

## THE PHARMACIST AND THE LAW.

## SECTION 472, POSTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

Sec. 472. 1. All kinds of poison, and all articles and compositions containing poison and all poisonous animals, insects, and reptiles, and explosives of all kinds, and inflammable materials, and infernal machines, and mechanical, chemical, or other devices or compositions which may ignite or explode, and all disease germs or scabs, and all other natural or artificial articles, compositions, or materials of whatever kind which may kill, or in any wise hurt, harm, or injure another, or damage, deface, or otherwise injure the mails or other property, whether sealed as first-class matter or not, are hereby declared to be non-mailable matter, and shall not be conveyed in the mails or delivered from any post-office or station thereof, nor by any letter carrier; but the Postmaster-General may permit the transmission in the mails, under such rules and regulations as he shall prescribe as to preparation and packing, of any articles hereinbefore described which are not outwardly or of their own force dangerous or injurious to life, health, or property: Provided. That all spirituous, vinous, malted, fermented, or other intoxicating liquors of any kind are hereby declared to be non-mailable and shall not be deposited in or carried through the mails. Whoever shall knowingly deposit or cause to be deposited for mailing or delivery, or shall knowingly cause to be delivered by mail according to the direction thereon, or at any place at which it is directed to be delivered by the person to whom it is addressed, anything declared by this section to be non-mailable, unless in accordance with the rules and regulations hereby authorized to be prescribed by the Postmaster-General, shall be fined not more than one thousand dollars, or imprisoned not more than two years, or both; and whoever shall knowingly deposit or cause to be deposited for mailing or delivery, or shall knowingly cause to be delivered by mail according to the direction thereon, or at any place to which it is directed to be delivered by the person to whom it is addressed, anything declared by this section to be non-mailable, whether transmitted in accordance with the rules and regulations authorized to be prescribed by the Postmaster-General or not, with the design, intent, or purpose to kill, or in any wise hurt, harm, or injure another, or damage,

deface, or otherwise injure the mails or other property, shall be fined not more than five thousand dollars, or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

2. (a) Spirituous, vinous, malted, fermented, or other intoxicating liquors of any kind, poisons of every kind, and articles and compositions containing poison (except as prescribed in the fourth paragraph hereof), and poisonous animals, insects, and reptiles, corrosive materials, fireworks, and explosives of every kind, and inflammable materials liable to cause fire by self-ignition through friction, through absorption of moisture, or through spontaneous chemical changes, and infernal machines, any mechanical, chemical, or other devices or compositions which may ignite or explode, and disease germs or scabs (except as prescribed in Sec. 473), and other natural or artificial articles, compositions, or materials of whatever kind which may kill or in anywise hurt, harm, or injure another, or damage, deface, or otherwise injure the mail or other property, live animals, insects, birds or fowls (except as prescribed in Sec. 475), fresh hides or pelts, or any articles exhaling bad odor, whether sealed as first-class matter or not, shall not be admitted to the mails.

(b) Inflammable liquids and substances, such as paints, varnishes, automobile tire-repair outfits containing rubber cement, etc., that are not liable to cause fire by self-ignition through friction, through absorption of moisture, or through spontaneous chemical changes, and are not poisonous or explosive or unmailable for reasons other than their inflammability, shall be accepted for transmission in the domestic mails, when in quantities of not more than four ounces and when contained in tightly closed metal tubes or cans and packed in strong papier maché tubes or in boxes made of good quality double-faced corrugated pasteboard. The word "inflammable" and the proper name of the article must be plainly marked on the outside of the package.

(c) Substances mentioned in the preceding paragraph (b) when in larger quantities shall be accepted for transmission in the domestic mails when in tight and strong metal containers enclosed in tight and strong outside wooden boxes or cases; provided, that the maximum quantity of any inflammable liquid packed in one outside container must not exceed one-

gallon when the flash point is 20° F., or below, and must not exceed five gallons when the flash point is above 20° F., and below 80° F., and the containers must not be entirely filled—not less than two percent of their capacity to be left vacant. The proper name of the inflammable substance contained therein must be plainly marked on the outside of the package and caution labels (red for liquid and yellow for solids) must be attached thereto by the shipper. These caution labels must be diamond-shaped, each side four inches long, with the wording printed in black letters inside of a black-lined border measuring three and a half inches on each side. The wording on the red labels to be "Notice to postal employees. Caution. Keep away from fires, stoves, radiators, lighted matches, lanterns, and direct sunlight. Any leaking package must be removed to a safe place. This is to certify that the above articles are properly described by name and are packed and marked and are in proper condition for transportation according to the regulations prescribed by the Post-Office Department.

.....  
(Shipper's name)

The wording on the yellow labels to be "Notice to postal employees. Caution. Keep fire and light away. Sweep up and remove carefully contents of broken packages. This is to certify that the above articles are properly described by name and are packed and marked and are in proper condition for transportation according to the regulations prescribed by the Post-Office Department.

.....  
(Shipper's name)

All such parcels to be handled outside of mail bags.

