

THE CONTINUOUS REVISION OF THE NATIONAL FORMULARY
SHOULD IMPROVE MEDICO-PHARMACEUTIC RELATIONS.

BY BERNARD FANTUS.*

The "get-together movement" of physicians and pharmacists in recent years originated with the mutual desire to gain the advantages of the use of official medicines in prescriptions. The success of the "pharmaceutical speciality" has been merited by its elegance, its permanence and its efficiency.

Adequate reasons have existed during the past several decades, other than the gullibility of doctors and the potency of high-pressure salesmen, for the marked use in prescriptions of "pharmaceutical specialities:" the preparations in our books of official standards have failed to meet the "speciality" of the manufacturer as to elegance, tastefulness and pharmaceutical perfection.

Among doctors prescribing has largely become a lost art. The new science of Pharmacology has displaced the former teaching of *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics to so great a degree that, while the modern doctor knows much more about how medicines act, he knows much less how to prescribe them.

The remedy lies not merely in doctors and druggists getting acquainted, in good fellowship meetings, in "sampling" doctors, but also and chiefly in rendering service equally reliable as the one now offered. This should not be difficult. It would be easy were pharmacists willing to pay the price. This price is pharmaceutical research and the publicity thereof. Through his official books the pharmacist has gotten into the habit of getting his formulas for nothing, excepting as he pays for the books containing them. The pharmaceutical speciality manufacturer, on the other hand, subjects his formulas to research, pharmaceutical as well as clinical, and he knows they must be good before he invests the large sums of money necessary to advertise the products to make a financial success of them. Have all our N. F. formulas been developed with so great care?

The establishment of the new Research Laboratory of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION should usher in a new era in Pharmacy research. It will cost some money; but, whatever the sum, it will be a good investment.

The remedy for the unsatisfactory medico-pharmaceutic relation then lies in our official books and, most especially, in the National Formulary. Were the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION to adopt the principle: "Every N. F. formula a pharmaceutical masterpiece," physicians would become interested in these formulas, especially if the effort were made to include in the National Formulary the "best administration forms for each and every important remedy." If, *e. g.*, the Syrup of Bromide, the Syrup of Iron, the Syrup of Codeine were known to the physician to represent the most palatable administration form of these remedies that modern pharmaceutical art can desire, he would be only too glad to avail himself of these preparations. It therefore behooves Pharmacy to get in line with modern developments, to cleanse its Formulary of old-fashioned elixirs and mixtures, to see to it that physicians find it in formulas for medicines as good as any manufacturer can prepare, medicines so much more acceptable because there is no secrecy surrounding their composition, and so much more economic to the patient.

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The new type of N. F. Committee that has already been instituted, the newly established A. Ph. A. Laboratory and the monthly publication of the *National Formulary Bulletin* provide for the continuous revision of the National Formulary. The "leading pharmacists" in each locality will now have the opportunity to actually cooperate with the National Formulary in the making. The "detailing" of physicians with improved preparations under discussion for possible inclusion in the National Formulary, or the acquainting of physicians with new preparations just adopted by the N. F. Revision Committee, will bring a new and zestful approach to physicians. Reporting the acceptance or criticisms of the new preparation under discussion will make possible an actual nation-wide collaboration by the medical and pharmaceutical profession in the improvement of the Formulary. "Get-together-meetings" of pharmacists and physicians will acquaint each group with the progress that is being made, and to accomplish this progress, each needs the cooperation of the other.

Medico-pharmaceutical relations will become better, as these good relations between physicians and pharmacists are deserved.

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS AND U. S. P.-N. F. PROMOTION.

Thirty-seven of the state pharmaceutical associations now have committees which are actively promoting programs to bring about closer cooperation between pharmacists, physicians and dentists, and to promote the use of official preparations. These committees are taking the leadership in their respective states and splendid progress is being made.

The first conference of these committees was held during the Minneapolis meeting at which a majority of the committees were represented. A very good exhibit was arranged to show what is being done by these committees and the exhibit brought favorable comment. A similar conference and exhibit will be arranged for the Atlanta meeting. An information bulletin will be sent regularly to the committees and each committee is requested to furnish samples of the material it uses to the A. Ph. A. headquarters for distribution to the other committees and for preservation.

It is expected that this program will encourage the other states to appoint committees for these very important activities and will lead to a well coordinated national movement.

An Interprofessional Program was opened in Wisconsin on October 27th, 1938, under the direction of chairman Emil C. Horn when the pharmacists entertained the members of the Milwaukee Medical Society. Dr. Bernard Fantus and Mr. O. U. Sisson of Chicago were the guest speakers. President Gordon of the Medical Society paid a fine tribute to the program and predicted its success. Chairman Charles V. Selby is carrying on an active program by mail with the physicians in West Virginia and has the active cooperation of the Medical Society and its official Journal, which has carried several strong editorials.

Chairman Andrews in Maryland is continuing the program he has carried on with physicians and dentists for several years through meetings and the distribution of cards giving prescriptions and other information. Chairman Wallace of Mississippi is promoting a program very successfully under the direction of the Board of Pharmacy and has been invited to speak before several neighboring state associations.

Similar programs have been developed along these lines in other states.

Pharmacology, Materia Medica and Therapeutics, by CHARLES SOLOMON, M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, Long Island College of Medicine; Junior attending Physician and Chief of the Medical Clinic, Jewish Hospital of Brooklyn; author of "Prescription Writing and Formulary of the Jewish Hospital of Brooklyn," "The Traffic in Health," collaborator, HAZEL HOUSTON, R. N. Third Edition. 693 pages. Price, \$3.00. Publishers J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, Pa. The reorganization of the third edition coincides with the Unit Plan of the New Curriculum Guide. It conforms to U. S. P. IX and Supplement and N. F. VI.