

### To Stop Cutting in Prices.

The Pabst Brewing Co., of Milwaukee, early in the year issued a circular offering cash prizes to the amount of \$500.00 for "the best plan to be submitted by the members of the retail drug trade for preventing the cutting of prices on proprietary articles." A very large number of papers were received, but the donors did not consider that any of those submitted could be "considered perfect" nor which they felt they "could champion before the National Wholesale Druggists' Association." They, therefore, submitted them to a committee of four gentlemen, Messrs. Gordman of the University of Illinois; Van Shaack of P. Van Shaack & Co., wholesale druggists, Chicago; Ebert, retail druggist, Chicago; Kathreus, proprietary manufacturer, Milwaukee.

This committee presented a voluminous report, and also a plan which they proposed, based on the suggestions contained in the more meritorious of the papers submitted.

The following is the committee's plan, and we would ask our readers' careful perusal of it, and an expression of opinion for our next issue:—

#### THE COMMITTEE'S PLAN.

The Proprietors' Association is to agree upon some thoroughly capable person not engaged in manufacturing, but conversant or familiar with pharmacy in the three branches, manufacturing, jobbing and retailing—a broadly intelligent ex-member of each branch being competent to serve as manager and pretor.

All manufacturers, whether great or small, regardless of any existing organization, are requested to give their active and moral support, by filling out a blank form, on honor, to carry out instructions conveyed to them by said pretor.

The pretor shall adopt a number or combination of letter and number for each and every wholesale druggist. This list of emblems he will furnish each member, who shall conspicuously stamp them on the label and wrapper of each and every bottle, box or package furnished each and every wholesale druggist, according to said list.

Each and every bottle, box or package shall be numbered consecutively. All bottles, boxes or packages sold in less than dozen quantities shall be put up in quarter dozens, which may be parceled and cased to suit the convenience of the manufacturer.

The wrapper of each quarter dozen shall be marked with the highest number contained, thus affording a package number.

The highest package number shall be marked on the case, constituting the case number.

Manufacturers must bill all goods to wholesale dealers by case number.

They must refuse all orders from firms or individuals not placed on the emblematic list by the pretor, and the pretor

will assign emblems only to wholesale druggists.

Manufacturers will, until instructed to the contrary, furnish goods at a uniform price regardless of quantity purchased.

We are aware that this is asking for the rejection of well established business rules, but it does not necessarily follow that because a rule has been adopted it is a good one, or that some other scheme might not be more advantageous. The difference in price thus gained to the manufacturer will enable him to deliver his goods, freight paid, so that the wholesale price will be the same in Texas as in New York.

If cutting in prices is reported to any manufacturer, he or they will report it at once to the pretor, who will request a bottle, box or package sent by express, and upon locating the wholesale dealer, will communicate with him, urging him to trace the goods after they left his hands, and, unless fully satisfied with the sincerity of the wholesaler, said pretor will remove his emblem from the list and instruct each and every manufacturer to cease sending goods to said wholesaler.

Manufacturers will not accept any provision of this plan till the pretor has satisfactory evidence of faithful and determined allegiance on the part of pharmacists. Manufacturers must regard wholesalers and retailers as their agents.

The pretor will collect an annual fee of . . . . . dollars from each manufacturer, and will file a due and sufficient bond.

Wholesale druggists are desirable as distributing agents, and this plan expects the National Wholesale Druggists' Association to appoint or elect a manager or pretor, of the character and as provided under Proprietors' Association above mentioned.

They shall indicate earnestness and fealty by filing an agreement with their pretor to carry out all orders from him to their utmost ability; to faithfully act as agent for manufacturers, controlling the sale of their goods and confining them to their legitimate channel.

Wholesalers must bill all goods by name and package number, and under no circumstances are they to open an original package.

They will sell only to pharmacists and will control, as far as possible, their supply by the known capacity of each.

They may exchange goods with each other on such terms as they may make among themselves; provided, such sale or exchange does not release the firm whose emblem is displayed on the wrapper, if such goods are subsequently found in the hands of cutters.

Under the same conditions they may supply goods to country pharmacists through wholesale dealers, provided the name, location and registration number of said pharmacist is given.

No goods, within the meaning of this plan, shall be furnished anyone not a pharmacist, except at full retail price; and not to a pharmacist, if he is known to cut prices or to be in the employ of a

firm who do; and, if a pharmacist reports to a wholesaler that goods bearing his emblem are on sale in a cutter's establishment he will proceed at once to tracing through whose hands the goods passed, report the same to the pretor, who will investigate the matter and direct all wholesalers to refuse the goods of all manufacturers to the guilty party, or if the pretor is satisfied the wholesaler is guilty, he will request the manufacturers, through their pretor, to cease selling him goods of each and every manufacturer.

The pretor shall file a bond as provided for above, and shall collect a fee of . . . dollars from each and every wholesaler. We suggest in this case also, the fee be as nominal as possible and the agreement be made on honor.

Retailers. As this class is more numerous, and as a consequence more difficult to control, we hope to band them together without any organization. Each man must be reached in his own shop and never asked to leave it.

In the interest of the present movement one pharmacist in every village and town and several in larger cities must agree to act as collector. Each will record the name and address of all the pharmacists who are willing to accept the agreement, and then send his own name and address, together with the number under his control, to one agreeing to be collector for the county seat, who, in like manner, will report to one in the State capital, and these from the several States will report to one elected at a meeting of the Proprietors' Association and National Wholesale Druggists' Association as retail pretor.

All pharmacists must agree on honor to carry out the instructions of their pretor conveyed to them by their respective collectors.

They must maintain prices, not sell to cutters, report cases of cutting as soon as possible to their pretor, who will investigate without fear or favor, and call upon the pretors of the wholesalers and manufacturers for assistance in cutting off the supply of all goods to the offender.

The retailers must pledge themselves to buy only of wholesale druggists. The retailer must not expect cutting to wholly cease, for department stores will cut more or less, even though they pay full retail price for the goods.

The pretor will receive, through the collectors, an annual fee of . . . dollars from each and every pharmacist, file a sufficient bond with the treasurer of the N.W.D.A. All funds collected shall be deposited with the treasurer of the P. A., will pay all bills and warrants that may be presented, properly endorsed by a pretor.

Collectors and pretors will conduct their business by mail. Collectors will draw on pretors for postage expenses. Pretors will furnish all printed matter, forms, agreements, etc., and will draw salaries from the united fees, which become a general fund for the three branches. The three pretors are to constitute a committee of last appeal.