

EDITORIAL

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COMPULSORY HEALTH INSURANCE.

A HEARING on compulsory health insurance was recently held in Boston before a special commission provided for by the Massachusetts Legislature. The only organization that unqualifiedly approved the scheme was the American Association for Labor Legislation and this association is not identified with the prominent labor organizations.

A rather unexpected situation developed in that the project was favored by representatives of employers and opposed by those of employees. True, this was not a general representation of employers, but largely of the textile, hotel and restaurant interests, and one of the reasons for indorsement was stated to be that competitors were inaugurating private insurance companies and the representatives present preferred that if there was to be insurance of this kind, all should be under state control and thus all employers be on the same footing. The objections related not only to competition with insurance protection afforded by membership benefits in some organizations but also, that the physical examinations might be utilized in "black-listing" and as reasons for discharge of employees.

There are doubtless benefits to be derived from health insurance, but the decision as to how and what kind of protection is best, should be left to the individual. The proposed Compulsory Health Insurance bills, as they now stand, are dangerous in the extreme, and the drug business would suffer more than any other if such legislation is enacted. On several occasions we have made editorial comment on the subject: the article prepared by Mr. Harry B. Mason for the Section on Education and Legislation, and printed in this issue, should be carefully studied. It is hoped that the action taken after earnest deliberation by the American Pharmaceutical Association will prompt druggists to oppose such legislation by every available means. Instructions were given to print the forceful presentation on Compulsory Health Insurance in an early issue of the JOURNAL, and legislative committees of state associations may obtain reprints of the article by addressing the Journal office. This menace will require not only coöperative and individual opposition but a campaign of education among citizens and legislators.

E. G. E.

CAPITALIZE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

A PAPER under above caption was presented at the Indianapolis meeting of the American Pharmaceutical Association by Mr. J. C. Peacock and is printed in this number of the JOURNAL.

Responsibility draws the largest salary, no responsibility the lowest: it develops the biggest business, but it can be equally destructive—it is invariably worth a price. All business is based on responsibility: in some activities it is part of the assets; in the insurance business responsibility represents the greater part of the investment. But it is with the responsibility in the drug business, in the pharmacy, that the paper deals and a very timely subject it is. All pharmacists recognize their responsibility, to themselves, to the public; all states have enacted laws based on assumed or delegated responsibility by pharmacists. Notwithstanding this, few pharmacists seek to get returns for their investment in responsibility, for the complement delivered with every package or at least accompanies every product of their own manufacture or dispensing. This responsibility may develop a business or it may in a day destroy the efforts of a lifetime—every pharmacist should get a price for it, and as its worth can only be estimated, a certain fixed percentage or sum should be exacted from the patrons as integral of the total sale price of an article from the drug or prescription department. It must be regarded in the light of service or protection required in the transactions, not as part of the cost of the constituents nor time required in delivering the articles sold. Because of the unique relation responsibility has, the uncertainty of whether it will be creative or destructive, the price charged must be the subject of individual study. The plan proposed by the author places the whole assessment in the prescription department, though he, of course, realizes that in a degree it is a factor in every sale. Not only should responsibility be considered in the sale but the estimated incoming sum from this source should be actually used in providing protection: some may prefer to buy indemnity insurance while others will be inclined to invest or credit an estimated sum otherwise. The splendid thought is worthy of consideration and ought to be put into more general practice by all pharmacists.

E. G. E.

PROGRESS FOR RECOGNITION OF PHARMACISTS IN MILITARY SERVICE.

THROUGH the courtesy of the *Australasian Journal of Pharmacy* we have been informed that Major D. A. Cossar, the Staff Pharmaceutical Officer for Australasia, is either in the United States now, or will be, during a tour he is making, investigating the status of pharmacists and pharmaceutical service in the Allied armies.

