

EDITORIAL NOTES

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SEPARATION OF PLANT PIGMENTS.

The laboratory of the biological and organic division of the United States Department of Agriculture has reported on the commercial extraction of chlorophyll, carotin and xanthophyll. The reports were made by G. E. Hilbert and F. M. Schertz. The carotin is extracted with petroleum ether; chlorophyll and xanthophyll are extracted together with acetone and separated by use of certain agents. The chemists report that they have been able to break down chlorophyll.

DETERMINING ALKALOIDS.

A new method of determining alkaloids consists in treating the alkaloid, dissolved in a hydrochloric acid solution, with excess of tetrachloro-iodic acid. Alkaloids are thereby converted into the tetrachloro-iodide derivatives, which possess characteristics readily distinguishable, and thus clearly differentiate between the alkaloids. The iodine can be quantitatively separated from these tetrachloroiodides, when they are treated with potassium iodide solution acidified with acetic acid. The iodine thus separated can be determined in usual fashion. The amount of tetrachloro-iodic acid used can be determined by saturation of a concentrated hydrochloric acid solution, containing very finely pulverized iodine in suspension, by means of chlorine. —*Journal of the Chemical Society of London through Drug Markets*.

NARCOTICS CONFERENCE DELEGATES.

President Hoover has named the delegates from the United States to the Conference on

limitation of the manufacture of narcotic drugs, to be held in Geneva beginning May 27th. The members are: John K. Caldwell, who represented the United States at the last four annual sessions of the League of Nations Opium Advisory Committee and attended the preliminary Conference on the limitation of the manufacture of narcotic drugs, held in London during October. The other members are: Commissioner Harry J. Anslinger, Dr. W. L. Treadway, chief of the Bureau of Mental Hygiene, U. S. Public Health Service, and Sanborn Young, chairman of the California State Narcotic Commission.

HERBARIUM OF THE HIMALAYAN FLORA.

An herbarium consisting of more than 1000 specimens of Himalayan flora—representing the first season's collection by Dr. Walter Koeltz, botanist of the Research Institute of the Roerich Museum, India—has been received by the Botanical Garden, New York, and is now being studied.

TREATMENT FOR MONOXIDE POISONING.

The laboratory of the Bureau of Mines, under the direction of Dr. R. R. Sayres, is conducting work in an effort to discover antidotes counteracting the effect of carbon monoxide. Studies are being made to determine whether there is permanent damage done by the poison to the brain, heart, lungs and other organs.

U. S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION EXAMINATION.

The U. S. Civil Service Commission has announced an open competitive examination for Junior Microanalyst. Application for the position must be made not later than April 21, 1931. In order to take the examination the applicant should address the U. S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C., or apply to any post office or customhouse in the United States.

THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF HOSPITALS.

We quote the following from the *Journal A. M. A.* of March 28th:

"The tenth annual compilation of statistics regarding hospital service in the United States, presented this week in *The Journal (A. M. A.)* brings fresh interest to a consideration of the magnitude of hospital service. Not long ago, hospital procedures were the business only of the few who worked within their walls. The change to modern methods has been so sweeping as to seem inevitable. A comparison of hospital service of ten or twenty years ago with that of to-day arouses pride in the mighty forces that have brought about such changes."

... "The practice of medicine is being transferred to hospitals in a continuously increasing degree. In 1909 there were in the United States 4359 reasonably acceptable hospitals; in 1930 there were 6719, a numerical increase of 2360, or 54.1 per cent. But the bed capacity of these hospitals rose during the same period from 421,065 to 955,869, a capacity increase of 534,804, or 127 per cent." . . .

"That improvements in the way of scientific equipment for the care of the sick have kept pace with the expansion in the capacity of hospitals is shown by the fact that from 1923 to 1930 the number of laboratories in hospitals increased from 3035 to 4249. During the same time the number of X-ray departments increased from 2841 to 4528. The departments of physical therapy in hospitals numbered 2091 in 1927 and 2236 in 1930. And also with the increase in the number of these adjuncts to diagnosis and treatment in hospitals has come increased demand that these departments be under the supervision of medical practitioners who are specially qualified."

Coöperation of trained pharmacists and physicians is essential for progress of the professions indicated and the service rendered by

them. The regulations of pharmacy in the hospitals should not differ greatly from those conducted by individuals, firms or corporations.

PHARMACISTS IN LONDON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

The London County Council has given other local authorities a very useful lead in the matter of dispenserships in the institutions under their control. It has been decided that (1) only persons registered as pharmaceutical chemists, or as chemists and druggists (pharmacists), shall be eligible for appointment as dispensers or assistant dispensers in the hospitals or district dispensaries; (2) in hospitals or other dispensaries carrying more than one assistant dispenser, an unregistered dispenser, an articulated pupil or an apprentice shall be eligible for the position of second assistant, and (3) in small hospitals or institutions in which there is no registered dispenser, the medical officer of the hospital or institution shall be responsible for the dispensing.

