

Business Associations. Their Workings and Their Accomplishments.*

BY OTTO CLAUS, PH. G. ST. LOUIS.

I will confine myself entirely to the relation between neighboring druggists, the druggist and physician, the business associations between wholesalers and business associations between retailers.

THE RELATION BETWEEN NEIGHBORING DRUGGISTS.

Occasionally the druggist finds that he is out of some ingredient, or perhaps has a call for some new remedy necessary to compound a prescription, he does not wish to purchase an original package, therefore, in order to fill that prescription, he must send to his neighbor for it, consequently it is necessary to cultivate the friendship of surrounding druggists. They ought to visit each other at times, thereby exchanging new ideas. Some of the things which may be accomplished by these business associations are, the purchasing of goods together in larger quantities, such as patent and proprietary remedies and various other goods, thereby saving a discount of from five to fifteen per cent. They may assist each other by calling attention to unreliable customers, especially those who can but will not pay their just debts. They may agree upon a uniform price for various articles, thereby preventing customers from leaving their store and trying to obtain it elsewhere for a cheaper rate, from when once the people know that all the stores in the neighborhood have the same prices upon certain articles, they will not try the second time.

THE RELATION BETWEEN DRUGGIST AND PHYSICIAN.

One of the main features of a drug store is the compounding of physicians' prescriptions. This being the greatest source of revenue, the druggist should do his utmost to fill as many as possible. How can he accomplish this? First it is necessary to prepare a full line of those every-day remedies, such as tinctures, elixirs, etc., which are generally prescribed by the physician. They should be made according to the direction of the National Formulary, after having shown the results to the physician, explain to him in a few words your mode of preparation, guaranteeing the proper strength of each and also that every one of your pharmaceuticals are prepared only under your direct supervision. One of the most disagreeable things you can do and one which hurts the physician's feeling, is to prescribe for patients. Refuse them by all means, sending them instead to the doctor. You should at all times treat him in a polite manner and see that your clerks do likewise. When this is done you will undoubtedly obtain his good will and thereby accomplish the desired result.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN RETAILERS.

The retail druggists should, by all means form a local association. The

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labor trades union, which includes all classes of laboring men, has been a great advantage to them. It has been beneficial in more than one way. They have formerly worked from ten to fourteen hours per day, whereas now their limit is eight hours for each day's work. They received from twenty-five cents to seventy-five cents per day less than they are now receiving. Upon questioning them as to their mode of procedure and how it was accomplished their answer was, in union there is strength, we have rules and laws in our association and live up to them. Why cannot retail druggists have rules and live up to them as well? They ought to meet about once a month and by doing this will undoubtedly accomplish good results. At this meeting they may discuss the various happenings of the past month. They may prepare a schedule of prices on certain medicines, imposing a fine on any person selling less than the schedule price and see that the fine is collected from every retailer violating the rules governing the association. They should establish a credit system, apply to the legislature for a law compelling every person contracting a debt to pay the same. At every meeting some three or four papers may be read, describing different ways of conducting a business, etc., which will surely prove profitable to every one present. They ought to have a written agreement with the wholesalers preventing them from opening a retail drug store and thus competing with them. The association ought to prevent retailers from advertising in the daily papers, claiming to have pure, fresh drugs, for it is an established fact that we all have the same. They ought to make arrangements for closing on Sundays (which can be done as well as in all other lines of business) permitting a few stores in different parts of the city to remain and changing about every Sunday. Arranging it in this way a certain drug store would not be open but once in every six or seven months and still the owner has the same opportunity to compete with his neighbor.

PHARMACISTS' TRADE ORGANIZATIONS.*

BY DR. H. M. WINKLER, PH. G., ST. LOUIS.

Among the list of subjects on which papers are solicited for this meeting I find one entitled "Business Associations, Their Workings and Their Accomplishments." I divine that the author had in mind the retail druggists' trade organizations, and shall consider the subject accordingly.

I unhesitatingly claim that whenever two or more druggists are doing business in the same town, city, or section of the country, they should form an association for mutual protection and benefit. Such an organization will not only improve the relationship existing between the members, but assist in maintaining a more de-

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sirable relationship among pharmacists, physicians, and wholesalers.

Among the principles on which a trade organization should be founded I will mention the following:

1. Only registered pharmacists to be eligible for membership.
2. The initiation fee and annual dues must be of sufficient amount to make the members feel a financial interest in the association.
3. With the exception of secretary and treasurer there must be an annual rotation in office, so that the different members can do their share of the work. The exception of the officers just mentioned will tend to keep the association in good working order at all times.
4. At least regular quarterly meetings should be held in order to keep up the interest. Special meetings can be called whenever necessary.
5. I most heartily approve of the Boston Druggists' Association plan of holding an annual dinner. Conviviality begets sociability and softens the iron rules of commerce.

WHAT A PHARMACISTS' BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CAN ACCOMPLISH.

1. The maintaining of living profits on all goods sold. I refer you to the Louisville (Kentucky) Botanical Club, where the cutter fails to find a foothold.
2. The mutual protection of the members against dead-beat customers, who constitute an expensive item in many places.
3. The prosecution of violators of the pharmacy law. In this respect an association can do much more than an individual can accomplish.
4. A mutual understanding with the wholesalers whereby both parties will be benefited. In union there is strength and in consultation there is wisdom.
5. The closing of the stores a part of each Sabbath or the closing of different stores on each Sunday. The Asheville, North Carolina, pharmacists can give you some good points on this subject.
6. Protection against dishonest or unreliable clerks. How often pharmacists have occasion to wish for such protection!
7. The benefits of an employment bureau whereby relief clerks can be had on short notice, and regular assistants when desired. The St. Louis Drug Clerks' Society has demonstrated the value of such an intelligence office.
8. The use of a common price mark for prescriptions which will foil the tricks of the perambulating low-priced prescription druggist-seeker.
9. Protection against agents who introduce fraudulent goods or otherwise beat the druggist out of his hard-earned money. No doubt some of you have met with them before now.
10. The more thorough introduction of the National Formulary among physicians and a corresponding increase in prescriptions for preparations made according to this authority.