Australasia has made some progress in giving recognition to pharmacists. In February of 1916 various pharmaceutical societies of Australasia were asked to nominate a Senior Pharmacist for the military district in which they were located. The Victorian Society nominated Major Cossar, the rank given him at that time being that of captain. Every military hospital in Australasia with over 220 beds has a Lieutenant Dispenser, who is a pharmaceutical chemist. All hospital ships are provided with a Lieutenant Dispenser and on all transports a registered chemist is in charge of the dispensary. No one is now employed by the military authorities in the dispensing of medicines unless he is a registered pharmacist.

When it was first suggested that pharmacists should be appointed to commissioned positions, more or less antagonism obtained, just as in the United States, but since the time of such appointments the value of their services has been recognized and there is inclination for still further recognition.

A letter has also come to the President of the American Pharmaceutical Association in which there is an account of a complimentary dinner given to Major D. A. Cossar before leaving Melbourne for his tour, on which occasion the military was well represented by officers of the service to express their appreciation, particularly of the services of Major Cossar and pharmacy in general.

It is, of course, regretted that the visitor will not find a pharmaceutical corps in the United States Army, but it can be stated that progress in that direction is being made, if the increasing interest of the officials may be viewed in that light. We have been informed that a hearing will be held on the Edmonds Bill soon after the reconvening of Congress in December. At the Indianapolis meeting this measure was indorsed by the American Pharmaceutical Association, the American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties and National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. Further indorsement has also been given which indicates that the medical men are continuing their interest and unquestionably this will be helpful in the promotion.

Advice has also been received from Great Britain that registered pharmacists on active service in the Army abroad are to receive commissioned rank. And with the probability of the American Army in France being reorganized more or less in line with the French system, wherein pharmaceutical corps are provided, there is an increasing possibility for a like provision in the U. S. Army.

In Australasia it soon became very evident that with professional pharmacists things in relation to the supply of drugs and medicine improved. Pharmacists had a chance to show their work and physicians and pharmacists, more than ever, learned that there was a mutual dependence, which had an economic value to the government and insured better service for the enlisted men. The same will be true if we are successful in our efforts but we must persist in them.

All pharmacists should advise their congressmen and senators that they de-

sire the establishment of a pharmaceutical corps in the Army, as provided for in the Edmonds Bill and inform them of the arguments which have been presented and apply.

E. G. E.

MAYO BROTHERS' GREAT GIFT TO MINNESOTA—AN EXAMPLE
FOR OTHERS.

ROCHESTER, MINN., is a center of surgical knowledge and practice for the whole world. Just how the Mayo Brothers have been able to accomplish so much is one of the wonders of the age. As a result of their labors, they have accumulated a large fortune, but the possession of it is not their object, for they have given all their savings, amounting to more than \$1,600,000, to the University of Minnesota, for the establishment of a hospital which they propose to maintain until the sum of two millions of endowment is reached. These men have given their lives to humanity and dedicated all their money to future generations for relief of the suffering and afflicted. They are not satisfied to selfishly enjoy the fruits of their financial success but are providing benefits for humanity while they are living. Both of the great surgeons are now also giving their invaluable time and experience to their country.

Such acts strongly emphasize the splendid service of medicine, and while pharmacy contributes to the possibilities of medicine, there are only a few, among many, engaged in pharmacy or contributory branches, who have exhibited a spirit of giving in a large way so that the opportunities of pharmacy might become achievements and lead on to greater accomplishments. The recommendation made by President Wulling in his annual address presents such opportunity, and all of the pharmacy schools of the country need the altruistic spirit of the alumni and of those who directly or indirectly profit.

E. G. E.

MINUTES OF THE SECOND GENERAL SESSION, AMERICAN
PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION.

As it was necessary to submit printed proof of the proceedings of the second general session of the American Pharmaceutical Association to the officers in charge, these may not be included in this issue but will be printed in November number of the JOURNAL. Should they arrive in time for inclusion these minutes will be found preceding Council Business.—THE EDITOR.