

that of pharmacy. What medical man would so far forget himself as to use such language, and what medical man could respect the druggist who uses such language? Nay, what druggist can respect another of his own profession who has been so indiscreet. The indiscretion of a few may cause permanent disaster to the many. I cannot, of course, agree with all the censure that is contained in the April issue of the *Manitoba Lancet*. No doubt druggists do not as a rule try to foster a most important friendship, viz: that of their allies, the medical men. It would not be difficult to show the inconsistency of the editor of that useful journal in which some of the druggists of whom he complains advertise. There is no logic in his criticism of advertising methods, and his assertion that druggists are growing fat on their calling, is as humorous as the reference to doctors as debtors.

If pharmacy is to be made strong, and worth anything to those engaged in it, let it be above all things made enduring by its respectability. In some localities of this delightfully progressive province pharmacy unfortunately has lost not only its respectability, but its character. There are men engaged in it, though still pharmacists, who should be regarded as saloon-keepers. More money, no doubt, can be made in some of the country places by combining the sale of medicines with that of liquors. I can readily believe that were some druggists limited to the selling of drugs and drug sundries they would soon have to leave the drug business or starve. But what an incongruous and irritating position is the Pharmaceutical Association placed in by the sinister business methods of a few of its members. The Association, though in no way concerned, is always unsparingly censured by the public; but the people forget there is a liquor license law, and because of imperfect inspection by the Government that law is constantly violated.

THE LIQUOR LICENSE ACT AMENDMENT.

While the members of the Council have always viewed with strong disapproval the illegal and indiscriminate retailing of liquors, they had to take unmistakable exception to an amendment, which was without our knowledge or consent incorporated in the Liquor License Act during the parliamentary session of 1897. By that amendment the legitimate selling of liquors by druggists for strictly medicinal

purposes was practically forbidden. A delegation consisting of Messrs. E. D. Martin, H. E. Mitchell, W. Pulford, Jno. F. Howard, and myself, representing the association, and Dr. MacArthur as president of the Dominion Alliance, waited on the Law Amendments Committee in sitting last year, and argued before that body the injustice that had been done to the druggists of Manitoba. The gentlemen of that committee acknowledged the injustice, by restoring the rights claimed on behalf of the association; but in so doing they sanctioned no infringement of the law.

The local Government, however, should provide a proper book for every druggist and his assistants, in which they shall register the sales of liquors. If regular inspection of that book is to be disregarded, then the Government should dispense with it. We all recognize the fact that the sale of intoxicants for medicinal purposes can be controlled by rational means. But unless there be proper supervision abuses must continue.

PROSECUTION OF DELINQUENTS.

There are men in all walks of life who injure themselves and wrong the various associations of which they may be members, by their sheer callousness and indifference. It is not difficult to understand why those who become regardless of good reputation do not confine themselves to any one particular trouble in their moral and legal shortcomings.

The council always finds it most disagreeable to take action against delinquents; but plain duty to the association compelled it, during the past year, to prosecute a few members who had not paid their fees for some time, and had disregarded the notices of the registrar. The registrar, who usually receives a great deal of abuse, is in no way to be blamed for putting the law in operation against offenders. No such prosecutions can be made by him without instruction from the council. One of the prosecuted gentlemen has since called on the registrar and myself to protest against the proportion of court fees which he had to pay. I promised the complainant to present his arguments to the council, and as this is the first opportunity I have had of doing so, I hope the matter will be disposed of before the meeting adjourns.

If delinquents would but consider what it costs the association to compel observation of the law, and how much they

retard the efforts of the council to make our pharmaceutical fees smaller, neither their honor nor their pockets would suffer.

CONDITIONS OF THE DRUG TRADE IN THE WEST.

That some druggists fall in arrears, cannot surely be in consequence of drug trade conditions in the west. We are possibly suffering less than druggists in other parts. But two failures have occurred within the past twelve months, and twelve new stores have been opened. We have now 88 druggists in business throughout the province, three of whom have branch stores, as compared with 79 last year and 67 the year previous. There are 20 qualified druggists not in business, 24 certified clerks and 70 certified apprentices. Whether this increase indicates an improvement in the trade would be hard to discover. It is a remarkable fact, that the drug stores of the United States have steadily decreased during the last three or four years, and the drug trade there is suffering less than it has done for many years; but it is still far from satisfactory. Mr. Joseph Feil read a very interesting paper at the last A. Ph. A. meeting, in which he showed that in 1896 there were 37,664 retail druggists in the United States. In the following year there were 35,463, and last year 35,467, or a total decrease of 2,197 in two years. The loss in some of the states was greater than in others. "The wholesale druggists numbered in 1896, 296, in 1897, 290, in 1898, 284," and he concluded his instructive remarks by saying "I believe that when the retailers number about 25,000 and the wholesalers about 200, the equilibrium will be established and the decrease cease."

There is reason to suppose a happy condition of equilibrium prevails in Canada, as we have 20 wholesale druggists to a possible population of 7,000,000.

Why there should be such decrease, while the population is so rapidly increasing, is a hard puzzle. No doubt for many years the drug business in that great country has been overdone, and reaction was inevitable. If we go into percentages or comparisons we find that Manitoba has one drug store for about every 2,200, and our American cousins one for about every 2,000 people. In our cities and towns our proportions would be similar to theirs, and our conditions are perhaps better.