

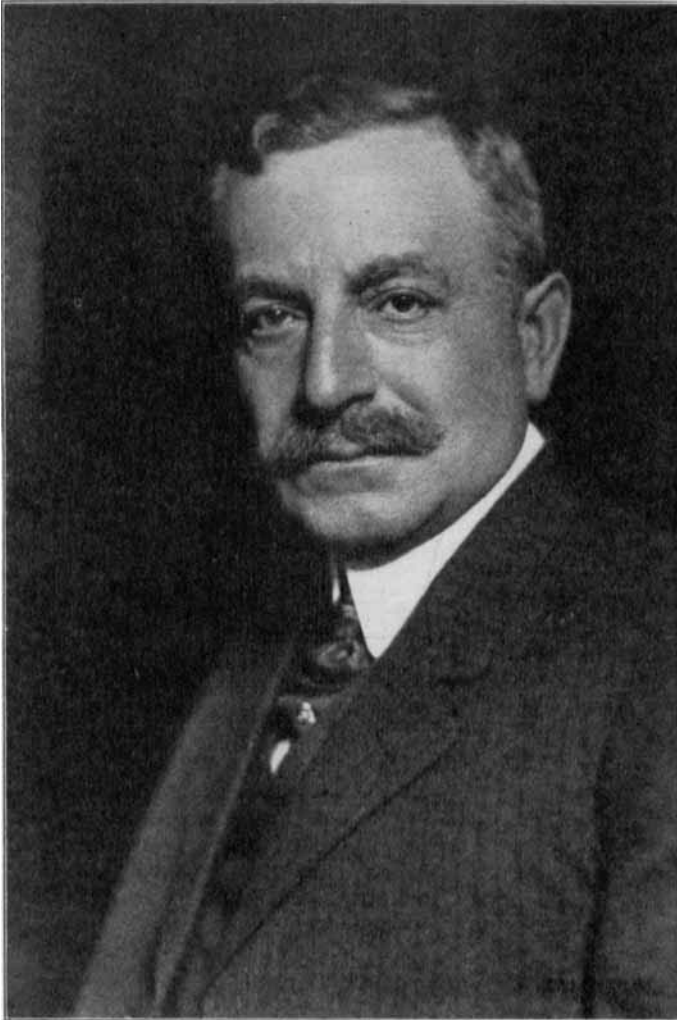
Obituary

ALBERT PLAUT.

On June 17, 1915, the remarkable life of this brilliant and highly esteemed member of the drug trade was closed by death.

Coming to the United States with his parents in 1868, when eleven years of age, he

macy. Mr. Plaut's natural abilities, however, were such that he assimilated knowledge rapidly and whatever he learned, he learned thoroughly, so that with this preliminary education he was able to conduct his large business interests and his various activities in commercial, educational and philanthropic work with the ease and refinement



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was prepared for his life's work by what in these days of long courses of study, would be considered a very inadequate education, viz., a three years' course in a New York public school and one year in the college of the city of New York. He also studied for one term at the New York College of Phar-

of one who had enjoyed a complete collegiate education.

In his fifteenth year he entered the drug business with his father, who was conducting a small jobbing drug business in New York City, and remained with him for five years, but when twenty years of age he found the

opportunity of his life by obtaining a position with Lehn & Fink, who had entered the importing and jobbing drug business three years previously, the firm combining the thorough training of the educated German apothecary in the person of Mr. Lehn, with the knowledge of the wholesale merchandising of drugs obtained by Mr. Fink while in the employ of some of New York's jobbing drug houses.

Albert Plaut rapidly assimilated knowledge from his new employers and applied his natural abilities and enthusiasm for work to their service to such good effect that upon Mr. Lehn's retirement in 1886 he became a member of the firm and twelve years later his brother, Joseph Plaut, who had entered the employ of the firm as credit manager in 1886, succeeded Mr. Fink, the remaining original partner.

During these and the succeeding years Albert Plaut's remarkable aptitude as a drug merchant became highly developed; he largely increased his firm's operations in the importation of drugs and chemicals, bringing in not only articles of large demand, but also new and rare grade remedies, so that, while catering to the requirements of manufacturers and large buyers, he steadily increased his firm's distribution to dispensing pharmacists and the best retail drug trade in all parts of the United States to whom Lehn & Fink became known as a source from which practically all articles in the drug and chemical line, however rare, could be obtained; while in Europe the house of Lehn & Fink was considered one of the most progressive drug firms of the United States.

