

PHARMACY IN RETROSPECT.*

BY HUGH C. MULDOON.¹

Pharmacists are not skilled in the arts of personal and professional publicity. They are not propagandists. Seldom is their work spectacular or dramatic. As a class they are inarticulate, making little effort to tell the public about themselves and their work. Consequently many people fail to appreciate the true worth of the pharmacist and the service he renders.

Prevailing ideas regarding modern pharmacy and those who practice it are often far from the truth. People unconcernedly place their lives in the hands of their pharmacists, yet they really know very little about them, their knowledge, their skill, their training, their integrity, their legal control and supervision, their professional contacts. Because of this lack of knowledge and because of misinformation, pharmacists are sometimes disparaged, often misunderstood and sometimes condemned unfairly.

People who judge superficially, who take manifestations for essentials and manner for being, may not even believe that pharmacy is a profession; yet it has well-defined moral and ethical responsibilities; it has a body of expert knowledge not possessed by others outside of pharmacy; and as time goes on this special knowledge increases through research. Pharmacy has an impressive literature and an important group of distinguished educational institutions. The practice of the calling requires initiative, judgment and independent thought as well as a definite technique. These, we are told, are the marks of a true profession. Pharmacy has them all, but far too many people are not aware of it.

Only those who have been in close contact with the profession realize the enormous strides that have been taken in pharmacy during the past quarter century. Revision, advance, improvement, extension have followed each other in rapid succession until the training and education and status of the pharmacist are quite different from what they were when this branch of the A. P. H. A. was founded. Advances have been made in the fields of organization, legislation and education; and it is a source of congratulation that the progress has been made voluntarily by pharmacists themselves, and not as a result of pressure by some outside agency.

This branch of the A. P. H. A., situated strategically at the crossroads of the world, has had a unique opportunity to observe and study and appraise the advances that have been made. It has done more; it has been an active leader in demanding and effecting the changes.

Twenty-five years ago practicing pharmacists were often lonely men so far as other pharmacists were concerned. A competitor was considered a personal rival, a man with whom one would not be friendly, a man from whom one could not afford to learn. But as time showed the very real need for pharmacists to band together for mutual aid and protection, groups such as this, local, sectional, state and national, were formed in increasing numbers. Just before the inception of this branch, the N. A. R. D. was established to serve the commercial interests of the pharmacist. In 1900 the A. A. C. P. was organized. In 1904 the N. A. B. P. was formed. In the organization and conduct of all these organizations the members of the New York Branch have played a prominent part.

National and local organizations, including this particular group, have been active in securing legislation to protect the pharmacist and the public. They have fought for higher educational requirements. They have encouraged scientific pharmacy and pharmaceutical research. This New York Branch has the distinction of being the first to make an annual award for distinguished service to pharmacy—the Remington Medal—a fine recognition of the worth of a great pharmacist.

Of all the professions, pharmacy is the most carefully regulated by law. The many legal safeguards thrown around the profession show how highly important the work of the pharmacist is. There are regulations concerning the preliminary training of the pharmacist, the approval of colleges and the courses they offer, the licensing of graduate pharmacists, the registration, conduct and inspection of pharmacies, the sale of poisons, the adulteration of drugs and a hundred other things. These regulations are established by law or by ruling of State Boards of Pharmacy. For

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many years the New York Branch has been represented continuously on the New York State Board of Pharmacy, and these representatives together with other members of the Branch have worked long and faithfully in the cause of legislation.

The New York Branch has seen the passing of important national laws which have influenced the work of the pharmacist. The Pure Food and Drug Law of 1906, the Harrison Anti-Narcotic Act of 1914, the Prohibition Amendment and the Volstead Act of 1919 have all had marked effects. Prohibition has been almost tragic in its consequences. Whether he approved or not—and he did not—the pharmacist was made the legal distributor of liquor to the public. Petitioned by pharmacists, the government would provide no relief. In hordes, undesirables were attracted to the profession and upright pharmacists suffered. The obtaining of alcohol in small quantities was made so difficult that many retail pharmacists were unwilling any longer to prepare the remedies they had been accustomed to make. Manufacturing was diverted to the great commercial houses at a time when the pharmacist is better trained than ever before to prepare his own medicines. Professional pharmacy suffered a staggering blow. Modification of the prohibition laws seems inevitable. Relief for the pharmacist will come eventually, but the damage cannot be undone.

The New York Branch has always been keenly interested in education. Its efforts for a better and more satisfactory educational program have met with a measure of success. Since the turn of the century the advances in pharmaceutical education have been little short of amazing. New York was the first state to demand college training for pharmacists, and it established the requirement before all the other states were requiring college graduation even for physicians. Until 1918, even in New York state, only one year of high school preparation was required for entrance to a college course which then occupied two short school years of three days a week. Since 1925, four years of high school work have been demanded. The college course was later extended to three years, and beginning in September of this year, a minimum four-year course will be established in most of the schools of the eastern district represented here to-night.

