

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

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DEPARTMENT.

Perhaps no subject taught in colleges of pharmacy has changed as much in the past decade as has the subject of chemistry, especially organic chemistry. This explains the amount of time, attention and thought that has been given to this subject in the meeting of our teachers' conferences. The importance of it cannot be overemphasized. The papers by Dr. Jenkins and Professor Harrod are worthy of careful study by all teachers of organic pharmaceutical chemistry.—
C. B. JORDAN, *Editor*.

TEACHING ORGANIC PHARMACEUTICAL CHEMISTRY.

BY GLENN L. JENKINS.*

NEED FOR MORE EMPHASIS.

The changing trend in *Materia Medica* has resulted, in many instances, in the partial or complete replacement of many natural drugs by pure chemicals. This tendency toward the more extensive use of pure chemicals, whether they are isolated from natural sources or made synthetically, has placed an ever-increasing responsibility and amount of subject matter upon those who teach chemistry in colleges of pharmacy. The burden falls especially to the lot of those who teach organic chemistry. Sufficient cognizance of the change that has occurred and is occurring has not been made in formulating new curricula. A casual perusal of the latest edition of *The Pharmaceutical Syllabus* and of *The Prescription Ingredient Survey* by Gathercoal furnishes evidence of this fact. In the *Pharmaceutical Syllabus* under the outline of the required course in pharmacognosy is written, "The course should include every crude vegetable or animal drug that the pharmacist is likely to be called upon to sell or dispense. The order of emphasis should be determined by the order of importance and the order of importance should be determined by usefulness and extent of use by pharmacists, physicians and laity." A primary list of drugs to be studied in detail as well as a secondary list of drugs to be studied less thoroughly is appended. The primary list includes such drugs as *Apocynum*, *Chirata*, *Matricaria*, *Pepo* and *Xanthoxylum*. The secondary list includes such drugs as *Absinthium*, *Adonis*, *Aletris*, *Aralia*, *Berberis*, *Geranium*, *Juglans*, *Mezereum*, *Rumex*, *Sassafras Pith*, *Trifolium*, *Triticum* and a host of others. The *Prescription Ingredient Survey* shows that these drugs and their preparations are seldom if ever used in prescriptions.

The only required course of instruction treating of organic chemicals in *The Syllabus* is the basic course in Organic Chemistry; a course that should be restricted in scope to the teaching of the fundamentals of organic chemistry, theory and practice. It should be obvious that this elementary course is not given sufficient time in the average curriculum to cover both the fundamentals of organic chemistry and the chemistry of the many complex and diverse types of organic chemicals used as medicaments. The irrationality of the situation is augmented when the importance and extent of use of such chemicals as the alkaloids, volatile

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