

Department of Advertising.

By J. P. McCONNELL, Toronto.

THIS DEPARTMENT.

It is to be a monthly experience meeting for the readers of this journal. Retail and general medicine and proprietary advertisers are invited to send in their ads for criticism, to write for assistance on knotty points on the knotty business of advertising. No charge whatever will be made for answering any questions in this department. This month I have given most of the space to discussion of topics applicable to city stores. Before next month's issue I hope to have heard from druggists, both in the cities and in the smaller towns. Every letter received will be answered, but the writer's name will be withheld if requested.

Address all communications on this department to THE CANADIAN DRUGGIST, Advertising Department.

Why Not Advertise?

An examination of the current issues of the Toronto *Telegram* and *News* reveals the fact that there is not a single druggist's ad in either of them.

May this to some extent account for the rapid encroachments of the department stores on the "legitimate" druggist? Why should druggists make a howl about department store competition when they let their best weapon, advertising, rust in a corner—the very weapon the department stores use so effectively?

I don't believe advertising will not help a druggist. True, some druggists, by reason of their location, may be helped more than others by newspaper advertising, while some, for the same reason, could be helped very little. But those druggists situated on Yonge, Queen and King streets could undoubtedly be benefited by a judicious advertising campaign. Druggists off the main streets of traffic would have a good deal of waste circulation to pay for, but there is no reason in the world why a druggist on Yonge street could not benefit as much by advertising as his neighbor shoe or furniture dealer.

Why should not a druggist cultivate a reputation for accuracy in prescriptions by advertising? Personally, I have never heard any particular Toronto druggist spoken of as pre eminent in this way. Yet anybody in Montreal will almost instantly tell you that Lewis' is a

good prescription drug store. The reason is that Lewis has advertised the fact and become known as such. Lewis has done some good advertising on this subject, laying emphasis on his many years' experience.

Surely there are one or more Toronto druggists who have been a long time at the business, who have made a specialty of it, are peculiarly well equipped, employ more competent clerks and all the other facts which the public does not know, but want to, and the knowledge of which gives them confidence in the druggist who possesses them. It only takes the telling, in the right kind of a way, to impress people the way you want to.

I have often thought, too, that the druggist who would advertise that substitution or an attempt at it would not be tolerated in his store, would win a large trade. If the trade knew just how many disgusted people leave drug stores in the course of a year it would be an eye-opener.

People don't like to be continually told there is something better than they ask for. Many consider it a reflection on their good taste or judgment. What is little better is the insinuating method of showing two kinds of an article and giving the customer a choice when one was asked for.

People are perfectly aware that the druggist who does this does it for a purpose. And the purpose is to effect a sale with more profit in it than there is on the article asked for. Such methods advertise a store backwards and drive customers away. The drug store that will not permit it and advertise the fact would probably "learn something to his advantage," in the way of public appreciation, for I know that many do resent such methods.

Another kind of reputation worth cultivating in a city like Toronto or Montreal, or any place in fact, would be one for high class toilet requisites, making a feature of good perfumes.

I do not recollect any Canadian instance of this having been done, but I do know of at least one American who has a national reputation as a perfumer and an immense trade as well. A few years ago he was advertising in his local papers only. Of course he had the goods.

ADVANTAGES OF GENERAL ADS

How many druggists have ever at-

tempted to take advantage of the thousands of dollars' worth of advertising spent on proprietary articles. Instead of benefiting by the trade developed by the big medicine and other proprietary concerns, most druggists persistently endeavor to kill the trade that comes through their doors in response to it.

A cheap way of getting a reputation for being up-to-date and in touch with the times, would be to watch the current advertising and display the goods brought prominently to the public notice in the newspapers in the windows.

Thus a buyer who had read an Ayer, a Milburn, Castoria, Dentofoos, a Chase or Pierce ad and been impressed at the moment, on seeing the article would be likely to buy it. On the other hand the effect of hundreds of ads is lost simply because the goods do not confront the buyer and the effect of the ad has not been strong enough to send him or her out for them. In such cases nobody benefits. The druggist loses the profit on the sale that might have been but does not make another in place of it. The advertiser of course is the big loser.

WINDOW ADVERTISING.

Speaking of windows:—I doubt if many druggists fully appreciate the advertising value of their windows.

If they do they would not make such poor use of them. Surely windows can be used for more purposes than the mere display of red and green water. Some times one sees a conglomerate of fly speckled cartons, presumably full of goods, with the "speckers" lying dead in the nooks. The impression of such a window is one of distinct repulsion. It indicates dry rot in the management and the same or worse in the shelves. A drug store, of all businesses, should have an appearance of freshness and purity. Should avoid the slightest approach to staleness.

I saw a window the other day that would have been a good one but it fell short in one particular. It was a display of toilet soaps, the name of which is well known, but not easily read on the cartons, because the lettering is too small and too much involved. Now all that one could see in that window was those cartons and a card saying "3 for 25 cents." The card wasn't neat. But the point was: I know that this soap sells for three cakes for a quarter, whereas the plain meaning of the card, to one who didn't know, was three boxes for a quarter.

A better way would have been "25