

EDITORIAL

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COMMISSIONS FOR PHARMACISTS IN THE RESERVE ARMY.

IN THE reorganization of the Army, following the World War, the "Medical Administrative Corps" was created as a special unit of technical experts to co-operate with the Medical Corps.

A limited number of Commissions have been available for expert pharmacists, who also possessed the necessary military training, as explained below in a letter recently received from Surgeon-General Ireland. But as the regular Army is small, the chief opportunity, as was expected, is to be found in the Reserve Corps.

Pharmaceutical service rightly occupies an important place in the Medical Service of the Army as this group of technically-trained experts should be responsible for drugs and supplies, which in times of war runs into a cost of millions of dollars. They should also be entrusted with maintaining the quality and standard of these supplies when furnished on contract, and, as probably their most important duty, highly trained pharmacists should be in charge of the supply and the dispensing of prepared and extemporaneous medicines, antiseptics and sterile products required in every large Army hospital or organized medical unit.

One feature of the Reserve Army plan is summer training camps. The Medical Corps and its associated unit, the Medical Service Corps, is now being called into short term camps, throughout the summer, so far as appropriations permit, and pharmacists, who have already obtained Commissions in this Reserve Corps, are included, according to a recent statement by Surgeon General Ireland of the Army.

At the annual meeting of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION the House of Delegates passed the following resolution:

"Resolved: That the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION in annual convention assembled earnestly urge the establishment and annual maintenance of a summer training camp at Carlisle for pharmacists who have received commissions in the Reserve Division of the Medical Service Corps of the U. S. Army. We believe that such action will greatly stimulate the interest of trained and competent pharmacists in this important division of the Army and will do much toward the development of this essential section of the medical service."

When Dr. Ireland's attention was called to this request his reply was very gratifying in that he gave assurance that this desired opportunity was already in operation and a definite feature of the plan of organization for the Medical Service of the Army.

Dr. Ireland writes:

"I am in receipt of your communication of August 29th relative to the possibility of training at Carlisle, qualified pharmacists who are members of the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve.

"At the inception of the present Reserve Corps project yearly training for fifteen-day periods was contemplated for all Reserve Corps units, but Congress has seen fit to so curtail appropriations for this purpose that it is now impossible to train all who apply. Under these circumstances it has become the policy to

extend opportunities for training in proportion to relative strength of the various sections of the Medical Department in so far as it is possible to make this plan fit in with the idea of training those who are to hold key positions in units in case of emergency.

"You are probably aware that a knowledge of pharmacy is one of several qualifications for which commissions are offered in the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve. The duties of this Corps in time of emergency will involve a variety of functions to which it is attempted to assign members who are specially qualified by fact of occupation in civil life to fill each requirement. By this plan of selection and assignment to duties appropriate to their training in civil life the necessity for training along special lines is obviated, and it then becomes necessary to give them only such training as will enable them to apply their knowledge in a military organization.

"The present allotment of funds for the purpose of training Medical Department Reserve Corps personnel and the limited training facilities available at Carlisle precludes conducting a special course for training pharmacists. As heretofore, pharmacists as members of the Sanitary Corps or Medical Administrative Corps Reserve, are given the privilege of active duty training in so far as possible in proportion to their relative strength of the Medical Department. Those assigned to definite units are trained with their respective units. Some of this training is given at stations other than Carlisle because of the expense involved in transportation. This, however, applied alike to all sections of the Medical Department.

"It would appear that what you desire is already being done, that is, a certain number of Medical Administrative Corps Reserve officers are being trained with their respective units, some of which, because of the distance from Carlisle, are being trained in camps nearer their home station.

"I desire to express my appreciation for your interest in procuring and training a qualified Medical Administrative Corps Reserve."

Pharmacy faces an opportunity and a patriotic duty. It is highly desirable that professional pharmaceutical service should be available and properly organized, as a feature of the Medical Division of the Army. The Reserve Corps makes it possible for a number of properly qualified pharmacists to secure these commissions and thus gratify that inborn desire to perform a patriotic duty and at the same time prepare for and perform pharmaceutical service in the Army.

Those who believe themselves qualified through adequate pharmaceutical training, and through the possession of those other personal and administrative qualities essential in an efficient officer, are urged to apply for a commission in the Reserve Corps.

Information can be obtained through the office of the Surgeon General of the Army, Washington, D. C.

Surgeon General Ireland has just supplied the following detailed information concerning the organization and function of the Medical Department Reserve of the Army, especially that pertaining to the Medical Administrative Corps, in which section registered and graduate pharmacists can most effectively assist in national defense.