The new curriculum will enable the colleges to give pharmacists a more adequate background, a broader culture and more diverse interests. Education in pharmacy will no longer be purely vocational. Student pharmacists should have an acquaintance with some of the finer things of life so that they may intelligently set up the high standards to which they should aspire, standards of excellence and merit by which they may appraise thought and action.

For almost the first time in pharmaceutical education, the student pharmacist will be permitted to elect a portion of his study program, enabling him to do special work in certain fields which may interest him. Until now the ordinary curriculum in pharmacy has been a Procrustean bed to which all students were forced to conform. Education is aimed at developing the talents and abilities bestowed upon us at birth. Since all men are not equally endowed, the personality and individuality of the student should be considered and respected. The man should finish college an educated individual, not a standardized unit. The new liberalized curriculum should train men to be bold, independent thinkers, men with minds which are not docile, men who dare question precedent and authority, men with ability to meet new situations.

Some of the finest pharmaceutical educators of this country, some of the greatest teachers of the century, are teachers in the five colleges of pharmacy of this district and members of this New York Branch of the A. P. H. A. I need not point them out to you. For many more than twenty-five years some of these men have been teaching pharmacists in the classroom and in the laboratory. They have themselves been actively engaged in research as well. They know that progress depends upon the discovery of new truth. The researches of these men may have been in pure or applied science. They may have been botanical, chemical, physical or pharmaceutical in character. The work may have been studies in the history or the literature of pharmacy; it may have been the botanical exploration of foreign countries, or the large-scale manufacturing of pharmaceuticals, or the assay and standardization of medicinals or studies of their adulteration; it may have been experimentation to improve the quality, uniformity, preservation and mode of administration of simple drugs, but in any case the research was superlatively well done by these scientists who are honored members of your group. Their accomplishments are known and appreciated not only locally and nationally, but throughout the world. Their influence will be felt for years to come, for they have taught to others the joy of creation and the pride of accomplishment.

It is by pharmacists such as these men that we ask that our profession shall be judged; by our best not by our poorest; not by our occasional incompetents, not by those blatantly commercial pharmacists who have little appreciation of the high responsibilities of their calling; not by our fringe of disreputables, renegade pharmacists who subscribe to no code of ethics. We want rather to be judged by that great body of upright pharmacists who can justly employ the motto of the old English apothecaries—*Opiferque per orbem dicor*—"And I am called the bringer of help throughout the world."

That motto applies most aptly to the members of this group, men who constantly strive to insure that the best traditions of our profession shall be honorably sustained.

We of the colleges, who are your guests, congratulate you upon having completed so creditably a quarter century of existence. Although your group would be justified in viewing the past with some measure of complacency, we know that you are rather looking forward into the future, considering the important tasks that are still ahead of you, many of which we feel sure will have been brought to a successful conclusion before we all meet together again in 1957 at your golden jubilee.

You have our best wishes.

PHARMACY IN PROSPECT.*

BY ROBERT P. FISCHELIS.¹

To a profession which measures the length of its services to mankind in terms of centuries, the celebration of a twenty-fifth anniversary may seem to be an event of small moment. It is doubtful, however, whether the forty centuries of recorded pharmaceutical history reveal any more startling changes in the practice of the healing arts than have come about in the twenty-five years since the New York Branch of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION was organized. It is altogether fitting and proper, therefore, that as we round the quarter-century mark in the history of this organization, we pause for a moment to view the past in retrospect and to gaze as far as possible into the fog which veils the future. The presence here to-night of the teachers of pharmacy from the College faculties of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and the District of Columbia and of the examiners and officers of State Boards of Pharmacy of the same political divisions, as guests of the New York Branch, lends to the occasion a scientific and professional atmosphere which emphasizes the importance of pharmacy in the field of medical care. The character of the technical discussions held by these respective groups during this day and to be continued to-morrow indicate the seriousness with which those who are engaged in teaching and testing pharmacists approach their responsibilities to the public. One needs only to glance at the program of papers and committee reports to realize that the duty of providing the public with competent pharmacists is indeed a serious business.

How far we have come in the past twenty-five years has been splendidly outlined to you by Dean Hugh C. Muldoon of the College of Pharmacy of Duquesne University. To tell you where we are going from here is the task assigned to me. The difficulties of the task are obvious. Yet we are in a better position to prognosticate in 1932 than we were in 1907. This is true only because for a number of years, fact-finding surveys have been under way in pharmacy as in other fields of endeavor. We may still guess but our guessing has been stabilized and improved through an accumulation of facts which, when classified, point to certain trends that show the direction in which men and things are heading.

It has been my pleasure to be associated for a number of years with the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care headed by Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, which was organized nearly five years ago to study the economic aspects of the prevention and care of sickness, including the adequacy, availability and compensation of the persons and agencies concerned.

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