

business, not unlike many others, is being overdone. The elevation of the standard of education, the alluring prospect of college life and a "professional" career, and the illusion of Phm. B. dangling before their eyes, has, we are confident, induced many young men to embark in the drug business without a due foresight into the future. Our colleges are turning out hundreds of thoroughly educated young pharmacists, who are quite the equal of those to be found either in Europe or elsewhere in America, until it has come to be a fact that the supply is larger than the demand. These young men must either go into business for themselves or look up situations elsewhere. Many of these graduates of pharmacy, becoming allured with city life, commence a business, aided financially, too frequently, by the jobbing houses, and in a very short time many of them, as well as those longer in business, find competition so keen, and the volume of business so largely divided, that the inevitable "cutting war" commences, and there is a struggle for survival.

In Toronto, for instance, there are fully three times as many drug stores as necessity demands, and this fact, together with the existence of several departmental stores, whose avowed purpose is to sell cheaper than any one else, has created such a thorough demoralization of prices in many lines that the druggist who may be dependent on the ordinary sales outside of his prescription department finds it a very difficult matter to make ends meet.

The efforts put forth by the newly organized Society of Retail Druggists have, no doubt, done much to suppress the spread of cut-rates throughout this province, but much remains to be done, especially by individual members of the trade, in acting squarely and honorably by each other, and by united effort in upholding those who would do business in a way which would not only be creditable to themselves, but a means of driving out of the ranks the "traitors" who would sacrifice everyone without, in the end, benefiting themselves.

The "departmental store" is, no doubt, one of the worst factors with which we have to deal now, for it affects not only the business in the place where it is situated, but its influence is felt throughout the province at large. Its insidious advertisements, its appeals to ignorant purchasers, its protestations against "monopoly"—itself the greatest "mon-

opoly" octopus in existence; all these things make it the most formidable antagonist to those who would do business on business-like principles, on the basis of "live and let live."

That these "stores" should be allowed to carry on business as druggists merely because they are limited liability companies—the manager of the drug department being supposed to hold some stock in the concern, while single individuals are prosecuted unless they are registered druggists—is an anomaly which appears to us very inconsistent with law or justice, and we trust that the test case which the Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacy has instituted against one of these companies will be pushed vigorously, and if the law, as it now stands, will not prevent this strange interpretation of the Act, that legislation will be asked for in order to give druggists that protection which the Act certainly *intended*, even if it does not now possess.

In speaking of the cut-rate problem, the *California Druggist* holds out encouragement to the druggist who can command the respect and confidence of his customers. There is no doubt that in a majority of cases those druggists who started out with the deliberate intention of cutting prices, and endeavored to maintain a business in that way, have come to grief. Our contemporary says:

Looking at the cut-rate problem from what seems to us a common sense standpoint, we are led to the conclusion that (barring departmental stores) wherever capital has been invested with the special object of conducting a cut-rate drug business, that same capital, energy, and business capacity would have been quite as well rewarded without the cut-rate features. The public is as easily influenced by the elegant and attractive display, the large store, the systematic arrangement, the liberal advertising, and the polite attention *without* as *with* the cut-rate feature; and while some trade is doubtless brought in through the advertising of cut prices, it is on the whole vastly unprofitable. The niggardly, penurious element of society is certainly attracted, and as certainly unsatisfied, for the disposition to "shop" leads to the hope of lower and lower quotations—unfortunately too often realized—while the demoralization and distress throughout the trade grow apace. The business qualities that have made the leading cut-rate druggists successful, we repeat, would have insured success with

regular prices. Cutting, of itself, never yet made a drug business successful, while its victims lie stranded wrecks from one end of the country to the other.

Prosecutions.

The chairman of the infringement committee of the Ontario College of Pharmacy, Mr. Karn, has instituted a crusade against violators of the Pharmacy Act. The duty which he is so energetically performing is a disagreeable one, and one which requires courage, confidence, and conscientiousness on the part of the plaintiff to enable him to do good work. Mr. Karn appears to possess these, and is apparently determined that all the power the Pharmacy Act possesses shall be utilized during the time he is supposed to administer it.

There is little doubt but that violations of the act are becoming more open and flagrant each year, and that some steps should be taken to call a halt.

If each prosecution would close up some business which should not be running actions under the act would be of real service, but when each prosecution demonstrates some new way of evading the law, and showing how weak the act is, then the wisdom of prosecuting is not so apparent. Within the past three years those who conduct any form of business under the Limited Liability Act have found that they are neither personally nor jointly liable to prosecution for keeping open shop for the sale of drugs and medicines, and for the compounding and dispensing of poisons. This feature of the act became conspicuous when an interpretation of the law was sought before Chief Justice Meredith and Judge Rose in the Simpson case, when they decided that had the company been incorporated when the case was entered the act would have been inoperative.

No worse feature of the act could have been openly exposed, as it plainly means that any five persons can apply for incorporation at a cost of less than one hundred dollars, and conduct a drug business if they choose. Owing to this weakness in the act the drug business in Ontario has become very unprofitable, and in the city of Toronto is almost valueless unless where medical support is strong.

It is very difficult for druggists who have the true interests of pharmacy at heart, and who are anxious to elevate the business to a higher plane, to cope with conditions of this kind. Many old drug-