"In the reorganization of the Regular Army following the World War, Congress authorized the Medical Department to consist of the Medical Corps, Dental Corps, Veterinary Corps, Medical Administrative Corps, a number of enlisted men and the Army Nurse Corps. The number of officers authorized for the Medical Administrative Corps of the Regular Army was fixed at one for every two thousand of the total enlisted strength of the Regular Army. To be eligible for examination for appointment in the Medical Administrative Corps of the Regular Army it is now required that the applicant have two years' service as an enlisted man in the

Medical Department of the Regular Army. Appointments are made to fill vacancies from among those who pass the prescribed examination. This examination consists of a physical examination, examination for moral character and general fitness, educational examination and professional examination. The professional examination embraces the following subjects:

1. Army Regulations, special regulations, orders, bulletins and circulars relative to Medical Department Administration.
2. Office organization and administration including the duties of an Adjutant and Registrar.
3. Mess management.
4. Property accountability and responsibility.
5. Manual of Courts Martial.
6. Oral and practical examination to determine candidate's capability to perform duties of Detachment Commander.
7. Examination in special training along some line of Medical Department work if requested by the candidate.

"Congress, in the Act of June 4, 1920, made provision for an Officers Reserve Corps to be composed of Reserve officers available for military service when needed and authorized sections corresponding to those of the various branches of the Regular Army. Based on this authority there has been constituted as a part of the Medical Reserve Department the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve composed of officers who are qualified by profession or training to assume duties similar to those of the Medical Administrative Corps of the Regular Army. The War Department authorized the appointment of officers in the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve who possess as knowledge qualification a high school education or its equivalent and who possess special training which will qualify them as property officers, pharmacists, mess officers and administrative officers such as adjutants, registrars, etc. Evidence of satisfactory standing and at least three years' experience and progress in duties in civil life or military service analogous to the Medical Administrative Corps will be accepted as satisfactory evidence of qualifications for appointment in the lowest grade of the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve in lieu of professional examination.

"It will be noted from the above that the qualification as pharmacist is only one of the several qualifications which are considered satisfactory for appointment in the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve. There is no function which the Medical Administrative Reserve Corps officer is called on to perform which would justify the appointment of a commissioned officer with the view of assigning and utilizing his services for duties requiring only the compounding and dispensing of medicines. The Medical Administrative Corps Reserve Officer must possess additional military qualifications. In other words, a commission in the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve which is based on the applicant's experience in pharmacy will have to be supplemented with other qualifications subsequent to such appointment before being eligible for promotion to a higher grade than that of 2nd Lieutenant which is the lowest. The War Department provides through its correspondence courses facilities for acquiring the additional training necessary for promotion to higher grade. The correspondence courses are intended to provide a means whereby officers of the Reserve Corps can of their own initiative and at their leisure time by individual effort acquire the knowledge necessary to make them eligible for promotion after having served the required number of years in grade. In addition to this method of training a limited number of officers of the Medical Department Reserve, including Medical Administrative Corps Reserve, are ordered to active duty at some training camp for the purpose of field training, where opportunity is offered to apply practically the theoretical knowledge gained through enrollment in correspondence courses.

"As in all Medical Department training for the Reserve Corps, it is not the policy to give Medical Administrative Corps officers training along purely professional lines. In other words, the medical officer will not be trained in surgery and internal medicine, neither will the pharmacist be trained in pharmacy. Such training as is provided will be given with the view of enabling the Reserve Officer to apply his professional knowledge in a military organization. There is no unit of the Medical Department composed entirely of Medical Administrative Corps officers. The Medical Administrative Corps officer is assigned with Medical Department units in such

numbers as required to care for the functions for which they are especially qualified and which are needed in the particular organization concerned. Logically they are given training with the unit so that they will understand their part in the team play which is necessary for a smooth working organization. They are not trained in separate camps composed entirely of Medical Administrative Corps officers.

"In addition to active duty training with their respective units it is the policy to offer at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., and other training camps an opportunity for individual training of members of the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve in numbers corresponding to their relative strength of the Medical Department as a whole. At the present time funds for active duty training are so limited as to preclude the training of all who apply.

"I desire to express my appreciation for your interest in national preparedness as indicated by your desire to cooperate in an effort to obtain the application of qualified pharmacists for the Medical Administrative Corps Reserve."

E. FULLERTON COOK.

IS PHARMACY WEEK WORTH WHILE?

