

## Rules For the Prescription Department.

Mr. Thomas J. Keenan has very carefully edited the rules by which the employees of the late Alexander Hudnut were governed for years, and presented his compilation at the last meeting of the New York Pharmaceutical Association. The entire set of regulations has been published by the *American Druggist*, we reproduce the rules pertaining to the prescription department:

**CHECKING PRESCRIPTIONS.**—(a) Whoever receives a prescription to compound will immediately say to the customer, "Wait one moment till I give you a check." He will then immediately hand the customer a check, and before he lays the prescription down or performs any other act whatever paste the duplicate number on the margin of the prescription.

(b) Check all prescriptions. Whoever compounds a prescription must have it carefully examined and checked off by another clerk, who must carefully examine every article in the prescription, also number, date and every detail connected with it, precisely as if he had himself prepared it. The compounder and the one who checks will enter their initials on a label to be placed on every bottle or box containing a prescription, including renewals, and also on the prescription itself.

(c) In checking prescriptions the party checking should always take notice whether the quantity of liquid required by the formula is in the bottle; also observe the weights that have been used in weighing, as well as the material used in the powders. He must critically examine by smelling, tasting, etc., mixtures and ointments, count pills, powders, etc., and in every way satisfy himself that the prescription contains the ingredients as ordered and is in every way correct.

(d) When the prescription is completed and there are two or more articles, wrap them together in the same paper and paste the number on the outside.

**PREPARING PRESCRIPTIONS.**—(a) Prescriptions must be prepared as soon as possible after they are received, and when a prescription is left to be compounded and the customer says he will call for it at a certain hour, every possible effort must be made to have it ready for him before the time specified.

(b) Any mixture which is liable to separate or deposit a sediment must be labeled with "This mixture to be shaken before taking each dose," and the word "Shake" written also on the lower margin of the prescription.

Liniments liable to separate must also have a label, "This liniment to be shaken before using." If such label is not required on the liniment, then use the label which reads "For external use only."

(c) Prescriptions must be dispensed with the greatest neatness and elegance, corks sealed, and the bottle or box tied up with pink twine in the best wrapping-paper. Use flint bottles, porcelain jars,

best quality boxes, and in every respect equal to the best.

(d) Always write the name of the doctor and the directions on the label, if possible to obtain them. The label must be written very plainly. Tie up every package with pink twine.

If the prescription has the name of the patient on it, write his name on the label, or his number, as the case may be.

**DOUBTFUL PRESCRIPTIONS.**—(a) When a prescription is received about which there is doubt as to whether the physician intended it as written, or when there is reasonable doubt as to what is prescribed, do not dispense the medicine. If the customer is not in haste and we can gain time for the purpose, send to the doctor privately a note of inquiry, otherwise hand the recipe back to the customer and request him to see the doctor about it.

(b) Illegible writing on prescriptions must be corrected by the compounder, in order to guard against mistakes in the event of the patient requiring a renewal at a future time.

(c) If the formula for a preparation used in a prescription is not uniform or is liable to be compounded in various ways, the dispenser must write on the margin of the prescription the exact formula he has used.

**UNSIGHTLY MIXTURES.**—No unsightly or incompatible mixture is allowed to be sent out of this pharmacy until the manager's attention has been drawn to the same, and every legitimate means tried to make a sightly and elegant compound.

**PILLS.**—In preparing a prescription of pills, mention on the margin thereof the kind and quantity of excipient used in compounding them, as nearly as possible. The same in regard to suppositories and capsules.

The intentions of this rule are that, on renewing a prescription, whoever compounds it will be able to prepare it exactly as in the first instance.

**EXCIPIENTS.**—When pills are ordered by a physician, and it becomes necessary to use an excipient, use either gum arabic and syrup, conserve of roses, powdered licorice, tragacanth, honey, alcohol, water, etc. In pills where a quantity of oil is ordered, use solution of yellow wax in ether. In compounding pills in hot weather, use powdered starch.

**CAPSULES.**—(a) In dispensing medicines which are to be enclosed in capsules do not handle the capsules in such a way as to leave any taste of the medicine on their surface. It is understood that all capsules are to be massed. Wash the hands first, and use a pin to pick up the pills.

(b) With reference to capsules and gelatin-coated pills, the two are not to be confounded. Gelatin-coated pills must not be given in recipes where capsules are directed.

**BLISTERING PLASTERS.**—In spreading cantharidal cerate, always paint the plaster over afterward with the ethereal solu-

tion of cantharides, a bottle of which with brush attached, will always be kept in the chemical closet.

**SUPPOSITORIES.**—Where the physician does not specify the amount of cacao butter to be used in making suppositories, use enough to make each cone weigh 15 grains when finished.

**RENEWALS.**—(a) When a prescription is renewed, always take the renewal check from the customer and destroy it. Also, the clerk who checks the renewal of a prescription must himself make sure that it is actually the medicine which is required by examining the label on the bottle or box brought in by the customer. Unless he does this, he has not properly checked the prescription. Also, he must see the check, if any, brought by the customer.

(b) In renewals, the soiled label must be renewed, and, if necessary, the bottle washed. This applies also to pills and powders.

**RESPONSIBILITY.**—Whoever dispenses a prescription in this store will be held personally responsible for any mistake in compounding.

The fact of the wrong drug having been put in the shop bottle by another clerk will not relieve the dispenser from responsibility, his duty being to critically examine every article he dispenses.

To avoid mistakes, permit no talking while you are preparing prescriptions.

**SUBSTITUTION.**—No substitution is permitted in prescriptions unless the article required is perfectly inert, and cannot be obtained readily by sending to other stores.

**POISONS.**—Poisons to be taken internally must always be labeled "drop with care," or "Use with caution." But unless so directed by the physician, the word *poison* must not be written on the label.

**BOTTLES.**—(a) Glass-stoppered bottles must always be used in prescriptions for such articles as act injuriously upon corks.

(b) Blue-glass vials must be used in prescriptions where the mixture is liable to be acted on by the light, and the fact of blue glass being used should be entered on the margin of the prescription.

**PUTTING.**—(a) When a high-priced prescription has been put up, or one that seems dear according to its bulk, always explain to the customer that it is an expensive preparation, and that it is put at as low a price as possible.

(b) And when a customer wants the price of prescription before having it prepared, be careful to charge a fair price only, and if he refuses to leave it at the price named, make an earnest effort to induce him to leave it by making the price as low as possible. Don't let him go if it is possible to prevent it.

(c) We propose to make only a fair and honest price for prescriptions. Our lowest charge for any regular prescription written by a doctor is 15c., such as one dose of blue pills or compound cathartic, etc. Single powders composed of some