

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

ERNEST LITTLE—CHAIRMAN OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, A. A. C. P., EDITOR OF THIS
DEPARTMENT.

The presidential address of Dean Robert C. Wilson, delivered before the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy at the annual convention held at Dallas, Texas, on August 24th and 25th, is given below in its entirety.

It has been spoken of by many as constituting one of the most challenging addresses of recent years.

Former presidents have shown great skill and vision in making recommendations relative to the proper organization and functioning of colleges of pharmacy. Such recommendations have been very largely followed out by our Association, as is evidenced by the splendid progress which has been made in pharmaceutical education during the past decade.

Dean Wilson's address is unique in that it contains no definite recommendations, as is usually the case. It does, however, put before us, in very definite form, several challenges which penetrate to the very heart and soul of pharmacy and pharmaceutical education; challenges which we must regard and heed if pharmaceutical education is to continue to make the progress for which we all hope.

I sincerely hope that Dean Wilson's paper will be carefully read and thoroughly studied by all our members.—ERNEST LITTLE.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY.*

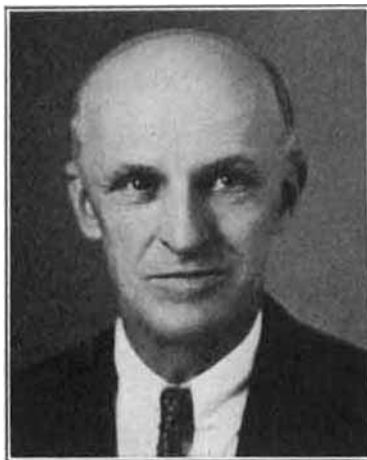
BY ROBERT C. WILSON.

Fellow Members:

The detail activities of the Association during the year, not already of common knowledge, will be revealed in the various Committee reports, and I will not burden you at this time with a review of these activities. I am, however, taking advantage of this opportunity to discuss with you some of the problems confronting American Pharmacy, for the existence of which and for the solution of which, the schools of pharmacy must assume a large share of responsibility.

In a material age such as that through which we are now passing, professional education, along with all education, has felt the urge to adjust itself to materialistic demands, entirely forgetful of the high principles by which it alone should have been guided. The result is that we find ourselves to-day in the midst of doubt and uncertainty—doubt as to the wisdom of our past activities or lack of them, and uncertainty as to how to plan for the future.

That there has been a breakdown in the former high ideals and ethical standards of the professions and the high regard in which they were held, I think no one can deny.



ROBERT C. WILSON.

* Dallas, Texas, August 24, 1936.

In Law, Medicine, Teaching, Preaching, Pharmacy or whatever the profession, conditions have been allowed to develop whereby the erstwhile ideals and standards have been obscured at the hands of those, who, for expediency or for ulterior motives, have appropriated the professions to their personal advantage. They have ignored or forgotten the principle that the franchise, under which a profession operates and is thereby distinguished from secular activities, is granted only under the assumption or theory that the profession will function in the interest of society, and not in the interest of an individual or group of individuals.

This breakdown in professional standards is directly chargeable to the professional schools through whose doors each year come an increasing number of young men and women, who, because of the failure of the school to inculcate proper conceptions of ideals, adjust themselves to existing conditions and practices as they find them in the field and thus continue the vicious cycle.

There appears to be some evidence that professional schools, here and there, rather than struggle to set up and maintain their own conception of ideals and standards, are dictated to or subsidized by interests which would use them for their selfish objectives. They seem to have passively submitted rather than combat those practices which destroy professional ideals and standards.

True professional practice in America is threatened unless and until our professional schools rechart their course and recognize and assume the responsibility of guiding professional practices into channels of high ethical and spiritual character.

It is granted of course that each professional school, if it is to function effectively, must be provided with proper faculty personnel and physical equipment, but it must be recognized at the same time that technical training constitutes but one phase of professional training. One cannot conceive of a more potentially dangerous influence in society than highly trained professional individuals who lack the fundamental elements of character, and who do not have a proper conception of their responsibilities in the utilization of their professional training.