IN THIS morning's mail, the writer received from Mr. L. J. Trudel, a prominent pharmacist at Rutland, Vermont, an article which appeared on Friday of Pharmacy Week in the *Rutland Daily Herald*. The article brought to the writer's mind the remark of a certain editor who, in commenting upon Pharmacy Week, said, "The calender is so clogged with special weeks observing one thing or another, that in order to make room for them all, they ought to combine Corn Week and Bean Week and call it Succotash Week."

The article by the Vermont editor, appearing in a column entitled "Peregrinations," follows:

Pharmacy Week hasn't made so much of a stir, chiefly for the reason that the pharmacists are all pretty busy themselves and the newspapers pretty well fed up with weeks of all kinds.

The week part of it doesn't interest me at all, but the idea that the national association is fathering does. The druggist as a professional man rather than a merchant, or perhaps more than a merchant, is something that isn't any too clear, either in the big cities or hereabout.

The druggist's is a well-recognized profession, with a State governing board, State and national associations, but where one person thinks of the drug store as a place to buy medicines or have medicines made up, two at least think involuntarily of a soda fountain, cigar counter, place to buy toilet articles, quite likely with suggestions of any one of five-score other articles, now procurable at the drug store.

For some reason, certain lines of merchandise have gravitated more or less naturally to the drug store or pharmacy, but the professional end of the job hasn't slacked off any. Couldn't, without poisoning half the community.

Suggesting that out of the thousands of prescriptions filled and on file in local drug stores, how many ever showed up an error? Considering the sort of hand-writing used by most doctors, the abbreviated terms, the use of new remedies and compounds, the constantly changing Pharmacopœia, this in itself stamps the profession of pharmacy as highly skilled, important and strictly dependable.

So when the national association undertakes to emphasize this unquestioned fact, it harks back to the older days when the druggist (or chemist in England) was on a par with the doctor, did emergency and first-aid operations, administered medicines and was a person of high professional standing.

He is yet, in circles where this sort of thing is appreciated and understood, so the slogan "more than a merchant" has no suggestion of a slam against merchandizing, but just constitutes a strong and definite implication that the important part of a pharmacist's job is to practice pharmacy, which he does, nowadays, pretty efficiently—and does considerable merchandizing as well.

It will be noted that after the good Vermont editor, in a paragraph and a little more, exhausts his contempt and aversion for "special weeks," he launches forth upon a splendidly constructive story, stressing pharmaceutical service. He calls forth from the recesses of his mind many splendid parts of the pharmacists' rôle, with which he is familiar, and his story appears in priceless printer's ink to bring to the public mind a fuller realization and deeper appreciation of the valuable contribution of pharmacy and its importance in public health conservation.

And so we say, "What! No Pharmacy Week?" Well, ask yourself and answer yourself honestly, "Would that Vermont editor have written a stick about pharmacy had it not been Pharmacy Week? Did he ever write anything about pharmacy before the inception of Pharmacy Week?" "We" happen to be the National Chairman of Pharmacy Week and we grinningly contemplate your mental answer.

The writer wishes that you could sit with him at his desk to see each mail bringing reports from State, district and local Pharmacy Week chairmen, association officers, deans of colleges and individual pharmacists, all telling with enthusiasm of the observance of National Pharmacy Week as it was carried on throughout the nation—hundreds of full-page and smaller newspaper spreads, thousands of news stories and editorials appeared in the newspapers throughout the country, enough to paper the proposed Pharmacy Headquarters Building; scores of radio talks were broadcast and hundreds of service clubs were addressed; thousands of cards appeared in the street, surface and elevated cars; and thousands upon thousands of Pharmacy Week windows in the drug stores of the United States—yes, and in Canada and Australia as well—all telling the story of pharmacy and pharmaceutical service to the public. Is Pharmacy Week worth while?

"Weeks" may come and "weeks" may go—many of them have gone—but Pharmacy Week will live and grow and accomplish its purpose. Why? Because it is based upon a strictly unselfish principle. It is not commercial—all it has to sell is public health service. "Paint Your House Week," "Wear Your Rubbers Week" and "Eat More Spaghetti Week," may die out and go to the final resting place set aside for all special weeks which have passed on because they had only selfish interests for their foundations, but Pharmacy Week will live on just as long as it deserves to live.

When the Pharmacy Week reports all reach National Headquarters, the writer will compile a story covering the national observance and it will be released to all of the journals of pharmacy. They will publish it and you will read it and know that *Pharmacy Week is worth while*.—R. J. R.

**Aid Annual Red Cross Roll Call.
Prepare for the Sale of Christmas Seals.**