. Over these fluctuations we had not the slightest control.

About August 1 the combination dropped the price—again on August 8—and again on August 12; but manufacturers of iodine preparations were at first refused sufficient supplies of iodine at the low price agreed upon by the combination, and finally were refused entirely, and found themselves in the anomalous position of receiving pressing orders (and for unusually large quantities) restricted to

low prices, without being able to purchase crude material at correspondingly low rates.

Had we been able to obtain an adequate supply of crude iodine at the low price named August 12, it would have been in our power, as it would have been our pleasure, to continue to furnish our friends with usual quantities and at low figures. But such was not the case.

We parted with a great deal of our stock at a heavy loss, but when our supplies of manufactured goods became greatly reduced, and, in some cases, entirely exhausted, and we were refused the crude material from which to continue manufacturing, there remained but one course to pursue; namely, to cut down orders.

And when the combination restored the price to the old figures, which it did about September 1, the only further course left for us to take was to go back to a basis of cost, and not work longer on meaningless quotations.

Very respectfully, your friends,

POWERS & WRIGHTMAN.

PHARMACY OF THE FUTURE.

A well-known professor of pharmacy in one of our eastern cities, not long ago said: The manufacturers have come to stay. Students of the subject all over the country are forced to believe that such is the fact. Some of us will be obliged to give up a favourite ideal in accepting it, for we have long dreamed of a pharmaceutical profession of individual pharmacists, each an independent manufacturer. But it must be apparent to the most superficial observer that this ideal is a false one. You ask, Why? Let us consider the answer.

First, pharmacy being the science of preparing medicine, it must of necessity depend upon therapeutics, or the application of medicine to cure disease. Pharmacy will therefore take form according to the demands of the medical profession. There is a growing tendency upon the part of the profession, as therapeutic science progresses, to use less medicine, and in simpler, more concentrated forms. For example take normal liquids. Here is a concentrated fluid form of medicine of standard strength obtained by assay. This class of preparation can be made with profit on the large scale, and, of course, is out of the reach of the pharmacist who manufactures on the smaller scale.

Take another example, that of coated pills now used so extensively. It is a well-known fact that the coating of pills in large quantities is a very cheap operation, while in the smaller way of the ideal pharmacist, competition with the great manufacturing houses engaged in this line of work is impossible.

Even the manufacture of fluid extracts is more profitable on a large scale, and in the struggle for supremacy the manufac-

turer can undersell the ideal pharmacist. And this is true in regard to all preparations, for the manufacturer who deals in large quantities can buy cheaper, and therefore undersell his smaller competitor, if he is forced to by competition.

Second, the large manufacturing houses have the advantage in the selection of drugs. They have the first pick in the market; and not until each lot is picked over many times does it finally fall in reach of the ideal pharmacist manufacturing small portions at one time. Then, too, when large purchases are made of drugs admitting assay, such as cinchona and the narcotics, the manufacturer can buy according to assay. This is done extensively in the case of some drugs, and the tendency is to a more extensive adoption of the plan.

There are other reasons, such as perfect machinery of costly design, etc., that puts modern pharmacy in many departments out of the reach of the ideal professional pharmacist. The modifying influence of homœopathy, too, is a factor of no mean importance in its influence, not only upon the public, but upon the prices as well. And thus successful manufacture of homœopathic triturations can be accomplished only upon a large scale.

The preparation of medicines, therefore, is leaving the hands of the ideal professional pharmacist, and going into the hands of the manufacturer. And the tendency is to its further exodus.

If the pharmacy of the future is going into the hands of the manufacturing houses, what is to become of the pharmacists of the future? Are they, too, going into the hands of the manufacturers? Yes, part of them undoubtedly are. As science progresses the competition between these houses will become more and more severe. This will require the employment of a higher and higher class of talent. To meet this demand our pharmaceutical colleges will be required to continually raise the standard: pharmaceutical training will have to be changed to fit young men to enter the great manufacturing establishments and handle improved forms of machinery not found in the drugstore. Analytical and synthetical chemistry of the higher and more practical type will have to be taught. It may seem a startling proposition, but it is nevertheless a fact that many teachers in pharmacy, now connected with our colleges, would be obliged to undertake a course of special training to fit them to occupy a position in charge of almost any one of the departments in a large manufacturing establishment.

But not all the pharmacists of the future will go into the hands of the manufac-