While Mr. Plant worked arduously in building-up the wholesale drug business which he brought into such prominence, he found time in his busy life to interest himself in many societies for trade-betterment, educational, social and philanthropic purposes. At meetings of these associations, his geniality made him many friends, while his intimate knowledge of business and readiness in debate always secured for him an interested audience.

In the drug trade he was a member of the National Wholesale Druggists' Association, serving it as chairman of many important committees, his services being recognized in 1912 by his being elected to the highest office in the gift of the Association, its presidency,

and he directed the affairs of the Association in this capacity in 1912-1913.

He assisted in forming the Drug Section of the New York Board of Trade and Transportation, in which he always took an active interest; was chairman of the Section in 1903 and a director of the General Board for more than fifteen years.

He was a member of the New York Chamber of Commerce, in which he was the official arbitrator for the drug trade, and was recently elected vice-president of the Merchants' Association of New York.

He became a member of the College of Pharmacy of the City of New York in 1887, served as trustee and chairman of its important Committee on Instruction for nine years; was elected vice-president in 1913, serving as such at the time of his decease.

He was a member of the Committee of Revision of the United States Pharmacopœia, being elected on account of his intimate knowledge of imported drugs and their sources of supply.

He joined the American Pharmaceutical Association in 1894 and the esteem in which he held it will be best shown by quoting his reply to the greetings of the delegates from the Association to the meeting of the National Wholesale Druggists' Association at Dallas (1910) when he spoke as follows:

"The delegates of the American Pharmaceutical Association are always welcome at the meetings of the National Wholesale Druggists' Association, for many reasons: first and chief among these, I place the matter so thoroughly dwelt upon by the president of the American Pharmaceutical Association, viz.: the fact that they uphold the ethics of the profession at whatever cost. We realize that the American Pharmaceutical Association is responsible, more than any other factor, for the high standing which the pharmaceutical profession enjoys in our country today. As Mr. Eberle has stated, many of the members of our Association are members of that Association, but I take this opportunity to urge those who are not members of the American Pharmaceutical Association to join it, and I urge those of our retail friends who have not as yet seen fit to join that Association to become members of it. Anyone who sees the monthly publication issued by the American Pharmaceutical Association must be impressed, cannot help but be im-

pressed, by the good work, the high quality of the work, that is being performed by the Association. It was never more evident to me than at the recent Decennial Congress at Washington, held for the purpose of revising the Pharmacopœia. The representatives sent there by the American Pharmaceutical Association simply swept everything before them. The men whom they selected to do the work of revision are a body of men whom it is impossible to duplicate or equal among all the professions which are interested in the making of a new Pharmacopœia. I was never so deeply impressed before by the high moral tone, the scientific requirements, the technical knowledge brought out in the discussions at Washington, and the subsequent work of the Committee itself has only served to deepen that impression.

My remarks are really an eulogy of the American Pharmaceutical Association and the high standing which the Association enjoys among similar organizations in other lines. In continental Europe, in Germany, in France, in Austria, in Italy, the American Pharmaceutical Association is known, its prominent members are known, its high standing is recognized, and every American who visits foreign pharmacists and foreign laboratories will be surprised to know that frequently these gentlemen are better known in foreign countries than they are among ourselves, and all I can say, in conclusion, is to repeat my invitation that all those who are entitled to do so should join the American Pharmaceutical Association and get those of our employes and customers who are entitled to join, to do likewise."

Mr. Plaut was one of the founders and Vice-President of the Metropolitan Drug Club of New York, was one of the foremost members of the Chemists' Club and chiefly instrumental in obtaining the funds for the construction of its club house. Was an active member of the American Chemical Society and the Society of Chemical Industry. He was also a member of the Drug and Chemical Club, the City Athletic, Freundschaft, Liederkranz, Reform, Harmonie, Lotos, and Automobile Clubs, a number of which he served as officer or trustee.

He was also a member of and generous contributor to the Associated Hebrew Charities, and many other charitable and philanthropic organizations.

Mr. Plaut's generous character was shown by his numerous bequests, among which was \$50,000 to employes who had been with him over ten years, \$54,000 to educational institutions, hospitals and charitable societies, and \$15,000 to the College of Pharmacy of the City of New York to endow a scholarship in memory of his father, to be known as the Isaac Plaut Fund.

Mr. Plaut lost his wife fifteen years ago and is survived by a son Edward and two daughters, Mrs. M. J. Falk and Miss Constance Plaut, who, in mourning their great loss, will be consoled by the knowledge that their lamented father died as he had lived, a citizen of no mean city, a man whose unique, forceful personality and splendid business abilities were known and recognized not only by the drug trade, but also by the leading members of the mercantile community, and who crowded into an all too-short life an amount of active work for the service of his fellows that few men are capable of rendering.



