

in conflict, therefore, with the conscientious principles of an honest, educated pharmacist.—*Dr. Adolph Koenig, in Pittsburgh Medical Review.*

### Paper Bottles.

Some years ago there was started in this city a company for the manufacture of paper bottles, says the *New York Mail and Express*. It was not the success that its promoters intended it to be. There was great difficulty in getting the right foothold. It was pointed out that paper was being used very extensively in the manufacture of car wheels, rowing shells, wash basins and half a dozen branches of the decorative art, but nobody would believe that the bottle scheme could possibly succeed, and there the matter was dropped as far as outside capital was concerned. Since that time another company has managed to push forward the idea with some degree of prosperity. Now, still another company is about to be formed and the manager of it says that it will have to be a success, because there is too much money behind the concern to make it otherwise.

This manager was asked what paper bottles were available for, and he answered quite promptly, but not altogether sarcastically: "Everything that glass is used for. We are now negotiating for the purchase of some of the finest machinery to be found in a newly established shop. We have this to claim for our bottle, it cannot be broken unless with unnecessary force. That is just where the saving is to come in. No more leakage or breakage, and consequently less loss to not only the consumer, but the merchant as well. We intend to make a big bid for the foreign trade. The wine merchants of Europe lose an immense sum annually through breakage in a ship's hold or otherwise. No matter where the glass bottles break, they are broken, and the loss is just as great all around.

"We can make a paper bottle for about one-half the cost of glass bottles, and, in addition, they will be found perfectly water tight, as well as air tight. We have made innumerable experiments, and in all of them we found that, while it was comparatively easy to make papier mache air tight around wine, it was not so easy to do so in the case of beer. Why this is so, the brewers may explain. But we have overcome that difficulty too. Another point that should be remembered in the manufacture of paper bottles is that there is little danger of freezing. Still another is that in packing them away absolutely no straw, waste, or such is required, and the absence of these means a large saving in space. In the next few years you will find paper bottles all over the world."

**MICROBE OF RHEUMATISM.**—Professor Riva, of the University of Parma, claims that he has found the microbe of articular rheumatism.

### Prescriber vs. Dispenser.\*

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Medicine and pharmacy are so dependent upon each other that they should go hand in hand, and should not allow minor differences to alienate them from each other. Recently a prominent medical journal has thrown out a hint that doctors might stock their offices with ready made prescriptions as a kind of retaliation upon druggists for prescribing. As an offset to this graduates in pharmacy, finding that they cannot obtain their share of prescription business, are taking degrees in medicine in order to practice both professions, still further crowding medicine without relieving pharmacy. It seems to me that this tendency from two opposite directions to unite the practice of medicine and pharmacy in the same individual is a retrogressive movement, and I venture to suggest that a more dispassionate view of our respective grievances is necessary if we would check the evils of which we complain.

Let us consider, then, in the first place, who should prescribe medicine? Upon this point there can be no two opinions. The physician, by his knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathology and other branches of medical science in which he has been educated, is the only competent person to diagnose disease and to prescribe treatment. But is he the only one who does prescribe? By no means. Many people prescribe for themselves, and if they are told the same truth concerning medicine that has become proverbial as applied to law, namely, that he who is his own doctor has a fool for his patient, they are apt to become indignant and reply that they know what they are about. There is another large class of persons who take pleasure in prescribing for their friends, and these persons again cannot be made to believe that, so far as the case in hand is concerned, they do not know more than all the doctors. The evils of such prescribing as this cannot be reached by codes of ethics or by any measure of reform instituted by physicians and pharmacists.

But there is a certain amount of prescribing done in drug stores by men who lay no claim to medical instruction, and whose practice in this regard cannot be defended. Reputable pharmacists, as well as physicians, are anxious to see this irregular practice abated, as it is an infringement upon the province of physicians, and, therefore, unfair, and also has the effect of lowering pharmacy in the esteem of the public as well as of physicians. In what way can this counter-prescribing be lessened? I suggest, in the first place, that it cannot be checked by abuse or by retaliation, but rather by cultivating more cordial relations between the two professions, and by a certain degree of concession on both sides. It is to be borne in mind that any retaliatory measures adopted by physicians in this

matter will affect the reputable pharmacists who are not doing the counter-prescribing, while those who are transgressing will not be affected thereby.

It is not to be forgotten in a discussion of this question that some physicians are inordinately sensitive on this subject, so they would prohibit the dispensing of almost all drugs and medicines that are not ordered by physicians. Whatever our views of this case may be, whether we like it or dislike it, the fact cannot be denied that the American people will not submit to such stringent regulations. You cannot compel an American citizen to employ an architect when he wants to build a dog kennel. In regard to the use of drugs and medicines, they feel themselves free to consult a physician or not, according to their own judgment, and cannot be driven into it by the combined efforts of all the doctors and druggists in the country. Again, those who have had much experience behind the counter in a drug store will bear me witness that even when there is the most conscientious and scrupulous regard for the rights of physicians and the most painstaking adherence to medical ethics, it is still impossible to answer many of the questions that are daily put to the druggist in regard to the nature, property and doses of medicines without appearing to suggest the use of certain ones in specified cases. Not only is the druggist consulted in regard to disinfectants, antiseptics and many other hygienic and remedial agencies, but his opinion is frequently asked in regard to the nature, use and doses of drugs, the best method and time of administration, etc. A refusal on his part to give the desired information would be attributed by the majority to ignorance, and by the remainder to boorishness. As a business man, he cannot afford to allow his patrons to leave his store with any such misapprehension concerning himself or his establishment. Furthermore, there are a few slight ailments which the public absolutely expect a druggist to prescribe for, which do not partake of the nature of medical treatment, since the patient diagnoses his own case, such, for instance, as a morning headache, slight bruises or trifling injuries; in fact, any such ailments as people are in the habit of prescribing for themselves. The druggist, when requested, is expected as a matter of course to suggest a remedy, and there is no more thought of medical treatment than when a barkeeper mixes a "pick-me-up," or a shoe dealer selects for you a shoe that will not hurt your corns. When physicians interpret ethical relations so rigidly as to prohibit druggists from performing these trifling courtesies for their customers, they widen the breach between the two professions, having no experimental knowledge of the injury the pharmacist does himself if he declines to render this service.

If we now ask the question, "Who shall dispense medicines?" the answer is no less positive than that given to our first query. The pharmacist is the proper dispenser of medicaments. This state-

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