

Editorial

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Thanksgiving.

HOW much there is expressive in this homely, old Anglo-Saxon word. How it appeals to the heart, stimulating the better nature of all mankind.

A delightful day, with its crisp air; its hint of winter's joys; its home-gatherings, with union of those long-separated; its jollity and its feasting; a day when all America can unite in heart-felt thankfulness that the Mayflower and her little, feeble band, seeking for political and religious freedom, came at last to their destination, and made a safe haven on "the stern and rock-bound" coast of New England, even though their highest achievement had been but this day.

We of the pharmaceutical world have much to be thankful for. We have the joy of living, the pleasures of helpfulness to others, to those who are sick and ailing. Much to be thankful for! Why, the whole world is before us to make us glad. The whole world? No, to our sorrow, we regret that, not the whole world, for across the sea there is much to make us sad. But, perhaps, with all, out of this *debacle* may come a better and a higher life for the peoples of Europe. "God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," and it may be that from the cruel war will come great good to the whole world. Out of the storm and stress of the French Revolution came the freedom of the *paysan*, the abolishment of arrogant nobility and liberty for the people. Some one has said that that Revolution was the first attempt to make the "Golden Rule" effective in this world, and perhaps out of this cruel strife will come another step toward that glorious end; one which will destroy that devilish paraphrase of that splendid rule of Life, which, enunciated by David Harum, has done incalculable harm to the world. "Do others before they do you, and do it first," is a devil's rule of life. Out of this strife, cruel and terrible though it be, may come to the people of these warring countries, the knowledge that they and they alone, are "THE STATE," and that all men are brothers, children of One Great Father. Kings, Emperors, Kaisers and nobles may learn that, "*Dei Gratia*," there is nothing higher or nobler in this world than a true man. That he alone is the NOBLEMAN, who is ennobled by his deeds and by his character, not by his birth.

Let us then, in this free America, where in the "melting-pot" of nations, we free men from the dross which clogs and stifles life in the older civilizations, give Thanksgiving that we are free, and that, although Government of the people is not without fault, it is infinitely better than government of lineage, government of militarism, of those "born to the purple."

On this day, give thanks not alone for what good we have, but also for what we have not of the evils of life, and let us bend our energies to making Pharmacy better, higher and nobler, and America, in truth, what our forefathers laid foundation for.—a land of freedom and of opportunity for the oppressed of all nations.

We stand upon the threshold of the door of Opportunity. Not the door of Commercialism, of sordid and debasing trade. But the opportunity of showing to the world the way to a better and a higher Civilization. Let us on this day dedicate ourselves to be better men and wiser men, and let our most fervent prayer upon this Day of Thanksgiving be, that we may do high and noble service to Pharmacy and, in so doing, to this land where, no

"Rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that."

THE WAR AND THE DRUG MARKET.

THE initial flurry incident to the declarations of war in Europe, has now somewhat subsided, and it is beginning to be possible to approximate the actual value of drug and chemical commodities of various sorts.

Under the early excitement many, who were dependent upon foreign supplies for their continuance in business, became "wild" and their efforts in the market to obtain future supplies, was doubtless a chief factor in forcing abnormal prices. This rush to obtain supplies for an unlimited period, became absolutely ridiculous, going to the extent even of affecting values on indigenous products in the drug line. As for example, the placing of an order for 500 barrels of powdered elm bark, *Ulmus Fulva* (which in its *habitat* is far removed from the scene of war), was uncalled-for and unwise and is an illustration of the lack of information on the part of those charged with the purchasing of supplies for large users of drugs. There is no more reason for an advance in the price of powdered elm bark than there is for change in the orbit of the moon, and yet it has come to us.

A very large part of the advance in prices of drugs and chemicals is due to what may be styled "frenzied buying" on the part of large consumers who do not seem to be well informed of sources of supply.

It is certainly true that all foreign products are due for an advance in price, and in some instances this is basic,—that is the original source of supply is curtailed or absolutely cut off,—but the greatest influence with respect to foreign products has to do with shipping facilities.

Immediately following the declaration of war, the merchant marine practically suspended business, so far as individual movements were concerned, and the earliest factor entering into the question of prices, is that of transportation, rather than a question of supplies at the place of origin.

We have now to note the reaction following the early frenzy.

It is not new to state, that commerce is the controlling influence in the world. It is to be noted, in the present situation, the movement of merchandise is of more importance to the world's welfare than the movement of armies, which latter can affect only a comparatively limited territory, while the first is world-wide in its influence.

It has been truly said that the present contest at arms, has not been paralleled in the history of the world, and yet the lines of commercial influence are already being drawn and are bound to influence the mighty contest now on.

The earnest endeavor of some of the nations engaged in the present conflict, seems to be and really is to ensure safety at sea for merchandise. This is very clearly shown by the desire of shippers, who have merchandise to transport across the sea, to secure their shipments under the flag of a nation which shall have at least a claim to exemption from war conditions.

