

The method of brushing is important as well as the selection of a dentifrice. The teeth should be brushed vigorously from the gums to the biting surfaces. The upper teeth, therefore, should be brushed only in a downward direction, while the lower ones are brushed in an upward stroke. In this way gum recession may be prevented. In brushing the upper teeth with an upward stroke and the lower teeth with a downward stroke the gums are brushed away from the enamel margin resulting in recession. Receded gums expose dentin areas which are very susceptible to decay. Under no circumstances should teeth be brushed cross-wise because this type of brushing will produce erosions.

Only dentifrices, either powders or pastes, which are mildly acidic in character, should be used because of the stimulating effect such preparations have on the oral secretions. Tart fruit juice is the most necessary and essential ingredient in a dentifrice. Soaps and other alkalies, so commonly found in the old-time dentifrice, are contra-indicated in the mouth. They found their way into dentifrices purely by accident, as history reveals, several centuries before the beginning of the Christian era. Their extensive use during the last century has contributed materially to the alarming increase in dental decay. Soap and alkalies are excellent detergents for the removal of fats and grease deposits and for this purpose largely employed in the laundry and kitchen. The deposits on teeth are albuminous, containing agglutinated masses of starchy debris and mineral salts. Alkalies will cause these deposits to become more adhesive. Alkalies, moreover, practically inhibit the flow of saliva, at the same time making it very viscous so that its bathing and protecting power is completely lost. Gies, of Columbia, urges the use of vinegar, diluted with water, as a mouth and tooth wash. Pickerill, of Otago, recommends a 1 % solution of potassium bitartrate. The latter would be the equivalent of a bunch or two of grapes, while the diluted vinegar might be compared with an apple so far as the effect on the oral secretions is concerned.

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A WAR-TIME VISIT WITH A FRENCH PHARMACIST.*

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Finding, as so many others had found before me, that my pharmaceutical qualifications were apparently of little use in the Army, I enlisted as a photographer early in the spring of 1918 and went overseas a few weeks later with the 39th Division—a husky lot of soft singing, hard swearing fellows from somewhere south of the Mason and Dixon Line. My equipment consisted principally of a Graflex camera and a .45 caliber Colt's automatic, a queer outfit, you will admit, for a man of pharmaceutical tendencies and training.

The division survived the trip across and the ordeal which had been prepared for all American troops landing at Brest; and the particular group to which I was attached arrived at length at a little village called St. Florent, where it was intended that we should be finally whipped into shape so that we, in turn, might finally whip certain members of the Potsdam crowd.

*Read before section on Historical Pharmacy, A. Ph. A. Washington Meeting, 1920.

We reached St. Florent late one afternoon and were marched at once to the stables that had been allotted to us. I have slept in some of the oldest and finest stables in France. Before I left there I could not pass one of them without wondering what kind of a place it would be to sleep in. That first night in St. Florent a rat fell, or was pushed by others, from a rafter overhead and dropped upon one of the fellows and he complained about it mildly, but that was his first night in a French stable; a few weeks later he would have thought nothing of it. St. Florent rather stands out in my mind because I had a bath there, my first since leaving Camp Merritt twenty-two days before. It was a simple, primitive bath. A walk in the rain down to the river and the deed was done. Later on, one time, when I was at the front, I went thirty-two days without a bath but I do not recommend this abstinence from ablutions for general adoption, and the Doughboy practice of keeping one's shirt on until it wore off was entirely the result of inadequate hotel facilities and the habit is one that few of the men have retained in civil life.

I "rode the gravy wagon" the entire week I spent in St. Florent. There were only three photographers in the entire division and it was easy for us to get lost. I roamed around the streets and showed up at the billet only at meal time. On the second day I discovered a drug store, or *pharmacie*, that looked interesting and went in, determined to try out my Army French on the defenseless proprietor.

Mustering up the phrases that I had rehearsed for the occasion I said to him when he stepped out to greet me, "*Bon jour, Monsieur. Je suis un pharmacien Americain.*" ("Good morning, sir. I am an American pharmacist" — or as near to that as I could make it.) His kindly eyes lighted up and I knew that I had "landed." Then came the shock. He extended his hand and said in perfect English, "Good morning, I am glad to see you."

