

CORRESPONDENCE.

Correspondence is invited from all members of the profession. We do not hold ourselves responsible for opinions of correspondents. All communications must have the name of the writer attached, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith. Any nom de plume may be used for publication. Write only on one side of the paper, and be concise.

The Relations of the Wholesaler and Retail Trade.

Editor CANADIAN DRUGGIST:

DEAR SIR,—The relations between the wholesaler and retailer in these days of cutting prices and keen competition should be very close for, to make a success in fighting such cases, they should be hand in hand. In times past the wholesale trade has assisted the retailer in a practical way. Outside of cutters the retail trade have dictated to the wholesaler who he should sell and who not, and sometimes this dictation has been done in quite an uncalled for offensive way. Even in these cases the wholesaler has met them in a very fair spirit, and in many cases have ceased catering for a trade out of deference to the retailer, but in nearly every instance the retailer cannot hold the trade and it has gone into other channels outside the drug trade. One would imagine, and not unreasonably so, that the parties asking such protection from their dealers would be willing to do what they could to turn all the business possible into their hands; but what do we find? To be enabled to buy drugs from first hands one man makes up an order for three or four times the quantity of goods he requires, and, to bring the stock down to his requirements, sells his overstock to friends at 5 per cent. advance on cost (at such an advance no house can do business and make money); there are cases where this is done by men who cater for doctors' trade in direct opposition to the druggists who are enabling him to buy goods cheaper than they can. In essential oils and such articles we find them buying at prices they know goods cannot be bought at to be the quality that people expect and should get in drug stores and from houses that sell any consumer that will buy from them. In patent medicines, where, most unfairly, quantity will get the best price irrespective of whether a man is a jobber or retailer, one man buys the quantity and divides up with his neighbor. In sundries the retailer objects to the wholesaler selling outside the trade, but fully half the sundries sold in this country are sold by parties who will sell to men in every line of business who will buy from them. One retailer made use of the argument that they had to buy from fancy goods houses in order to compete with their neighbors. Well, on the same line, the wholesale druggist should sell everywhere and to anyone to be able to buy in the quantities to enable him to sell as cheap as the fancy goods man. But, as I understand the wholesale trade, they do not want outside trade; all they want is fair play from the

retailer in these matters in return for the protection given them. Let the retailer give the wholesaler first chance on drugs, sundries, &c., they may require, as, in many cases, goods can be bought from them at home if prices would be procured for the quantities bought abroad. Every retail druggist should consider these points carefully, as one-sided protection is sure to bring trouble eventually.

Drugs.

The Relation of the Council of the College to "Trade and Commerce."

To the Chemists of Ontario.

GENTLEMEN,—I have been frequently asked what the Council is doing to help us in the unfair and unequal fight being waged against our business by the "Muslin Drug Stores," as the *Pharmaceutical Journal* appropriately calls them. The increasing number and cost of patent medicines, the withdrawal from us by the doctors of their prescriptions to act as their own dispensers, the rapid substitution of the simple efficacious and inexpensive preparations of our Pharmacopoeia by the secret formula, high-priced empirical preparations of the modern manufacturing pharmacists.

These agencies combined are rapidly relegating the business of pharmacists and the medical profession to that of shopkeepers and instruments of trade for the manufacturers to sell their wares, and completely destroying confidence in the science of medicine.

The epidemic has worked sad havoc with the retail drug business in the cities of the United States, and we have stood aloof feeling that in the case of the muslin drug stores at least, we were secure, until we are warned by a circular sent out from Toronto that the disease has gained a foothold in that city, and asking us to unite with them for mutual protection, and I have no hesitation in believing that there are none of us too lazy or indifferent to lend a helping hand to our city brethren. Think you the effect of selling patent medicines at 10 per cent. above cost will be confined to Toronto if a stop is not put to it at once by united and vigorous action? Within three years this, the most profitable part of many drug businesses will count for nothing, which means closing up at least 25 per cent. of the drug stores in this Province. The Council have foreseen this for several years and one of the objects of the Pharmacy Act of 1889 was to waken the trade up to district organization by dividing the country into 13 electoral divisions and voting by districts for men who must live in the district.

If you have no organization, either district or local, start one at once. Bury old feuds and jealousies. To keep them alive is to sacrifice your profits and digestion, and play into the enemy's hands. Come together and know each other, as has been done in Toronto, Ham-

ilton, London, Guelph, Brantford, Stratford, St. Thomas, Galt, Woodstock, and other places. You learn to see that there is no more intelligent, honorable, or trustworthy class than the chemists of this Province. Having thus established mutual respect and confidence, as has been done in the places named, all else follows. Meet frequently, keep the organization alive. We now want a central organization. If only the places named would act unitedly there is no wholesale house or manufacturer of patents or proprietaries dare ignore their voice if they decided that \$2, \$4, and \$8 per dozen, less 5 %, was the maximum price they would pay for patents, refuse to buy goods from wholesalers who sell at retail or to cut rate stores, discourage the sale of secret and high-priced preparations, such as Listerine, Aristol, Antipyrine, Antikamnia, Bromidia, Lactopeptin and its Elixir, Wampole's preparations, etc., and do as over a hundred druggists in Chicago are doing, have an expert make an analysis and preparations identical in composition, call it by another name, sample the physicians and give the formula. One hundred druggists in the places named could popularize any preparation in this way over the whole Province. We buy these preparations because we are afraid that our neighbor will if we do not and thus both ourselves and the doctors are being used as catspaws to pull the chestnuts from the fire by these people by handling their stuff. If we but trust each other and establish confidence we should be maintaining the dignity of our profession, discouraging charlatanry and quackery, doing a kindness to the medical profession and the public by restoring to public favor the simple, reliable, inexpensive preparations of our Pharmacopoeia, and retaining confidence in the efficacy of medicine.

Again, in the Act of 1889 you will see the Council have power to change the college curriculum from time to time to meet the changing conditions of pharmacy in this country. We believe that the times demand a wider, a more scientific knowledge, and an elegance of finish and detail in pharmacy that it never did before, and, because we have not been instructing our young men along this line, the preparation and manipulation that used to be done in the drug stores is now done for them by the manufacturers. We have changed our curriculum to meet this, by devoting half of the time of the students to practical work, by building an addition to the College for practical work, by engaging a staff of teachers of modern thought and method. And to-day we have the most handsome, commodious, and best equipped College of Pharmacy in the world, so far as we can learn, and giving to the students as good value for their money as any. We hope in this way to build up a class of chemists who can always make a good living for themselves, who are not dependent upon the manufacturer, and in whose hands the future of pharmacy will be safe. This is the legitimate work of the Council, and,