The drug markets at the present time, are showing a reaction from the frenzied influences above mentioned toward a meeting of the conditions which actually exist. We note, in the general drug list, a very general decline from the excessive prices prevailing immediately after the outbreak of the war, the natural reaction following the conditions. Market values on foreign drugs and chemicals are

still much higher than the normal, and legitimately so, because of the increased cost, not of production, but of transportation.

From general reports which come to us, we are assured that the ordinary supply of foreign drugs for the current "crop," is held at the source of supply, and, in many cases, an extraordinary crop is in store.

The difficulty in transportation, the increase in transportation rates, the increase in marine insurance and the uncertainty surrounding deliveries, are now the only remaining excuses for general advances in values. Perhaps the most common is the marine insurance item.

It has come to our knowledge that marine insurance, in some cases at least, has been placed on a 20% *ad valorem* basis and the least advance of which we have knowledge is 25% advance on former prevailing rates.

It has been claimed with respect to the drug products of the warring nations, that the present year's "crop" has been sacrificed to the marching armies. Later reports deny this and the statement is made that this year's "crop" is considerably above the normal, and all that is needed to bring market values down to or even below the prices prevailing before the war, is a reasonably safe means of transportation.

The extension of the war to the colonies of the nations involved, will naturally extend the conditions heretofore stated, to certain products in these colonies, as for example, the drugs which we procure from Central and South Africa, and, possibly, as the Asian condition is developed, to East Indian and Japanese products. But as in respect to these, it seems that for the most part, sufficient stocks are already in this country to tide over a period of many months.

In regard to chemicals, it is well known that Germany has been the center of the chemical industry for many years, and that it has held the master-hand over many of what are classed as the necessary chemical products, particularly the organic or synthetic products. The German government has been very largely paternal with respect to its chemical industries, and they have been fostered in a variety of ways, until they have practically a world-control. The stoppage of these industries in Germany, has worked a hardship to the entire world, in that it must either pay exorbitant prices for certain products or do without.

We Americans, confronted with such a condition, naturally rebel, and exclaim: "Why can't we do these things ourselves?" The question is easily answered by the statement that we certainly can, but we should follow it by the subsequent statement that "We won't" and "Cause why?" Simply because, commercially, we cannot put ourselves on the German basis. We have heard much about establishing chemical industries in America to meet the present situation, which is all well and good. We certainly can do it. We have the money, we have the trained chemists, and ability to carry on the business in full, but it won't happen until conditions change very materially. Suppose we start a chemical plant for the production of organic bodies, as for instance benzoic and pyrogallic acids, hydroquinone, and all the limitless number of synthetics produced from "coal tar." It would involve the investment of a large sum of money running into the millions, to organize and equip a proper plant. Now, having done this thing, and demon-

strated that we can produce all these products, when the war is ended, what will happen?

The millions that have been expended in the building of the plant and organization, will count for naught against the renewed German competition. We all know that the lowest class of American workmen receive a wage two, three, four times beyond that of the foreign workman, whether he be German or of any other nationality, and it is foolish to ignore the fact that, in certain chemical industries, we cannot compete, until our government protects our chemical industries as does Germany and some other countries.

It is true that Germany has some natural advantages, as for instance, she has some deposits of mineral containing potash, which we do not possess or which, if we do possess, have not yet been exploited, but the real reason for her commanding position in the chemical industry is the government support which these industries receive.

We see in the public press, the chemical, pharmaceutical and other journals, arguments and statements with regard to our ability to take care of ourselves in the matter of chemical products, but we will not do it until our government protects this industry, as is done in foreign countries, and with consideration for the diverse standards of living between American and foreign workmen.

GEORGE B. KAUFFMAN.

THE NEW PHARMACEUTICAL SYLLABUS.

THE attention of the members is especially called to the criticisms of the Syllabus, which appear on P. 1495.

As this work is one intended to powerfully and definitely influence the course of Pharmaceutical education in this country and to provide uniform, definite and certain courses of education for its coming pharmacists, our readers are earnestly requested to transmit to the Journal any succinct and informing comment upon the Syllabus which they may think desirable to make, with the purpose of determining its true value in pharmaceutical education.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

Just as we go to press, the following announcement is made by the Board of Canvassers of the result of the election for officers of the Association,

President, Dr. William C. Alpers, of Cleveland, Ohio.

First Vice President, Charles H. LaWall, Ph. M., of Philadelphia, Pa.

Second Vice President, E. A. Ruddiman, M. D., of Nashville, Tenn.

Third Vice President, Linwood A. Brown, Phar. D., of Lexington, Ky.

Members of the Council, Caswell A. Mayo, Ph. G., of New York, F. M. Apple, P. D., of Philadelphia, Pa., Harry V. Arny, Ph. D., of New York, N. Y.

The Board of Canvassers comprised the following members:—Clyde M. Snow, Chairman, Irwin A. Becker, William Gray, Henry W. Colson, Mrs. M. M. Gray, all of Chicago, Ill.

The Journal extends to the newly-elected officers its sincere congratulations, and also those of every member of the Association.