

# SECTION ON COMMERCIAL INTERESTS, AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION

## A COUPLE OF TIME-SAVERS FOR RETAIL DRUGGISTS.\*

BY DAVID M. FLETCHER.

With the ever-changing prices of drugs and chemicals during the past two years it has been extremely difficult for the retail pharmacist to avoid losses in fixing and keeping track of the retail selling price of his wares, especially at the prescription case.

The large chain stores on the Coast provide their clerks with a scale of prices for various quantities at which drugs and chemicals shall be sold and constantly issue bulletins of price changes. The men in the prescription and drug departments are expected to note these changes in their price books and to change the prices on all containers in the stores. Every bottle, pot or can carries the sale price at retail in various quantities, and each clerk is thus in touch with these prices.

At the time of the breaking out of the European war, price changes came so quickly that the task of making the proper changes on the containers became quite a task and writing out all these prices and attaching to proper container was rather slow work. In order to expedite the work the writer devised the accompanying small labels, for the various subdivisions of quantities most frequently

<b>ARTICLE</b>		1 OZ. .... 2 OZS. .... 4 OZS. .... 8 OZS. .... 1 LB. ....
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <b>PKG. NO.</b> </div>	<b>DATE PURCHASED</b> _____ <b>FROM</b> _____ <b>PRICE</b> _____ <b>QUANTITY</b> _____	
<b>WHEN</b> _____ <b>HAVE BEEN USED NOTIFY OFFICE</b> _____		1 DRAM ..... 2 DRAMS ..... ½ OZ. .... 1 OZ .....
<b>USED</b> _____ _____ _____ _____		1 DOZ. .... 2 DOZ. .... 1/100 ..... 1/500 .....
<b>NEW SUPPLY ORDERED</b> _____		

used, had them printed on gummed paper and by their use speeded up the changes tenfold. As will be noticed one calls for the subdivisions of the ounce, another for those of the pound, and when necessary both can be used on a container when wishing to carry the prices through from dram to 1 pound; the third one is used

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on pill and tablet bottles; if desired, a fourth label for grains might come in handy at the prescription case, in pricing such articles as pilocarpine, homatropine, cocaine, etc. These labels have also proved very serviceable on bulk perfume bottles.

The proper pricing of prescriptions has been discussed frequently of late years and in many instances it has been shown that the retail druggist was actually dispensing his wares at a loss, or at so small a margin of profit as to be not worth while, that I offer the suggestion that by the use of the little labels here described, and the following of price changes, many of these leaks may be stopped.

Another labor-saving card that I have been using may be of interest to the druggist who desires to keep in touch with the quantity purchases he may be making, and who does not keep a stock book, the necessary clerical work being accomplished as the goods are handled in the stock-room. The various cards are returned to the office after the packages to which they were attached are emptied, and filed away. They will at any time afford all desired information as to quantity used in a given time, prices paid and sources of supply. These cards are attached to barrels of bulk chemicals, boxes of patents when bought in quantities, or to the edge of shelf in the stock-room, if more convenient. The druggist will find that at the end of a year he has a most valuable lot of information of what has gone in and out of his stock-room, at a minimum of overhead expense in keeping the record.

#### PARAFFIN-COVERED BANDAGES.\*

The use of paraffined bandages has been suggested by Fisher.<sup>1</sup> He dips the bandages into melted paraffin, and applies this directly to the wound as a non-impregnable dressing. In principle, this is somewhat analogous to the paraffin films, although it differs in some essential respects.

Another use of paraffin in connection with bandaging occurred to me while working with the paraffin films, as reported in a previous paper: the painting of the surface of the finished dressing *in situ* with melted paraffin. The results were very promising. The bandage is stiffened so as to form a support, which in some cases may take the place of a splint, or even of a cast. It is weaker and somewhat more pliable, but very much lighter. It may also serve the purpose of fixing a bandage so that it does not slide on itself, and of protecting the surface of the bandage against moisture and dirt.

The bandage is prepared very simply by painting the outer layers of the ordinary bandage with melted paraffin. It is also feasible to paint the surface of the cotton directly, without application of any bandage. This, however, does not give as good a mold as the paraffin bandage.

The paraffin bandages can of course be easily removed by cutting them with scissors. Paraffin may also take the place of adhesive plaster, etc., for sealing the end of a bandage. The melted paraffin is simply painted over the edge after the bandage is in place. Another use is for painting the edge of the bandage where it is especially liable to become frayed or soiled, as at the wrist. A strip of melted paraffin may also be painted along one side of the bandage to keep the laps from sliding on each other.—Torald Sollman, M.D., Cleveland.

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<sup>1</sup> Fisher, H. E.: "Non-adhering Surgical Gauze," *The Journal A. M. A.*, March 25, 1916, p. 939.