

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

C. B. JORDAN—CHAIRMAN OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, A. A. C. P., EDITOR OF THIS
DEPARTMENT.

The following paper by Dean Robert C. Wilson, President of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, offers a challenge to the Faculty of every college of pharmacy in the United States. Have we, in our desire to stress professional training and turn out more graduates, been derelict in our duty to the state, the nation and our profession by giving too little attention to the question of the character of those we graduate?

I believe that Dean Wilson is correct when he says, "We have not been *too* careful as to the technical and scientific qualifications of those men and women, and we have been tragically careless as to their qualifications of character. . . ." With the longer curriculum we now have more time to give to character-building courses and to the study of the personality of our students. Every member of the instructional force should consider it his duty to become well acquainted with every one of his students, to study their reactions and to impress upon them the importance of those qualifications that go to make up good character. If the student fails to respond, is indifferent or opposed to the ideals of pharmacy and good citizenship, this should be an excellent reason for refusing to graduate him, regardless of how well he is technically prepared.

Until the Code of Pharmaceutical Ethics becomes a *living force* in the business and professional conduct of our pharmacists and in the training of the young men and young women who enter pharmacy, the unsatisfactory conditions pointed out by Dean Wilson will continue to exist.—
C. B. JORDAN, *Editor*.

WHAT STEPS, IF ANY, CAN BE TAKEN BY THE BOARDS AND COLLEGES TO GUARANTEE TO THE PROFESSION AND TO THE PUBLIC THAT ONLY THOSE OF SUCH ETHICAL AND MORAL CHARACTER AS WILL REFLECT CREDIT UPON THE PROFESSION OF PHARMACY WILL BE ADMITTED TO ITS RANKS?*

ROBERT C. WILSON.¹

University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

As a tragic evidence of what is happening to Pharmacy in the mind of the public, our Pharmacy Building, THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHARMACY, was recently referred to by a distinguished writer and a man of wide influence throughout America as "The Tomb of the Unknown Pharmacist." This prompted the title of this paper, which is the query submitted to the various District Boards and College groups. Get the full significance of this observation which was not intended as a slur on Pharmacy, but which may so easily be construed as such, *A Tomb*, denoting death—*The Unknown Pharmacist*, denoting the fact that the building represents some *one* or some *thing* of which we may have heard, but of which there is no living example. This should shock us into the realization that if, while there is yet time, we would salvage anything of value from the wreck we have allowed the public to believe has come to us, our program for the future must be so shaped that THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHARMACY, rather than a *Tomb*, will become in the minds of the public a *Flaming Torch*, and an inspiration to *us* to place Pharmacy in the front ranks of all professional, ethical and scientific activities.

* District No. 4, Boards and Colleges, La Fayette, Indiana, March 27, 1936; also District No. 2, Boards and Colleges, Atlantic City, March 9, 1936.

¹ President of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

In any movement which is directed toward the improvement of conditions in an institution we must consider the historical background, what the present trends and practices are, and how its future must be shaped so as to bring into fulfilment the ideals and ambitions we hold for it. It is axiomatic that these ideals and ambitions be of the noblest order.

When the true history of Pharmacy has been written from the standpoint of the cold facts revealed therein, I believe that it will reveal, among other important things, the fact that the foundations upon which it was built rest upon bed-rock, are capable of carrying a structure of the noblest proportions and this structure should be consecrated to an effort of real scientific achievement and an active spirit of service.

As typified by the condition we find in Pharmacy to-day, which is an omen of what it may be in the future, can we be proud of the structure we have erected? As judged by other professional groups and by an observing public, the structure we have erected perhaps reflects an image far removed from the character of edifice such a foundation promised.

There must be ways and means by which the present structure may be razed and a new structure reared, commensurate with the dignity and solidarity of the original foundation. This becomes your responsibility and mine, if, profiting by the mistakes and the false gods of the past, we are to have a structure of which we and those who are to follow, may have just cause to be proud.

It is a well-known historical fact, which is repeating itself from day to day, that any worth-while institution is built around the personality, the character and the ideals of some one individual or group of individuals. Our drug stores throughout America are manned by individuals. Each store is a separate unit, and has identified with it some one individual around whose personality and character and ideals the reputation of the business depends. This individual, therefore, by his conduct and by the type of institution he directs, will inevitably determine, in the minds of those with whom he is identified, what Pharmacy is and what it stands for, not only in that community, but throughout America.

In this advanced age, distance and sections are eliminated. It is a tragic fact that a one-man drug store in Georgia, in Maine, in Washington or in California, by its conduct, involving errors of omission or of commission, may discredit the entire profession of Pharmacy throughout America and for an unlimited period of time.

Many factors have contributed to the condition in which Pharmacy finds itself to-day, *chief among which can be very definitely proved to be our failure to more properly and carefully select those who have been allowed to enter the practice of Pharmacy.* We have not been *too careful* as to the technical and scientific qualifications of those men and women, and *we have been tragically careless* as to their qualifications of character and have therein failed in our primary responsibility to the institution to which we have committed our lives, our hopes and our dreams. In this neglect we become individually and collectively guilty.

