

EDITORIAL NOTES

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PHARMACEUTICAL FORMULAS.

Pharmaceutical Formulas proposed for the A. Ph. A. Recipe Book are omitted from this issue. Chairman Otto Raubenheimer advises that they will, however, be continued in the November number of the JOURNAL.

MAJOR D. A. COSSAR.

We have referred in an editorial to the prospective visit of Major D. A. Cossar, the Staff Pharmaceutical Officer for Australasia, to this country. Major Cossar is president



MAJOR D. A. COSSAR

of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australasia and is said to be the youngest pharmacist who has ever reached that position. He was apprenticed in 1896 to William Simpson, of

North Melbourne, attended the College lectures in 1898 and passed the final examination in 1903. Soon thereafter he entered the business he now conducts at Burwood Road, Hawthorne.

Upon receipt of advice, Dr. Frederick J. Wulling at once communicated with Surgeon-General Gorgas and Dr. William J. Mayo, with the end in view to bring about a conference to consider pharmaceutical matters of the U. S. Army. Dr. Wulling also addressed Chairman S. L. Hilton of the American Pharmaceutical Association Committee on National Defense, so that Major Cossar might receive every attention possible to further the object of his work and at the same time throw light on the consideration of the matter for our further efforts. It will be recognized that under present conditions it is not always possible to know the whereabouts of a military official but it is to be hoped that the American Pharmaceutical Association and pharmacists generally will have the opportunity of showing courtesies and attention to the distinguished visitor. The JOURNAL assumes the privilege of extending a welcome.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO STIMULATE DRUG PRODUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

Immediate steps towards maintaining and developing as soon as practicable a domestic supply of drugs, which are now short on the market, are to be taken by the drug trade under the leadership of government experts, following the convention of the American Pharmaceutical Association in Indianapolis.

Dr. Warner W. Stockberger, in charge of drug plant and poisonous plant investigations for the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, was named chairman of a special committee to determine a conservative policy in regard to stimulation of drug production. Dissemination of information regarding the need of drug crop production will be regulated so as to reach those specially trained.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AT WASHINGTON FINDS COURT PLASTER NOT DELIBERATELY CONTAMINATED.

The Hygienic Laboratory of Public Health Service, Washington, reports that there is no ground for believing that the contamination of court plaster with tetanus germs, as recently reported, was intentional. The report further states that court plaster is not clean in the surgical sense and various health departments advise that sales by itinerant vendors should be prohibited because of the fact that such plasters offer a favorable field for the breeding of both dirt and disease germs, and because of this should be kept in condition of cleanliness and freedom from contamination, impossible when carried from place to place in a vendor's handbag.

ETHYL ALCOHOL FROM WOOD AS GOOD AS ANY OTHER.

According to the Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, there is no reason for discriminating against ethyl alcohol made from wood in favor of that from grain or molasses, according to the Government chemists of the Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin. The amount of impurities in commercial ethyl alcohol, they say, is very small, and the impurities are probably less objectionable when wood is used as a base than when grain or molasses is used.

The prejudice against the use for some purposes of ethyl alcohol made from wood is probably accounted for, the experts say, by a confusion with methyl or "wood" alcohol, which is poisonous. Both products are derived from wood, but are radically different. The ethyl, or grain alcohol, is made by reducing the wood to sawdust, treating the sawdust with an acid to produce chemical sugars, and converting the fermentable sugars into alcohol by fermentation, as in the case of grain or molasses. Wood alcohol, however, is obtained by condensing certain gases which are liberated when the wood is heated in airtight retorts, so that it decomposes without burning.

Ethyl alcohol has, it is stated, been commercially manufactured from wood for several years in this country. It is suitable for any use to which ethyl alcohol from any other base

is put. Improvements on the processes which have been developed at the Forest Products Laboratory have made it possible to decrease the former cost of production.

NATIONAL EXPOSITION OF CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES.

The National Exposition of Chemical Industries held in New York City during the week of September 24 was attended by about 100,000, and so well pleased were the exhibitors that spaces for exhibition have largely been reserved for next year.

It was estimated that 25,000 chemists and others interested in kindred professions attended the show. Enthusiastic throngs of technical men were in evidence each day, owing to the fact that the exposition proved to be a great clearing house for information on chemistry.

THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN-MADE SYNTHETICS.

The Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry, with the aid of the A. M. A. Chemical Laboratory, proposes to make a study of the quality of American-made synthetics. It will examine specimens of important, unofficial synthetic drugs submitted by their manufacturers and later, when these drugs are offered for sale, purchase them on the open market and report on their purity. The Council also offers to examine specimens of American-made synthetics when submitted by dealers, providing the origin of such specimens is established.

This control of synthetic drugs, which as the result of the war are now made in this country, is believed to be in the interest of American industry, for the protection of the public, and to the satisfaction of physicians. Since the manufacture of some of the synthetic drugs is to some extent experimental in this country, it is due physicians and the public, that they be given the protection which will come from the proposed investigation of the market supply. In undertaking this investigation, the Council feels confident that the responsible manufacturer will welcome this check as the best way of establishing complete confidence in his product.

W. A. PUCKNER, *Secretary*.
Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry.