

If we will definitely commit ourselves to an educational program that will place pharmacy on a parity with other liberally educated professions, and labor intelligently and persistently for that goal, there is reason to believe that society will eventually recognize the value of the professionally trained pharmacist, and that there will also remain a field for the activities of the merchant druggist.

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#### AN INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR CHEMICAL INFORMATION.

The Maison de la Chimie now under construction in Paris is to be the headquarters of the International Chemical Union which had its inception in the efforts of the late William Ostwald. A purpose is to avoid duplication by making this a central station for information. Organization of the library will be the first undertaking; it is to be very complete and to that end chemists are to contribute copies of their published works; lists of chemical substances with papers describing them, etc. The idea is to supply information and the further aim is to compile a comprehensive encyclopedic chemical dictionary. The abstracting journals represent duplication and are limited in degree. The project will be developed and of general usefulness to chemists and scientists generally. The idea of the American Institute of Pharmacy has in it a more or less related purpose.

#### HOSPITAL TRAGEDY.

Two ordinary white medicine bottles filled with brown liquid were exhibits at an inquest held at Dartford, Kent (Australia), recently. One contained belladonna and glycerin and one syrup of figs.

The belladonna had been given in mistake for syrup of figs by a young nurse to three patients in Livingstone Hospital, and one of them, Mrs. Beatrice Mary Summers, wife of a postman, had died. The other patients were progressing favorably. A verdict of "accidental death" was returned. No rider was added by the jury.

The widower said that his wife was progressing favorably after an operation. "When I visited her on Thursday night," he said, "she told me she was dying. I was asked to leave the ward, and was told that there had been a mistake. I was sent for about eight o'clock next morning, and my wife died shortly afterward."

Megan Davida James, aged seventeen, a probationer nurse, said she was told by a sister to administer aperients which were on a tray in the medicine cupboard. Medicines, embrocations and drugs were generally kept in the same cupboard, and there were no divisions between them.

Witness said she took what she thought was syrup of figs, but she afterward knew it to be belladonna and glycerin. Both were ordinary white glass bottles, and the labels were stained and almost illegible.

Sister Marion Hebborn said she could not say how or when the belladonna bottle came to be in the cupboard.

When the coroner questioned witness on the condition of the bottles she admitted that this should not be so. The witness fainted at this point, and had to be taken out of the room.

A doctor said he found Mrs. Summers showing signs of poisoning. Everything possible was done for her, but she died the next morning. He agreed that the bottle produced was not a suitable one in which to keep poison.

The matron of the hospital, Janet Shields Anderson, said she had asked the committee to provide another medicine cabinet, but it had not been done.

"There is no doubt that there was want of organization and supervision," said the coroner. He alluded to the youth of Nurse James, and said it was advisable that certificates of birth should be asked for when young nurses were appointed. This nurse should have served a much longer probation before taking on such responsibilities as giving medicine, he added. It was a most serious mistake, but all the blame could not be put on the nurse. The coroner said he hoped that the hospital authorities would also see that proper accommodation was provided for the keeping of drugs. The labels on the bottles were most unsatisfactory.—*The Australasian Journal of Pharmacy.*