It is a human trait on the part of each of us to watch and judge our fellows, and that is equally true of institutions. Each of us, therefore, must recognize that the institution of which we are a part is being judged by what may be revealed by our individual and group conduct. As painful as the realization may be, the responsibility is ever upon us and no one but a coward would attempt to evade it.

There are approximately sixty thousand drug stores in America. Through these stores, in the course of time, the entire population of America filters, coming into contact, and rather intimate contact, with some Pharmacist. By reason of this contact, these pharmacists have an opportunity to exert an influence of the highest order with the people of the Nation, and naturally the people through contact with these men, have the opportunity to judge the character and the ideals of pharmacy.

We have just passed through an era in which mass production has been the controlling fetish. Schools of Pharmacy and Boards of Pharmacy have not been immune since it was a recognized principle that numbers count, and that volume must be produced, regardless of quality.

We find ourselves at the present time in the midst of a reverse order of things, and it is an opportune time for pharmacy to begin a general process of reconstruction, based upon the principle of quality rather than quantity. This becomes the responsibility of the Boards and Colleges of America.

The passage of prerequisite legislation in most of the states is not the solution to our problem—it is but a step. The solution must come at the hands of individuals composing our Boards and Colleges, and they, if they see their responsibility clearly, must be guided by a spirit of consecration. Individual pharmacists and pharmaceutical groups must accept the responsibility of demanding that only those of proper character be chosen to fill positions on our Boards and in our college faculties.

Reference has frequently been made to the possibility that pharmaceutical education is in a chaotic state. As I contact educators in different lines of work, and come to know more of educational practices throughout America, I am not so sure but that our entire educational program may be in a chaotic state. The factors which we have omitted in our educational program, be it pharmaceutical or otherwise, constitute the most important cause of failure of any educational program. Chief among these failures on the part of general educational programs, as well as specialized educational programs, such as pharmacy and other professional fields, is the important fact that we have not stressed to the proper extent the items of personality and general character of those to whom we have granted degrees. Educational institutions should, above all things, be concerned with the development of proper ideals of citizenship in their students and graduates. Pharmacists above all others should be good citizens, because of the fact that they have such a wide opportunity for influence with the people of America. Regardless of how much technical education we may give our pharmacists, if we cannot guarantee to the public that, in addition to these qualities, they also possess the qualifications of good citizenship which carries with it the responsibility of influencing others in all of those matters pertaining to good citizenship, we have failed in our primary responsibility.

Our schools and colleges of pharmacy should be in the hands of only those who themselves have the proper qualities of character, and who know the qualifications a man should have who is to assume the responsibilities of a pharmacist. They should, disregarding entirely the matter of enrolment in their institutions, select only those of their students who have, by their conduct, by their personality and by their ability to absorb the technical training, proved their fitness to enter the

profession of pharmacy and to represent it to the public in its highest professional sense.

A school or college of pharmacy should have such an intimate acquaintance with the general character and fitness of its students that graduation would constitute a recommendation to the people of the state that this graduate is worthy of their confidence and respect, and to the retail proprietors, that the graduate is of such character that the faculty members themselves would not hesitate to employ this man, and trust him with all of the responsibilities of a business.

The Boards of Pharmacy should assure themselves and the public that the technical training is of the proper scope and character; and further, that applicants for license must produce proper evidence of integrity, sobriety, faithfulness to professional ethics and a sense of responsibility to properly influence the public with whom they come into contact.

The personnel of our Boards of Pharmacy must be more carefully chosen. Too often in the past, men have been chosen for these important positions on the basis of personal popularity, or for political expediency or because of the insistence of some self-seeker. In the future, if we would safeguard the good name of pharmacy, we must choose Board members on the basis of their personal character and technical and educational attainments, and who, having the proper ideals themselves, can more intelligently pass upon the qualifications of those who are to be permitted to enter the practice of pharmacy.

In the choice of our leaders, in our local, state and national pharmaceutical organizations, we should and must eliminate those who, for selfish purposes, seek positions of leadership, and commandeer those who, by their character, training and ideals are fully qualified to represent pharmacy in America.

When and if we may be able to bring into fulfilment such standards as these for those who will represent pharmacy in the future, pharmacy will have assured for itself the highest place in the minds of the American public and other professional groups. We will have then created a structure commensurate with the high purpose of the original founders of the Associations of the Boards and the Colleges of Pharmacy, whose responsibility is that of selecting and training those who are to represent pharmacy in the future. Those selected must be of such ethical and professional character that **THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHARMACY**, which represents us to the public, may not again be referred to as *The Tomb of the Unknown Pharmacist*.

A. PH. A. STUDENT BRANCHES.

See Council Letters for organization of A. Ph. A. Student Branches. Kentucky and Mississippi Student Branches have been organized. Dean G. L. Curry is the faculty adviser of the former and Dean E. L. Hammond of the latter. There are great opportunities in these organizations, not the least a closer

relation of the members of the student body and of the faculty; acquainting pharmacists with the pharmacy course and the faculty with the needs of pharmacists. In some instances the relation has been too distant and this applies not infrequently to the relation in universities of the medical branches. *The relationship should develop a friendship helpful to the members of these professions.*
