

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

252 York Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

September 9, 1916.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION.

DEAR SIR:

On page 804 of the August issue of your JOURNAL in an article by Wilbur L. Scoville, are some statements which, if allowed to pass without criticism, will create a general belief in what is contrary to fact. I refer to this paragraph, namely:

"The Pharmacopœia is an authority on therapeutics, and its scope is controlled by therapeutic considerations, . . . The Pharmacopœia is controlled by the 'regular' school of practice, but the National Formulary makes no distinction between allopaths, homeopaths, osteopaths, chiropractors, or any other school of practice."

I cannot believe that Mr. Scoville intended to mislead the reader, but he cannot be at all cognizant of the facts, and he himself must be glad to withdraw what is manifestly untrue.

In the first place, the Pharmacopœia is not an authority on therapeutics, and it was repeatedly and distinctly so stated and so urged in various discussions held by the Sub-committee on Scope, a component part of the Revision Committee of the Pharmacopœia. I was a strong advocate that a drug which was therapeutically useless should not enter the ninth revision of the United States Pharmacopœia, but I was repeatedly and permanently outvoted, those who differed from me voting for the principle that the United States Pharmacopœia was "not a book on therapeutics." The Sub-committee on Scope, consisting of nine members, passed a "guiding principle" that a drug to be admitted to the United States Pharmacopœia should be of "therapeutic usefulness" or of "pharmaceutic necessity."

On the floor of the Pharmacopœial Convention held in 1910, it was stated that it was the duty of physicians to select the drugs, and the duty of pharmacists to decide how the preparations of the drug should be made. Neither was this obviously correct division of labor lived up to, nor were the "guiding principles" of the Sub-committee on Scope lived up to.

Of the fifty members of the Revision Committee only six were physicians engaged in the practice of medicine, and four of these physicians were members of the Sub-committee on Scope. Basing their recommendations on the fact that very many drugs and preparations in the Pharmacopœia of 1900 were therapeutically useless, this Sub-committee on Scope recommended the deletion of more than 150 drugs and preparations, and more than half of these drugs and preparations were recommended for the Pharmacopœia by the Executive Committee, only one member of which was a practising physician. This all-powerful Executive Committee also introduced into the Pharmacopœia drugs that had not even been passed upon by the Sub-committee on Scope. In other words, the votes, advice and decision of the hard-working Sub-committee on Scope, aiming at therapeutic usefulness of drugs that should enter the new Pharmacopœia, were largely turned down, over-ruled and over-voted by the Executive Committee (an all-powerful committee that passed on all recommendations of the sub-committees), and only one member of this Executive Committee is a practising physician, and therefore the only one qualified to pass upon the therapeutic value of a drug or preparation. Hence the reasons that more than half of the drugs and preparations recommended for deletion by the Sub-committee on Scope, and introduced into the Pharmacopœia by the Executive Committee, in spite of such deletion recommendation, were not therapeutic reasons. Therefore the book is *not* an authority on therapeutics and was not intended to be such. In fact, it is a book of valuable therapeutic drugs interspersed with several hundred drugs and preparations that are either useless or inferior to the few that are of value.

A drug, to have therapeutic value, must have some recognized activity on the human body. A very large number of those in the new Pharmacopœia have no such activity. Even the doses of the drugs are not authoritative, only suggestive. The dose of a drug is enough to produce the results required, more or less than the dose suggested by the Pharmacopœia.

That the Pharmacopœia is controlled by so-called "regulars" is another statement that is not a fact. Only four members of the Executive Committee, which committee is *entirely responsible* for the contents of the Pharmacopœia, have the degree of M.D. Hence the book represents the drugs and preparations that the expert drug men in all branches of the drug traffic desire to have in the book.

Also, one cannot well see how those who use no drugs in the treatment of disease could be interested in a book on drugs. Therefore, to intimate that such were shut out of the United States Pharmacopœia is a reflection on their supposedly drugless practice, and criticism cannot be made of the Revision Committee, thirty-two of whose fifty members are drug experts.

Exactly how the so-called osteopaths, their pseudo friends, the chiropractors, and "other schools of practice," perhaps mental and Christian scientists, *i.e.*, drugless treaters of disease can or will find the fourth revision of the National Formulary useful, is a question in psychology. And also it should be remembered that the state medical laws prohibit these sects from giving or prescribing drugs.

May I be pardoned for stating my right to call attention to these obvious mistakes of Mr. Scoville. I have taught materia medica for twenty-five years, have written several books on therapeutics; am a member of the Revision Committee of the Pharmacopœia, of the Sub-committee on Scope, and of the Sub-committee on Dosage.

Yours very truly,  
OLIVER T. OSBORNE.

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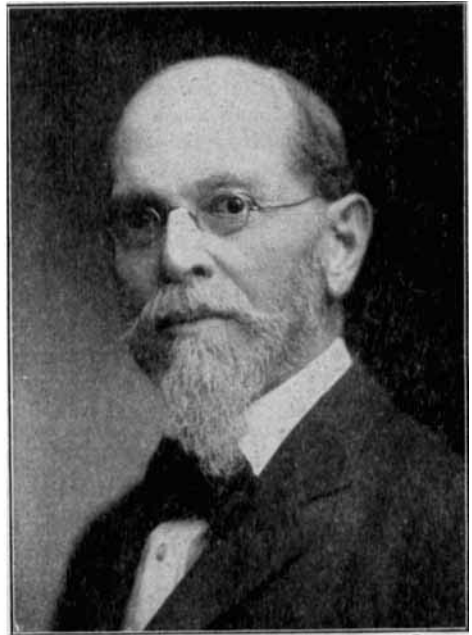
SCHEDULE B STAMP TAX REPEALED.

Schedule B of the emergency war revenue act has been repealed by the omnibus revenue bill, which has just received the President's signature, taking effect Saturday morning, September 9. The revenue bill also repeals the documentary stamp taxes included in Schedule A of the emergency war revenue act, including all bills of lading, express receipts, telephone and telegraph messages.

Manufacturers are now free to remove from their factory premises all goods included in Schedule B without payment of tax. Collectors of internal revenue have been instructed to assist manufacturers in the preparation of claims for the redemption of all unused stamps, and canceled stamps which have not been attached to goods. Refunds will also be allowed for stamps attached to goods which have not been removed from factory premises, provided the individual packages can be exhibited to deputy collectors in order that *each stamp* may be specially canceled. As to goods which have been removed from factory premises, the government holds that as the tax accrues upon removal no refunds can be made.



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