

appointed a commissioner to visit Canada and report upon the prospect for trade and possible openings. So far only a report upon Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island has appeared, but more is promised. Some years ago one of the proprietors undertook a similar business trip through the East and especially Australia, with the result that an Australian edition was founded. Canada appears so well provided with drug trade journals that it is hardly likely anything of the kind is contemplated in the Dominion, but the point may be borne in mind. It is to be hoped that, when representing Canadian pharmacies, wholesale and retail establishments, something better than second-rate wood cuts will be reproduced. An essential qualification of a good commissioner should be that of producing decent photographs of all the most interesting features. Rough sketches are all very well, but now-a-days subscribers expect reproductions to be by half-tone blocks or other similar process, otherwise illustrations had better be omitted altogether. There is no doubt that a large amount of attention will be paid shortly to Canada by British manufacturers, and the way will be opened by the Imperial penny postage, which Canada has successfully initiated. Already I hear of arrangements being made in the brush trade, and also by a sundry house, for sending a representative early next year, and both of these will devote special attention to pharmacists.

The School of Practical Experience.*

(Written for the Juniors.)

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Much has been said concerning the relation of practical experience to the so-called theoretical school training in preparing for a pharmaceutical career. Not a little of this seems to have been actuated by the prejudice of past methods rather than inspired by observation of present conditions and the lessons of real experience.

The demand is to place pharmacy upon the plane of a pure profession, yet the effort to give the novice the same thorough preliminary training that the lawyer, the physician and the theologian must have before entering upon their practical experience is discredited.

To be sure experience is often lauded as the best teacher, but her worth depends upon her lessons and upon the re-

ceptivity of her pupil. She is as apt to teach lessons that were better never learned as to teach those of practical value. Unless they are guided by correct theory her book had better remain closed. Thousands of young men have experienced the bad effects of acquiring wrong habits of thought and action,—have even tasted the bitterness that follows the indulgence in vice or the thwarting of their advancement by yielding to a spirit of indifference and love of ease and pleasure, but how many are taught by the experience to throw off the yoke, assert their manhood and re-win the lost field of struggle.

Is not experience the forger of habit, and does not unwise experience hang to one like a ball and chain to a criminal, preventing the restoral of a shattered ideal or the creation of a new one? Is it not better to be thoroughly drilled in correct theory and a habit of observation that will enable one to avoid misleading experience and to move continuously along the way of actual service and real success? Common sense says yes, even if prejudice curls the lip.

As in life, so in pharmacy, there are many experiences at the outset that are calculated to check advance, to so dwarf and belittle the calling in the eyes of the new aspirant as to prevent his rising above the level of his surroundings. How many students have said to me, "What is the use of my learning all this? They never need or use it in the store where I am employed."

Following this question in many cases came a drop in the low level of working for rank only, or the lower one of acquiring that which seemed practical in the narrow vision of the questioner, measured by the boundary of immediate environment; while no word of encouragement could arouse a purpose to store up principles of knowledge, to strengthen the mind and to control action on a higher plane in an unknown future. The same young men, kept from the unfortunate if not erroneous teachings of a narrow practical experience, might have been inspired to strive for the high ideal of a perfect training for an important calling, and under such impulse have acquired a discipline of mind, a steadiness of purpose, a thoroughness of manipulative skill, and a mastery of the right theory on which all legitimate and proper practice is based, that would have permanently fixed their place in the vanguard of their calling, sustained by their

increased resourcefulness on each occasion of a new experience.

If unable to locate in pharmacy free from the blight of prejudice and an unjust public suspicion classing them as dram sellers, drink mixers, petty merchants and panderers to the depravity of snuff dippers, morphine users, cocaine victims and ether sniffers, they would not drop to the level an improper public sentiment would consign them to, but would rise so far above it as to prove its falsity, or would step forward into a medical career doubly equipped for successful service.

These preliminary thoughts might be enlarged upon to practical purpose, but enough has been said to convey our thought that correct theory should precede correct practice, and, in a rambling sort of way, we will call attention to some experiences which are, and some which are not, practical.

It is good in theory to acquire habits of industry, promptness, neatness, accuracy and politeness, and any young man having an employer who insists rigidly upon their practice should be grateful for his good fortune.

It is *not* practical to know the little that is dangerous. Such an attitude leads the clerk to criticize the prescription, to neglect study, and to become over-officious. This is illustrated by a recent experience in our city, when a young lady customer calling for a prescription containing copaiba was insulted by the familiar remarks of the clerk. Had he more than the little knowledge that is dangerous he would have known that copaiba is used for chronic dysentery, for hæmorrhoids, for chronic bronchitis and other troubles besides that one uppermost in his mind. Lacking this knowledge, his insulting insinuations to a chaste, high-minded and spirited young lady cost him his situation, and may cost still more in the future.

It is practical to cleanse dishes and apparatus as soon as used, and not permit the formation of hard residues from the evaporation of any remaining liquid; yet how often this is neglected at the cost of much subsequent annoyance and loss of time!

It is *not* practical to place steel spatulas in the sink after using, often causing them to discolor or rust, impairing their smoothness and their strength. They should be cleansed as soon as used.

Some of these points considered of minor importance may result in large