

minutes of his time, for which, also, he would be paid. On the other hand, presuming, he says, "Yes, I will analyse it for you," the doctor not only has reason to go there again for such work, not only refers other doctors, as also his patients, there, but trade, prescriptions, etc., are necessarily increased.

We know a pharmacist who, as a result of this one department of analytical chemistry, took in two hundred dollars for the work itself in one year, to say nothing of the increase of trade thus induced. In other words, we believe that a pharmacist should not only be a druggist, but a chemist. He need not delve in the minute depths of the subject, but there are many of its minor branches like the one referred to—that require but little study or time, that not only add to his business, but give a scientific touch to his reputation that the public decidedly admire. As regards the microscope in pharmacy, the many and increasing articles in our different journals commending its value and use are but growing proofs of the fact that the pharmacist of the future will and must be a microscopist.

Here we have another of the many minor studies, that are not only easily learned but quite as easily applied.

The value of a microscope is illustrated readily by the fact that while every crystal, root, rhizome, leaf, powder, starch, etc., have distinctive and individual peculiarities, yet very few of these are distinguishable by the naked eye, while all are easily resolved and can be identified by aid of a microscope and a little experience. When we think of the fact that England, France, Germany and other foreign countries make a business of manufacturing especial "adulterants for the American trade" we can comprehend the necessity of individual analysis. Of course the microscope can only apply to a part of these things, and many pharmacists have but few occasions to use its powers. Nevertheless if one possesses the knowledge to detect anise in conium, or vice versa, starch, sugar, etc., in quinine and antipyrine or powdered ipecac, to say nothing of coffee, pepper and many more drugs that are so commonly adulterated, he could save the price of his instrument in a comparatively short time, and while enjoying the pleasure of this delightful and instructive work would also know that he is conscientious in supplying pure articles to his customers.

It is encouraging to know that microscopy has been gaining in importance in many of our pharmacy schools. Usually starting with small proportions and inefficient supplies—it, as a study, gradually works its way and proves its utility until to-day a number of the leading colleges require the work as one of the necessities for graduation. In many medical schools of the United States and Europe not only is microscopy applied temporarily but much stress is being laid on photomicrography, by which means its valuable investigations are easily preserved. It is evident that microscopy is one of the pharmaceutical advancements of the day. It has rapidly pressed its needs upon the scientific part of the profession. It is growing in demand. It is a comparatively new field and presents grand opportunities for observation, investigation and original work.

As the time must surely come when a part of the pharmacist's armament will be a microscope and microscopy, we wish to direct attention to the subject in the belief that those who would be progressive may be led to investigate its value.—[N. E. Druggist.

CUTTING PRICES.

In connection with this subject of cutting, the following interview of an Era reporter with Mr. Alexander Hudnut, the proprietor of the great cut rate store of Hegeman & Co., New York, will be read with interest. Mr. Hudnut said:—

The rebate plan, or any other system of artificial bolstering, is as futile as it would be to try and dam Niagara. Legislation on the subject is unnecessary and superfluous. The matter carries its own death warrant with it.

Some six years ago the drug trade got together and formed a most beautiful plan for maintaining prices. Where is that beautiful plan now? The rebate system is probably its legitimate offspring. Come to me some years hence and I expect to be able to point to a string of lineal descendants of the rebate plan, each of them as helpless to perform what is expected as the other. The world ought to be wise enough by this time to recognize the fixity of the laws which govern commerce.

I regard the principle of cutting as a settled policy in the drug business, and I shall pursue that steadily. Hegemann & Co. have done a business of about \$325,000 annually. I expect to increase it to half a million dollars. In London the immense stores of the Army & Navy, and of the Civil Service have worked a revolution in the drug trade, by buying at first hands in immense quantities, and selling on close margin. They have even cut the rates on prescription business. The result has been that the chemists, as they call them there, have been compelled to come down in their prices, and a process of elimination has steadily gone on—the weak have had to go to the wall. The result is the "survival of the fittest." These conditions apply to New York, and I venture to say that there are not over ten drug stores in the city of New York that are making their owners more than a living. With the rest it is simply a process of more or less rapid rusting out.

An absence of cut prices, and general prosperity marks the retail drug trade of Cleveland. The Cleveland Pharmaceutical Association is clannish and its dues are so moderate that almost the entire trade is within the Association. This gives rise to a brotherly feeling which makes doing business a pleasure; and prevents cuts and insures prosperity. The drug trade in many cities suffers from wholesale slashing of prices from the lack of such an Association as exists in Cleveland. The Association is thoroughly organized, and the two wholesale houses in Cleveland do everything in their power to help the retail trade along, and decline to sell at retail in

OPIUM.

In Opium the reduced estimates of the probable yield from the current crop, coupled with advices of higher prices in London and the primary market, have caused a much firmer feeling here. The bulk of the spot supply is controlled by three dealers who it is said are working in harmony to raise prices, in which effort they have already made considerable progress, it would appear, since at the close there was very little standardized to be had at \$3.10, the general quotation being \$3.15. Natural was held at \$3.20 to \$3.50. While there were no large buyers in the market, the demand for single cases and broken lots was very good. Powdered has advanced to \$4.20 to \$4.30 as to seller and test. We have received the following from Smyrna under date of July 13th: "There is no longer doubt that if the yield of 5,000 baskets is to be reached by the new crop (including the 1,250 baskets from Salonica) the fields on the high grounds must yield much more than the lower fields have shown up to the present moment—arrivals of 117 baskets against 570 in 1888, which certainly is a poor showing. It is true that in Constantinople, where they got the opium from the districts where the gathering was made in advance of the others this season, they had received 45 baskets against 125 last year, which is somewhat better than we can show, but is still awfully poor. Holders are very sanguine and will not sell their goods unless they get higher prices, and as they now have increased facilities for depositing their goods with banks at reasonable rates of interest, it is most probable that buyers will have to accept their terms. The stocks abroad were large, but as they have been kept all along at lower rates than what opium could be bought at in the primary markets, they have gradually melted down to reasonable quantities. London has hardly 1,000 cases, the greater part of which is Persian and high grade Turkish, not suitable for the American market. New York has about 500 cases which could be called 'in the market.' The balance is held by outsiders who would not part with their opium unless they get much higher prices for it. But all this is a matter of little consideration to the native merchant in Turkey; he holds on to his opium when he sees a small crop, and buyers will have either to live on the European and New York stocks or pay them something better than the starving prices they paid for the last few years." Since this was written, some cables advise crop estimates reduced to 4,500 baskets (including Salonica), and prices in Smyrna from 9s. 3d. to 9s. 9d.