Thinking along this line, and recognizing that a true diagnosis of the problems and practices in Pharmacy, if not made at our hands, will be made by other agencies not of our choosing; and that such a diagnosis will reveal some things the knowledge of which may be painful and which if not removed or modified will result in a delayed and doubtful prognosis, I have set up the following "Standard of measurement for professional schools" by which I will check my own school and ask you to check yours. Frankness and honesty force me to recognize that my failures have been many, but at the same time, I recognize that my opportunities and responsibilities are equally many.

"A STANDARD OF MEASUREMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS."

1. A professional school does not justify its existence and maintenance if it concerns itself only with curricula and other mechanical details, and, at the same time, fails to assume leadership in the promotion of proper ideals in its respective field.
2. It fails in its responsibility if it does not acquaint itself with conditions and practices and trends as they actually exist in that respective field, and, properly diagnosing them, exercise a proper influence in correcting and directing them.
3. It fails if it does not concern itself with the personal character of its graduates so as to insure men and women of the highest type by whose conduct and ability that profession will be judged by the public and other professional groups; and to take such steps as may be possible to see that these graduates continue to be guided by high standards of character.

4. It fails if it does not actively identify itself with all proper agencies within the profession which have for their aim the improvement of conditions and the setting up and maintenance of standards, and exercise a proper influence upon these agencies.

5. It fails if it is not manned by individuals of broad vision, who have not only a deep love for their profession and an intimate knowledge of its problems, but who also have the proper conception of and responsibility for a real spirit of service; and if it does not imbue its students with these ideals of and responsibility for service to society rather than for personal gain.

6. It fails if it does not know the qualifications of character, of vision, of personality and of fitness a person should have who is to participate in that profession; and, who, by the application of these qualities, would be capable of influencing and have a desire to influence constructive changes for the improvement and more proper functioning of that profession.

7. It fails if its students have not been so impressed that they have a respect for and confidence in its ideals, and, on leaving the school, may continue to be guided by it.

A DISCUSSION OF THESE ITEMS AS THEY RELATE TO PHARMACY.

1. Like other professional groups, Pharmacy operates under a franchise which distinguishes it from secular activities. The practice of any profession involves the application of certain spiritual qualities, indefinable though they may be, but without which the influence of ideals would be impossible. The hope of Pharmacy in America lies in this intangible and indefinable factor of ideals and idealism, and our schools of pharmacy must assume the responsibility of their inculcation in our students. Without the influence of ideals, the franchise under which we operate as a profession will be nullified.

Herein Lies a Challenge! Dare We Accept It?

2. The practices and trends which have crept insidiously into American Pharmacy, if not corrected, will relegate Pharmacy to a non-professional status. These practices and trends which are familiar to each of us in all of their gruesomeness have been allowed to develop without the guiding hand of the schools of pharmacy. The schools have failed to observe and direct these practices either because of indifference, or of timidity, or of a lack of interest, or of an appreciation of their significance.

From a study of the catalogs, we find that the curricula have been altered to meet the new conditions produced by the spirit of commercialism which has been allowed to pervade Pharmacy, whereas, recognizing and properly evaluating these conditions, our curricula should have been made more definitely professional in character.

We have seen the proprietary medicine interests prey upon the professional name of Pharmacy, and make of our graduates purveyors of their products, which in many cases were of most unethical character and calculated to debase Pharmacy in the public consciousness. And now that the large monied interests are dominating the proprietary medicine markets, they have "smitten the hand which fed them," and promote the sale of their products in other channels, never having had any real regard for Pharmacy except to use it for their own ulterior motives and profit.

It is a sad picture to contemplate the vast amount of time, of energy and of money which have been spent in recent years, under the guise of protecting Pharmacy, in an effort to circumscribe manufacturing interests by legislative enactments so that these products, unethical though many of them may be, will be forced back into the drug stores. This situation is analogous to the withdrawal of a nar-

cotic from an addict which for a time relieves the pain but which in the end results in wreck and misery. Except for feeble efforts here and there our schools of pharmacy have failed to recognize their responsibilities in this premise. *Herein lies a challenge! Dare we accept it?*

The development of the chain drug store idea has been a potent factor in the destruction of professional ideals and standards in Pharmacy, and has forced independent operators to meet this type of competition at the expense of the professional phases of their business. There are thousands of drug stores in America today which formerly were ethical places of business, but which have now been converted into lunch rooms, department stores, et cetera. This seemed to be necessary to meet the competition of merchandising establishments which have appropriated the good name of Pharmacy as a decoy to attract the public. The chain drug store is of course operated solely for the dollar involved, and is controlled by groups of individuals who have no professional background or responsibility. To merchandise under the good name of Pharmacy is the factor which is responsible for the large influx of undesirables into Pharmacy in recent years. If Pharmacy in America is to be dominated and controlled by these interests, or the principles which guide them, our schools of pharmacy will have no field in which to operate or function as professional institutions, for professional practices and principles have no real place in "chain" plans.

