

## Toronto Retail Druggists' Association.

The regular meeting of this society was held in the College of Pharmacy building March 12th. In the absence of the president, Mr. Gibbard presided. After the reading of the minutes of previous meeting, the secretary announced that he had not received any report from the committee appointed to look into the matter of cheaper alcohol for druggists. A report was promised for next meeting. Mr. E. R. Robinson's paper on "Window Dressing" was read by the secretary in the absence of the writer. A paper on "Some Means of Advertising a Drug Business" was also read by Mr. W. Murchison, and was followed by an address by the chairman on "The Future Relationship of the Druggist and Patent Medicine." Votes of thanks were tendered to the writers for their papers, copies of which we give.

## WINDOW DRESSING.

BY E. R. ROBINSON.

In reply to your query as to my opinion on window display for a retail drug store, take a walk along King or Yonge streets in the city and tell me which stores attract attention your first. Are they not they not those of our most prominent merchants? Those who are reputed as doing the largest business in their respective lines. Take the grocery stores, and do not Barron, McWillie, and Michie's first attract your attention? In jewellery, Ellis, Rylie, and Kent are the first you see. Dunlop's flowers, Mueller's tobacco; the "Pantec," Junor, and Irving's, china, and so on, first claim your attention. Why is this? Is it not the style of the front of these respective shops that attracts you? and in any place of business the window is the most prominent feature. Do you ever examine these places? If you do you must be aware that the constant alteration of the exhibit is the rule in all, and the display of one article or set of articles the style. Now, while it may be true that attention to window dressing may not have been the cause of their evident success, can you say that it has not been one of the main elements?

Now look at the *drug* stores. How very little attention has been paid to this feature. Every druggist in town makes an attempt to dress his window, but what a miserable attempt it is.

As a body of men they are as handsome in person and as well dressed as any other class, but are not their windows in comparison with the other trades shabby, in the extreme?

Every one insists on having a plate glass window, but it is the contents of the window I refer to. Frequently I hear that it is not possible to exhibit only one article, as the stock consists of very small articles, and that it costs too much to purchase sufficient to fill a window properly. Is this true? Take sponges, for instance. Very few stores carry less than say \$25 worth. With this or even a lesser quantity; a good display can be made, if care-

fully arranged; but put them all in a heap in a corner, and how small they look!

But you have asked me to give a few ideas on how to dress a window, and I will summarize my answers as follows:

(1) Put one article or class of articles in at a time.

(2) Arrange carefully to set each article off to the best advantage.

(3) Alter the dressing every week or two weeks at the outside.

(4) Always put a price card, which should be in plain, block type—a few can read Greek, but everybody understands plain English. I find that a window without a price card will sell one article, whereas with it it will sell a dozen.

(5) See that the exhibit is seasonable. As to what to put in and how to dress it you will have to study for yourself, but many a valuable hint may be obtained by watching the windows of other merchants in other lines of business. Another point is this, do not take it for granted that because you have only sold one dozen of any particular article in a month that that is the limit. I have been told, in rather powerful language, that I was a fool for buying largely of some lines—licorice, for instance—but experience has shown me that if I buy a box or two of tittbits and wait until they are inquired for, that they will linger around indefinitely; but fill the window and they will go like snow on a summer day.

Take the display in my window this week—Tooth Preparations. I bought about the middle of December a few dozen of Hance Bros.' tooth paste along with other things, since then a few boxes only were sold; this week most of it has gone, not above nine or ten remaining, besides a number of my own tooth wash, tooth powder, sundry proprietary tooth pastes, powders, tooth brushes, etc. The card reads "Tooth Paste, 10c.," and serves as a means of drawing customers in, and wherever our opinion as to the respective merits of the different articles displayed is asked, and it frequently is—you can readily guess our reply.

As an instance, one customer made a purchase of a tube at 10 cents, then remembered he wanted a tooth brush 30 cents; that made him recall that his wife wanted one also, 30 cents, that necessitated another tube, 10 cents, for her, and while he was at it a bottle of tooth wash, 25 cents, and one of camphorated chalk, 25 cents. Total sale \$1.30. The card cost 25 cents. Did the display not pay? This I merely mention as a proof that it pays to dress your window if done properly.

You may have seen whisks exhibited in my window several times. Do you not find them rather slow sellers? I do as a rule, but each time we exhibit them our sales usually average *three dozen a week*, about 20 are the usual 5 cent ones, which we mark at 4 cents to draw. Do you sell sixteen whisks a week, running from 10 to 40 cents each? I do not except when displaying them.

Again, with reference to cutting an article to draw trade. I would not advise doing so, with anything that is not already cut, but if any patent or proprietary is being sold at less than the marked figure, how can you expect to induce your customer to pay you more than others sell it at?

For instance, electric oil is being sold for 15 cents—at which price you say you do not make anything, which is quite true—but if you do not sell it all, and you won't if you ask 25c. or 20c., do you make any more? Instead, you send your customer to the departmental store, and he may not come back for anything else! But use the fact, disagreeable as it is, of its being cut, and suppose you dress your window with three dozen (\$5.00) as a bait at 15c. and a quantity of liniment of your own, or the Standard, or the O. C. liniment, and if you are a careful salesman, you will easily sell more O. C. or Standard in a week than you ever did in a month, and any electric oil sold will pay you as an advertisement alone. This is a very disjointed reply to your question, but it has been written a few lines at a time, interspersed with interruptions of business affairs, but I trust will be of use in aiding you to sell more goods than ever, and to do so you must first have what the public want to buy, then you must let them know you have it, and that you have as good an article, as cheap, and as large a variety of it as any other retailer, and your window, above all other means, is the cheapest way to emphasize this.

## HOW TO DO EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING OF YOUR BUSINESS AS A DRUGGIST.

BY W. MURCHISON.

The means which may be adopted for the purpose of extending the fame of a druggist will vary as much as the men who apply them, yet in all cases certain principles must be maintained to assure success. In the present day of illusive and deceptive advertising, we are apt to think that the measure of success is allotted only to those who snatch it undererredly, and we are tempted to imitate in a way: and petty way methods which only hold us up to ridicule. Druggists, far less than any other business men, can afford to play for catch-penny prizes. They must not forget that they lay claim, even in the public eye, to a semi-professional position, and the public are as ready to criticize them, as they are to criticize medical men who descend beneath the plan which the ethics of their profession has established for dignified conduct.

If pride in attainment is intended to take a minor position among the animating influences which guide us, then it is quite right and proper that we seek the position in commercial life which nature has designed us to fill because under no circumstances can we maintain for a lengthened period a status which is beyond our abilities. If it is our desire to conduct our businesses upon the lines