

be construed as an agreement between the several states, or between the state boards of the several states acting for them, respectively, yet provides the means for active coöperation between them, and legalizes in that connection contributions and expenditures to serve their common purpose. It would remove from the field of correct coöperation between our state boards of pharmacy such doubts as now exist with reference to the legality of action and authority to act. The advisability of having a provision in our several state pharmacy laws, such as is contemplated by Provision No. 7, must rest in the need for legal and systematic coöperation between our several state boards. It presents for decision also, whether it is advisable to establish and maintain a Central Bureau through which the several boards would act in their relationship with each other, and which would be supported by them respectively, so as to permit its operation in a sound business-like manner. The question is, whether the existing National Association of State Boards of Pharmacy is so equipped as to properly serve its intended purpose, or whether it should be placed upon a more solid foundation with assured support, authorized by law in the several states.

JOSEPH P. REMINGTON: I move that this report be received and take the usual course, and that Chairman Freericks and the Committee be extended the thanks of this Section. Motion seconded.

H. C. CHRISTENSEN: These provisions have been given much thought by the individual members of the Boards, as well as by the Association as a whole and we are heartily in accord with the recommendations made. We realize that the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, as constituted at the present time, can be improved, and we are glad to have the subject brought up. It is unfortunate that we are not able to discuss these provisions further. This is a legislative year, and I was in hopes we could get some of these recommendations in shape to answer some of the inquiries we are bound to have from different states. I hope something will be done, in spite of the fact that we cannot discuss the propositions, so that we may have the information to convey to those who will ask for it.

Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was seconded and carried.

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## COMPULSORY HEALTH INSURANCE.

BY BERNARD FANTUS, M.D.

I note with regret the unfriendly attitude displayed by an editorial in the November issue of the JOURNAL toward the Health Insurance Bill drafted by the American Association for Labor Legislation, a movement which is in line with the latest developments in the care of the workingman's health in Germany, England, and in other countries of Europe. To characterize such legislation as charity is as erroneous, as to apply that designation to accident insurance laws or to compulsory education. Public Health Insurance could lead to a neglect of the insured only, if it is grossly mismanaged. It does not have that tendency in Europe, as far as I know. The neglect of human health and the lack of care of the sick, that exists at present, makes human life and health appear extremely cheap. We protect all other kinds of property by law upon law; we have so far done next to nothing toward protecting our most precious possession—namely, health. It is one of the boasts of the modern hygienist that health can be bought; and, to a certain extent, this is true. Sufficiently comprehensive legislation of the kind contemplated could not fail to take cognizance of the prophylaxis of disease. Human society is responsible for all the contagious and infectious diseases, for

all the occupational diseases, for many forms of intoxication and much of the results of physical violence, not to mention the injuries to health wrought by poverty and destitution. If society is responsible for all these things—and I believe it can be shown that it is—then it is the duty of society to apply the remedy. Health Insurance is a step in that direction. Nor is taking care of the sick altogether altruistic, for the sick are a constant menace to the well. To oppose this because it would be bad for our business is the lowest sort of ethics—the ethics of the jungle. Society does not exist that doctors and druggists may fatten on it. Doctors and druggists exist for the good of society. Health insurance does not enable society to dispense with our services, if it did, all the better for health insurance. It may lessen the income of our professions—and again I say so much the better for health insurance for it will lighten to an incalculably greater degree the burden that must be borne by shoulders too weak to bear it—the burden that is now borne by the sick poor.

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#### SULPHO-TITANIC REAGENT FOR ALKALOIDS HAVING A PHENOLIC NUCLEUS.

That titanic anhydride, in various combinations, gives intense color reactions with phenolic substances, has been known for some years; Leuher and Crawford have published a method for the colorimetric determination of titanium based on the reaction it affords with thymol. This has suggested to the author to employ titanic anhydride for the identification of alkaloids containing a phenolic group. He has prepared a reagent for this purpose by heating coarse particles of rutile, native titanic anhydride, with strong sulphuric acid, at near the boiling point of the latter, for several hours. Only a very small amount of the rutile is dissolved. After cooling, the liquid, decanted from the undissolved rutile, furnishes the reagent, which is absolutely permanent. A few hundredths of a milligramme of an alkaloid, triturated in a porcelain capsule with a drop or two of this liquid, will yield a characteristic and often distinctive color reaction. More pronounced colors may obviously be obtained by adding a minute quantity of an alkaloid, or its salt, to two or three mils of the reagent and shaking. Under these conditions morphine gives a blood-red color; apomorphine, a reddish violet; oxydimorphine, a wine-red, intermediate between the above two tints; cupreine, an orange shade, resembling that of alkali bichromate; hordenine, deep orange; tyrosine, a color similar to that given by hordenine; adrenaline, a reddish brown color. Alkaloids devoid of a phenolic nucleus give no reaction. The reagent also forms a sensitive test for the presence of hydrogen peroxide.—G. Denigès, *Annales Chim. Analytic*, 1916, 21, 213; through *Pharmaceutical Journal*.