

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH

Compiled by A. G. DuMez, Reporter on the Progress of Pharmacy.

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ENACTMENT OF NATION-WIDE PREREQUISITE LAWS?*

BY LEO G. PENN.

In a recent article by J. G. Beard, on Education and Legislation, appearing in the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, Professor Beard raises the following important and interesting question and suggestion:

"What means can be formulated for hastening the enactment of nation-wide prerequisite laws? Heretofore this has been a problem left largely to each State for solution, when in reality it should have a central direction."

By nation-wide "Prerequisite Laws," I take it that Professor Beard means *uniform* prerequisite laws. I take it also, that the suggestion made by him after the question raised is, that the matter of legislation be taken from the States and placed in the hands of some other legislative body and, as the only other legislative body in addition to the legislatures of the various States is Congress, I take it that the "central direction," which is suggested implies the United States Congress.

For the purpose of this article, therefore, I will assume that uniform prerequisite laws are desirable and I will concern myself with the means whereby they can be obtained.

It is true that the matter of prerequisites, having been left to the several States, has resulted in a very uneven standard of excellence; in the 48 States, there are almost as many varieties of preliminary requirements.

When a young man has satisfactorily completed his college course and passed the requirements of the State Board in one of the States, is it not merely logical that he should be enabled to practice in the capacity of pharmacist in any of the other States by passing a required State Board examination? Yes, you answer, if his preparation for the profession is equal to that of students in the other States.

Under existing conditions, it most assuredly is not. For illustration:

Some States provide as their only stipulation that candidates for the profession pass the State Board. They do not question how or where the necessary knowledge has been obtained, nor do they concern themselves with the preliminary training a man has received.

Pennsylvania, on the other hand, does not merely insist upon the successful completion of a college course, but demands a four-year high school course in order that the members of the profession may have some cultural and intellectual training. These are only two examples, but the preliminary requirements range through all degrees from the slightest and most negligent to the highest yet required. I am not pleading here for an increase in prerequisites, but surely it is obvious that the more carefully the requirements are looked into and the sounder the

* Section on Education and Legislation, Des Moines meeting, 1926.