Here again our schools of pharmacy have lent themselves to materialistic demands since it is rather common to find a catalog statement to the effect that among the opportunities for our graduates are "managers for chain stores." *May God Forbid!*

There is no analogous situation to this in other professional fields—no chain law—no chain medicine—no chain dentistry—no chain nursing—no chain teaching—no chain engineering—*Why under high heavens chain pharmacy?*

Herein lies a challenge! Dare we accept it?

3. No profession can be evaluated more highly than the personal character of its individual practitioners, and it will be so judged. It therefore behooves our schools of pharmacy to assure the public and those already engaged in the practice of pharmacy that the graduates from our schools have the proper qualities of character as well as the proper technical training. If it is the earnest desire of our schools of pharmacy to elevate the profession and practice of Pharmacy, it becomes their first responsibility to see that those to whom degrees are granted are of proper character and will uphold professional ideals and standards wherever they may go.

There are many thousands practicing Pharmacy to-day in America who have not had the opportunity of contact with a school of pharmacy or individuals or agencies which might influence professional practices and ideals. So long as this group is an integral part of American Pharmacy, the schools of pharmacy owe them an obligation, and if the schools have anything of value to offer they should assume the responsibility of influencing this group and rendering them every possible service.

If schools of pharmacy are to serve the profession of Pharmacy, and through it the public, there is a definite sphere in which they may operate in the inculcation of proper ideals in their graduates and in those who have not been exposed to such influences heretofore.

Herein lies a challenge! Dare we accept it?

There is within every state, a State Pharmaceutical Association, a State Board of Pharmacy and a State Law Enforcement Agency. In addition to these, we have our National groups, the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, the National Association of Retail Druggists, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, the Conference of Law Enforcement Officers, the Conference of State Association Secretaries, in addition to our American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Enough organizations and agencies, it would seem, to meet every need, but there still must be something radically wrong somewhere when, with all these agencies, the question we constantly ask ourselves, "What is the matter with Pharmacy?" is itself an admission of the fact.

Article "2" of the Constitution of most of the State and National Associations, in which the "object" of the Association is set forth, is usually an array of words beautifully portraying the part the Association should play in the promotion of scientific and professional activities.

But if we are to judge from the programs of most of the annual meetings of these Associations, one would assume that once the "object" is properly defined, it is promptly forgotten. We should consider that these gatherings of various pharmaceutical groups under the auspices of Pharmacy, advertise and represent it to the public, and, in the main except for feeble efforts here and there, fail to devote any part of their programs to scientific or professional discussions. The absence of these features is not only an indication that practicing pharmacists (many of whom are our graduates) have no interest in them, but that the schools of pharmacy are likewise indifferent to them or shirk their responsibilities.

Herein lies a challenge! Dare we accept it?

The fact that the membership in the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, whose object is to represent and promote professional and ethical interests, has suffered a severe loss in recent years; while the National Association of Retail Druggists, whose object is to represent the commercial interests, has shown a corresponding increase in membership, is but another indication of the loss of interest on the part of retail pharmacists in professional activities. The schools have failed to keep the fires burning!

There may be a proper place for both of these National Associations, but there should be and must be some proper coördination of their efforts if they are to render the best service to American Pharmacy. They both need, perhaps, the tempering influence one of the other; but if State and National Associations are to safely, sanely and properly function in the interest of American Pharmacy, there should be and must be some method of affiliation or coördination devised between all these groups whereby there could be some one group to speak for American Pharmacy and direct its destinies. No house divided against itself, as the house of Pharmacy seems to be, can hope to stand.

Herein lies a challenge! Dare we accept it?

4. Recognizing the splendid start that has been made in coördinating the work of the Boards and Colleges, there must be a still closer tie-in between these agencies in the development of a more careful method of selecting those to whom degrees and licenses are granted, if we would properly safeguard the good name of Pharmacy and give it a dignified and proper place in American life.

