THROUGH THE PAGES OF A CENTURY-OLD PRESCRIPTION BOOK.

MISS E. M. WITT GIVES DEMONSTRATION TO STUDENTS AT PHARMACY COLLEGE.

A GOOD PHARMACIST IS

BY HELEN SEAGER

IN THE EIGHTIES Melbourne citizens knew the building which now houses the Victorian College of Pharmacy as the old County Court. Here Ned Kelly was tried, and to this day one of the thick plate-glass windows in a lecture theatre bears a hole made by a bullet. Someone annoyed with a judge's summing up, took a pot shot at his Honour.

In 1882 the building, which is in Swanston St, changed hands for the princely sum of £400, and on May 12, 1884, the college was open to students.

The Dean of the College, Mr A. T. S. Sissons, says that pharmacy as a career for women is no longer considered an unusual one. The number of women students up to 1908 was negligible, a steady trickle kept up until 1914, when a decided step up was recorded with the First World War.

Until 1913 the feminine dispensers kept modestly out of the limelight, but that year Ethel E. Drew put the men to shame by carrying off the coveted gold medal for the intermediate, and in 1915 took the Gold Medal in Pharmacy Final Examination, from all comers. She started the fashion, and since then five women students have followed suit.

What happens to women pharmacists after their lengthy and expensive education? For between 600 and 700 Victorian women have qualified.

Here are a few instances. Miss Mary Burgess, who qualified in 1924, is now senior woman pharmacist at the Queen Victoria Hospital, and she has one of the finest dispensaries in the State.

Miss Nancy Allen, who stepped from the college portals for the last time in 1924, is now Chief Pharmaceutical Chemist at Prince Henry's Hospital.

Miss Alison Farrell, intermediate gold medalist of 1927, has her own business at Prahran.

Miss Ruby Walker, gold medalist — intermediate 1923 and finals 1924 — had charge of a well-known city pharmacy for some years and then established her own suburban business.

Miss Josephine Dear, who qualified in 1922, proved herself not only a good chemist but a remarkably apt business woman as well. She started a pharmacy on the outskirts of the Victoria Market and followed this up by similar adjacents to the Prahran and Camberwell Markets.

Miss E. M. Witt, a gold medalist, who passed through the college from 1924 to 1927, is now back again, the first woman to hold a lecturing position.

"Being first woman on the staff," said Miss Witt, "will, with a woman's acquisitiveness, I have shouldered quite a lot of responsibilities which are hard to pin down into a list of duties. I lecture, do a bit of work in the laboratory, supervise practical work, keep an eye on the library, answer innumerable questions both from students and qualified people who want the latest opinions on new drugs. I help with the preparations for examinations. I purchase the drugs and other requirements.

Miss Witt served the four years of apprenticeship as a pharmaceutical chemist, which is