Then he invited me to the rooms back of the store where he lived and placed before me delicious hot chocolate and some most remarkable old wine. He had learned to speak English during a long visit in London. He seemed genuinely glad to see me and showed me pictures of his two sons, both of whom were with the French Army. He told me that he, too, had been called at the outbreak of the war and that he had served for some time as a major.

At my request he showed me his store and laboratory. His store was hardly a dozen feet square and was devoted to drugs and pharmaceuticals exclusively. No, there was one tiny drawer filled with proprietary remedies and he apologized for having them. His laboratory was quite elaborate and much of his time was devoted to the analysis of urine, wine, milk, soil, and water. Also he manufactured valerianic acid and valerianates as a sort of specialty or "side line." His only assistants were two women, one of them his daughter.

The French pharmacist is a much respected member of the community in which he resides. The competition between pharmacists is not so much of the commercial as of the professional variety and they visit a good deal with each other. During the winter of 1918, M. Bouge told me, he and his confrere in the little town were called upon to visit in their homes persons suffering with influenza and to prescribe for them because of the lack of physicians. As I have stated before, he was a major in the French Army, and was quite surprised when I told him some-

thing concerning the status of pharmacists in our army. It appears that the dentist is the one who has not adequate professional recognition in France.

The *pharmacies* in the smaller towns are opened at eight or nine in the morning and closed at six in the evening—with an hour and a half out for lunch in the middle of the day. Practically all of the French stores are closed from 12 until 1:30 or 2 each day so that their proprietors may enjoy their lunches undisturbed.

There are two kinds of drug stores in France—the *pharmacie* and the *herboristerie*. The *pharmacies* are operated by trained, professional pharmacists and little is sold in them except drugs, chemicals and prescriptions. The *herboristerie*, on the other hand, is a more commercial organization. The proprietor is required to do a certain amount of studying—principally on materia medica—and is licensed to sell almost all drugs except certain poisons and, of course, is not permitted to compound prescriptions. In these stores they sell crude and household drugs, hospital and sick room supplies, perfumes, brushes, manicure articles, bandages, hair curlers, sponges, and many other similar articles of merchandise.

The *herboristerie* has a competitor in the barber shop. The barber sells toilet preparations and perfumes and makes rather an elaborate window display of his wares. A French barber shop is a peculiar institution. The barbers use the, to us, old fashioned strop on a wooden handle and their razors are seldom sharp. After the shaving ordeal is over the customer gets out of the chair and washes his own face in a nearby bowl. Then, as he goes out, he drops one or more of those heavy French coins—"clackers" the fellows called them—in a sort of coin box and a bell rings, whereupon every barber in the shop turns around and bows to him. It gives one quite a sensation.

Much has been said concerning the possibility of establishing two kinds of drug stores in the United States; perhaps it would be well to study the working of such a system as it exists in France before attempting changes in that direction here.

BACON CIPHER A TARGET OF CRITICS

There is reason for skepticism relative to the Roger Bacon cipher manuscript. Mystery seemingly surrounds the source, and the revelations are astounding. We quote the *New York Times* and *New York Tribune* on the subject:

(From the *New York Times*.)

That Roger Bacon conceived certain scientific ideas far in advance of his time has been known ever since the world came abreast of them. If, as Dr. Newbold asserts, it can now be proved that he made use of the telescope, the fact will be cheerfully accepted. It is even possible that he possessed a microscope and by means of it discovered the cellular structure of tissue and recorded the life history of a fertilized cell. But when Dr. Newbold asserts that Friar Bacon himself was five centuries in advance of his time and that if he had "made his discoveries known" the fact would have "put our scientific knowl-

edge centuries ahead of what it is today," credulity falters and is dumb.

(From the *New York Tribune*.)

This new Baconian cult has points in its favor and points against it as compared with the old Bacon-Shakespeare madness. The worst feature of its case is the uncertainty attaching to any manuscript which has kicked about Europe from possessor to possessor, for more than five centuries. The Francis Bacon believers at least had a known document to work upon—the Shakespeare texts. These delvers into Roger Bacon's intellectuals have first to convince the world that their manuscript is really the handiwork of the British monk. * * * Roger Bacon had the mental equipment for the sort of labor credited to him and he had some motive for concealing his discoveries in a cipher. * * *