There remains much yet to be done in the writing and passage of proper Pharmacy Laws in the various states, and a more definite relationship established between the Boards and Colleges on the one hand and the Law Enforcement Agencies on the other. No Law Enforcement Agency can properly and effectively function without the sympathetic understanding and coöperative effort of all pharmaceutical interests.

When and if a proper coördination and spirit of coöperation can be established between the Schools and Boards, between the Schools and Law Enforcement Agencies, between the Schools and the various State and National Associations, and an interlocking relationship established between all of these agencies, we will then have taken some definite step toward pointing our efforts to the solution of the immediate problems of Pharmacy, and assure for it a definite, dignified and orderly place in the future.

Herein lies a challenge! Dare we accept it?

5. Service is a function or quality which in our thought has become definitely associated with all ethical and professional practices. It involves contributing or rendering to others or to a cause without hope of personal reward except for an inner satisfaction from the consciousness of a duty well done.

Pharmacy is definitely a service profession, and under present conditions renders a high type of service to more individuals of America than any other profession. The pharmacists of America come into intimate contact almost daily with the entire population of America, and thereby have an opportunity, to a far greater extent than is true of any other group, to advise in matters of health, of general scientific nature, and in many matters affecting the personal and family life of the entire people of America. Their contacts being so many in number and so varied in scope, pharmacists should be of the highest ethical character, and scientifically qualified to perform a most important function in American life.

Herein lies a challenge to our schools of pharmacy, if we dare accept it, to influence those already operating drug stores to recognize and assume the responsibility for service; and to prepare our graduates from the standpoint of character, of fitness, of vision, and of scientific knowledge and viewpoint to assume their responsibilities and realize upon this opportunity to place Pharmacy definitely in the forefront of the professions.

6. The criticism is being made, and perhaps justly so, that our college faculties are composed of individuals who are theorists and have no actual knowledge of the conditions and problems in Pharmacy. To what extent this criticism is justified, is left to your judgment to determine. But I agree in principle that no school of Pharmacy can intelligently prepare its graduates to assume their proper place in retail or other pharmaceutical activity unless it has an intimate acquaintance with existing conditions and problems, and with the qualifications of fitness an individual should have who is to practice Pharmacy.

As the result of carelessness or indifference of the Colleges and Boards of Pharmacy in the matter of qualifications of fitness for those who have entered the practice of Pharmacy, there has naturally crept into its ranks an appreciable number of individuals, who, by no reasonable standard of measurement of fitness, of character or training, could be classed as professional practitioners. And so long as they

remain in Pharmacy or their number materially increases they will constitute a menace to its good name and professional status.

Herein lies a challenge! Dare we accept it?

7. Our colleges, universities and professional schools spend much time and energy in an effort to build up strong Alumni organizations. I believe a survey would reveal that those institutions having the most loyal and interested group of Alumni would be shown to be those whose ideals and standards have been maintained on the highest level; and, who, having so impressed their students with these ideals and standards, are thought of by them in after years with confidence and affection and will continue to serve as guides to them. It is such factors as these which make it possible to build up and maintain worth-while college and professional traditions, and not athletic or other spectacular activities unless they are secondary to and involve the same ideals and standards. A college or school or university without traditions of the highest order, has somewhere fallen short of its opportunities; and the cause in whose interests it was supposed to function would have progressed farther and on a much higher level had it never existed.

Pharmaceutical traditions must begin with and continue to be maintained by our schools of pharmacy if we would unify all pharmaceutical interests toward the creation of a heritage for future generations of which they would have cause to feel proud and which they would sacredly guard.

Regardless of how seriously I may have painted the picture of the problems of American Pharmacy, I am not pessimistic over its future, for I believe that within its ranks there are those with ability enough, with character enough, with vision enough and with courage enough to solve existing problems and cope with any which may arise in the future.

I feel that introspection such as this may be worth our while individually and collectively, and, if in your judgment, there is any worthwhile thought in this discussion which may be worthy of further study, I recommend that such matters be referred to the Committee on Problems and Plans for their further study and recommendations.

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Harvard University is celebrating its three hundredth anniversary. The occasion is a memorable one; scientists and philosophic thinkers from all parts of the learned world are visitors at the ceremonials of the venerable institution.