ALBERT PLAUT.

A TRIBUTE BY W. C. ALPERS, SC. D.

The saying: "De mortuis nil nisi bene" is often put at the head of obituaries of prominent men in order to explain or excuse the then following eulogy. But it is not always necessary to begin notices of this kind with this phrase. In fact, there are cases where this expression becomes a statement of facts, where nothing but good and honorable can be said about the life and works of a departed friend, even if envy or prejudice should look for disapproving words.

Such a man was Albert Plaut. *Our* Albert Plaut, the whole pharmaceutical profession may say. For he was one of the most important, active, influential and honored men of our vocation. Not that he passed through life without enemies or defilers. Far from it. A man of strength, influence and decided character must, of necessity, have enemies. Perhaps it would bespeak less of his strength if he had none. The inscription on a tombstone, "He had no enemies," often appeared to us as a doubtful praise. The weak always fears the strong, the indolent criticises the thinker, the lazy hates the active, the slow envies the successful, the narrow-minded shuns the broad-minded, the miser detests the liberal.

Albert Plaut, too, had such enemies. But far from injuring him, they only added to the high esteem in which the better, the thoughtful, the co-laborers in his many-sided works held him.

But it was not these enemies, it was his friends that mourned at his bier, and he had many of them. Many more than the superficial observer believes. Friends of his successful activity, friends of his sharp and correct judgment, friends of his integrity and honesty, friends of his benevolence, friends of his sincere interest in all matters pharmaceutical, friends of his sacrificing heart.

There are two ways to recognize and judge men of importance. From a distance we may observe them, or in the close intimate circle of friendship. In our ordinary daily life all good men are more or less equal. Each one goes willingly to his work, performs the expected task, earns his bread by the sweat of his brow and goes home contented and hopeful. But when serious times approach, when the weight of events demands stronger shoulders, when the call for talent is heralded through the land, it is then that a giant suddenly towers above the masses. Without wishing or knowing it, the destined one is elected leader, or he breaks through to the front obeying his convictions. More than once when powerful commercial crises threatened did Albert Plaut take the lead. With a sharp look into the future he combined the correctness of quick logical thought. Therefore his advice was sought for and respected. Therefore he occupied the highest and most responsible positions in the societies of his calling. He was a power for action, a force for good. Thus he appeared from a distance, a giant in enterprise, in mind, in influence.

But whoever knew him more intimately, who had the privilege of casting a glance into his heart, would respect him still higher, and the esteem would grow to admiration, to intimate friendship. The world may justly praise Albert Plaut as an active, careful, prudent business man to whom rich compensation flowed as a just recognition of his abilities. But only few know that the acquisition of wealth was not the object of his life. He soared for higher aims. To him money was only the means to do larger and better things. The long list of benevolent societies, more

than thirty in number, to which he left legacies, gives testimony of his benevolent mind and liberal hand. And yet, this is the smallest part of the blessing that he spread among his friends. His sacrificing heart acted without ostentation or flourish of trumpets, and he was always ready to assist the needy or suffering friend. The friend! for he examined carefully the hearts of those that approached him and understood well to distinguish flattery from truth. But whomsoever he had selected as his friend, to him he stuck, defended him against all attacks and helped him willingly and liberally.

For the higher interests of pharmacy Albert Plaut had a warm heart. His participation in the development of the College of Pharmacy of New York is well known and even beyond his death he extended this interest, as the legacy of \$15,000 shows. In the circles of professional pharmacy his merits were equally recognized. When at the meeting of the Convention for the Revision of the Pharmacopœia in Washington in 1910 the election of a practical business man became desirable, on account of new laws passed by Congress, all eyes turned to Albert Plaut. He was elected a member of the Committee of Revision unanimously by men who had come from all parts of the United States and were convinced of his ability and reliability.

American pharmacy, in all its branches, commercial, scientific, educational and practical, loses in Albert Plaut one of its best and most devoted members and it will be hard to fill his place. As energetic business man, as sterling man of honor, as liberal benefactor, as advocate of higher pharmaceutical education, as dear, sacrificing friend we will remember him forever.



Any business, in order to be a permanent success, must have as a guide the ideals which stand for honesty and integrity of the highest order, which is simply right thinking put into acts. Given a man whose every associate, or every employe, knows that he stands for integrity of the highest order and nothing less, and let the actions of that man speak more loudly than any words which he may say, and there you have a nucleus of a successful business; and let us not forget that while falsehood and insincerity may have a very hard crust, truth will, in time, find a weak spot and finally break through.—The Caxton.