CANCER "CURERS" AND "CURES."

Dr. J. J. Durrett, chief of drug control, Federal Food and Drug Administration, stated—in commenting upon a radio talk delivered recently by Lord Moynihan, one of the world's leading cancer specialists, and president of the Royal College of Surgeons, England, in which the British surgeon declared: "The cancer curer is still a curse in every land, and the most pathetic credulity as to his claim is shown by people who should know better." "In twenty-four years' regulatory operation of the Federal Food and Drug Act, the Administration has instituted more than seventy court actions against more than forty so-called cancer 'cures.' "

Publicity and sales of these "cancer cures" should be stopped, but there is even greater danger, if possible, in permitting fake cancer doctors to ply their calling. They may be found in nearly every large city.

A ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER TYPE IDENTIFIED IN EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN SECTIONS OF UNITED STATES.

According to a report recently made public by the United States Public Health Service, a disease of the Rocky Mountain spotted fever type has been identified as occurring in States in the eastern and southeastern sections of the United States. Heretofore, it

has been thought that Rocky Mountain spotted fever existed only in the western part of the United States being most prevalent in the Rocky Mountain section.

The discovery that a disease of this type is present in the eastern part of the United States is important to the general public, as well as to health authorities. Rocky Mountain spotted fever is spread by the bite of ticks, and the present evidence indicates that the type of disease just reported for the eastern States is also spread by ticks. This disease is rather severe and death has resulted in some of the cases. The disease occurring in the Rocky Mountain section is often extremely severe, with mortality running from 60 to 90 per cent.

The discovery of this disease in a section hitherto unknown is the result of laborious and extended studies by the Public Health Service, including laboratory investigations as well as studies of a number of clinical cases.

CONTROL OF SALE OF PROPRIETARY MEDICINES.

The *Oil, Paint and Drug Reporter*, of April 13th, states editorially that "suggestions for a plan of rigid control of the sale of proprietary medicines are under consideration by the Commissioner of Health of the City of New York. These suggestions were made for the municipal department of health at the invitation of the commissioner by the secretary of the council on dental therapeutics of the American Dental Association. They would, if adopted, oblige the board of health, as one of the commissioner's advisers, a physician of high standing, has declared, to rule out of the drug stores practically all patent medicines now on sale . . . and seriously interfere with the advertising matter in fully half of the newspapers and magazines sold in this city."

DE LAMAR LECTURE ON NARCOTIC ADDICTION.

Dr. George F. McCleary, deputy senior medical officer, Ministry of Health, England, delivered a De Lamar lecture on Hygiene, April 14th, at The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health. The subject of the address was, "The Prevention and Cure of Narcotic Drug Addiction."

THE CHARLES E. DOHME MEMORIAL LECTURESHIP.

The Charles E. Dohme lectures were delivered April 16th to 18th, at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. The Memorial

Lecture was established by Mrs. Dohme in memory of her husband, the late Charles E. Dohme, a former president of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION. The lectures were given by Prof. Karl Freudenberg, Ph.D., director of the Chemical Institute of the University of Heidelberg. The subjects were: "Insulin," "Optical Activity and Configuration of Oxy- and Amino-Acids," "Recent Researches on Cellulose and Starch."

PERSONAL AND NEWS ITEMS.

Our fellow member, **Ivor Griffith**, has contributed a very interesting article to the April *Drug Topics* on how the mistakes of famous scientists have proved of benefit to humanity. He refers to Courtois in applying a strong acid to remove the scale from a vat in which he was making salts of potash; the result was the discovery of iodine. Perkins' use of the wrong reagent, seeking to make synthetic quinine, resulted in the production of aniline dyes. Dr. Ira Remsen was led to the discovery of saccharin by tasting of material from the laboratory, on his hands, while eating. Roentgen's discovery was more-or-less accidental. Kekule blundered upon his benzene structure by following a dream. Nobel blundered to his dynamite; an error of Goodyear led to his manufacture of hard rubber; etc. While these discoveries may be ascribed to errors, as a matter of fact scientific observation by the individuals named was largely responsible for the results.

At the Grand Council of Phi Delta Chi fraternity held in Columbus, **Dean Edward Spease** was presented with a beautiful watch in appreciation of five years of continuous and distinguished service in behalf of that fraternity.

The New York Pharmacist for March carried the message of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION to its readers—an appreciated evidence of service for pharmacy.

Secretary Hayman's *Bulletins* are informative and keep the membership of West Virginia Pharmaceutical Association in touch with things to happen. The Association celebrates its 25th anniversary in June.

President G. E. Heller and **Secretary A. L. I. Winne** have been planning for district meetings in Virginia and also for the State event—the Golden Anniversary of Virginia Pharmaceutical Association to be held at Virginia Beach, Cavalier Hotel, June 22nd-24th. **Chas. R. Claiborne** has been enthusing the veterans to assemble at a Luncheon during the convention.