3. Liquids not spirituous, vinous, malted, fermented, or otherwise intoxicating (including samples of altar or communion wine used in church services), and not liable to explosion or spontaneous combustion or ignition by shock or jar, and not inflammable, fruits or vegetable matter liable to decomposition, comb honey, soft soap, pastes or confections, ointments, salves and articles of similar consistency, shall be admitted to the mails for transmission in the domestic mails when enclosed in packages in conformity with the conditions prescribed in Sections 474 and 475.

4. Medicines and anesthetic agents which are not outwardly or of their own force dan-

gerous or injurious to life, health or property and not in themselves unmailable (see Secs. 454 and 480), may be admitted to the mails for transmission in the domestic mails when enclosed in packages in conformity with the conditions prescribed in Section 474: Provided, That the terms "medicines" and "anesthetic agents" shall not be construed to mean poisons. Provided, further, That the article mailed bears the label or superscription of the manufacturer thereof, or dealer therein, or of the licensed physician, surgeon, dentist, or veterinarian preparing or prescribing the same.

#### DEFINITION OF A "POISON."

Second Assistant Postmaster-General Otto Praeger, in a communication under date of November 23, to Smith, Kline & French Company, of Philadelphia, states:

"You ask what is the definition of a poison within the meaning of the Postal Laws and Regulations, and it is desired to say that any substance which is *required by law or the exercise of ordinary prudence to be labeled 'poison'*\* is considered to be poisonous and unmailable. Medicines containing cocaine, or more than two grains of opium, or more than one grain of codeine, or more than one-quarter of a grain of morphine, or more than one-eighth of a grain of heroine to the ounce, are considered to be poison and unmailable."

#### METRIC SYSTEM IN COMMERCE BETWEEN U. S. AND SOUTH AMERICA URGED BY INTERNATIONAL HIGH COMMISSION.

As a means of facilitating and stimulating commerce between the United States and Latin-American countries the use of the metric system is recommended in a resolution adopted by the United States Section of the International High Commission, of which Secretary McAdoo is chairman. The resolution adopted by the commission is as follows:

The United States Section of the International High Commission, having in view the present efforts to bring about the exclusive use of the metric system of weights and measures within the jurisdiction of the United States, resolves:

I. That is the opinion of the section the adoption of that system would be productive

\* Yours truly.

of great advantage in the commercial relations of the United States with the other American republics.

II. That the secretary of the section be

directed to communicate a copy of this resolution to the chairmen of the proper committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

### BOOK NOTICES AND REVIEWS.

*A Text-Book of Chemistry.—Intended for the Use of Pharmaceutical and Medical Students.* By Samuel P. Sadtler, Ph.D., LL.D., Virgil Coblenz, Ph.D., F.C.S., and Jeannot Hostmann, Ph.G. Fifth Edition, revised and rewritten. J. B. Lippincott Company. Philadelphia and London. 765 pages. Price, \$5.50.

The many changes and improvements in manufacturing processes, as well as the almost revolutionary changes in chemical activities, in all directions, brought about by the world war, have made the revision of almost any chemical text a matter of considerable labor.

In order to meet these conditions the present edition of this well-known and popular textbook has therefore been largely rewritten and the book shows a great number of changes. Much new matter has been added and much of that which has become obsolete has been withdrawn.

The changes in Part I devoted to Elementary Physics are particularly noticeable, the entire part having been rewritten by Prof. Jeannot Hostmann, of the Department of Pharmacy, of Columbia University. The matter is clear and concise and covers the field of special interest to pharmacy students well.

The sections on Inorganic Chemistry have been brought up to date by Prof. Virgil Coblenz, who has been in close touch with the manufacturing side of chemistry for a number of years, and therefore specially qualified for this work.

A chapter on electrolysis and its applications, describing many of the latest manufacturing processes now in use, has been added.

The section on Organic Chemistry has been brought up to date, but one is rather disappointed not to find any mention of such substances as the chloramines, dichlorethylsulphide, etc.

The book is especially well adapted to the needs of pharmacists and pharmacy students and will undoubtedly find a large field of usefulness.

J. A. KOCH.

#### PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

HYGIENIC LABORATORY—BULLETIN NO. 112,  
APRIL 1918:

*I. Phenols as Preservatives of Antipseudococcic Serum. A Pharmacological Study.* By Carl Voegtlin.

*II. The Nature of Contaminations of Biological Products.* By I. A. Bengtson.

*III. Studies in Preservatives of Biological Products. The Effects of Certain Substances on Organisms Found in Biological Products.* By M. H. Neill.

*IV. The Effect of Ether on Tetanus Spores and on Certain Other Microorganisms.* By H. B. Corbitt.

*Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of the Texas Pharmaceutical Association* held in Waco, Texas.

*Bulletin, Oregon Agricultural College,* No. 283; also an illustrated anniversary number, showing fifty years of progress.

*Studies from the Research Laboratory, of Parke, Davis & Co.* "The Hypodermic Use of Iron," "The Influence of the Method of Administration upon the Degree of Toxicity of *Strophanthus* Preparations," "Studies on Derivatives of Trihalogeno-tertiary Butyl-Alcohols."