

SECTION ON EDUCATION AND LEGISLATION, AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION

THE UNITED STATES PHARMACOPOEIA AND NATIONAL FORMULARY AS TEXT-BOOKS IN PHARMACOGNOSY.

BY W. F. GIDLEY.

Pharmacognosy is taught in every school of Pharmacy under one name or another and in all degrees of intensity. In some we find its principles given under "Pharmacology," in others under "Materia Medica," while in others we find it under its own name, but compounded frequently with therapeutics, posology, and toxicology. That some confusion exists between certain of these terms becomes at once apparent when we compare their definitions in standard books on materia medica, on pharmacology, on pharmacognosy with the *Pharmaceutical Syllabus*. According to the latter pharmacognosy is the "art of identifying, selecting, and valuing drugs." In its teaching we include these and usually several other things.

"The study of synonyms is one of the most important departments of pharmacognosy," says Dr. Kraemer in his excellent and comprehensive "*Scientific and Applied Pharmacognosy*." The knowledge of the source of drugs is not necessarily implied in their identification, but usually taught under pharmacognosy. Points of historical interest concerning drugs should certainly be given in a course in Pharmacy, and these are in part at least usually taught under this same heading. Historical points are made also, of course, in chemistry, therapeutics, toxicology, and other branches.

To establish the identity of a drug as being official we must have accurate and concise definitions of the official drugs—accurate macroscopic and microscopic descriptions. These descriptions, together with identification tests, purity tests and assay processes, give us our basis for the selection and valuing of drugs.

In the U. S. P. and N. F. we have, as all know, correct Latin titles, English names, abbreviations, and synonyms of drugs; their definitions, concise and mainly accurate (see criticisms of botanical authority by Farwell in *Druggists' Circular*, April 1917), family names, biological classifications, purity rubric, macroscopic descriptions of true whole drugs, macroscopic and microscopic descriptions of true powdered drugs, identification tests, purity tests, assay processes, limits of impurities, limits of normal ash contents, and a list of the preparations into which the drug enters. Is not this the information required in the "art of identifying, selecting, and valuing drugs," that is, in pharmacognosy? Certain important points are missing, it is true, for pharmacognosy as "she is taught." These might be supplied in the lectures by the professor in charge.

Careful attention must be given to chief constituents. This knowledge is required for correct valuing as well as being indispensable in pharmacology. Supplement the above also with information of historical value, of methods of collection and preservation of drugs, and you have covered the field of pharmacognosy as given in many colleges of pharmacy. A specific illustration seems unnecessary.

It is contended by some that, with the bulk of this information in the U. S. P. and N. F., the student of pharmacy should not be required to purchase an additional text-book for pharmacognosy.

The trouble with the U. S. P. and N. F. as text-books is that they were never intended as such, nor are they arranged in presentable form and are pedagogically incorrect. It is like studying botany out of the dictionary. It may be all there, but—!

Again, text-books in pharmacognosy are usually complete, and describe and illustrate, as a rule, the official drugs and all those numerous and often interesting unofficials, "post officials," and therapeutic aids.

Students are all too prone to try to get along with the minimum of required information. It is often advisable to have the limits of such not too closely confined.

That the expense side of the question deserves some consideration is perhaps true. Be that as it may, the writer believes in an extra, or "additional" text-book for pharmacognosy. Its selection should be a matter of considerable concern. The U. S. P. and N. F. give no illustrations and these are of very great value in teaching this subject, particularly the microscopic side of it, and may be supplemented as much as possible. The text-book should be illustrated.

There can be no doubt that the U. S. P. and N. F. descriptions are clear cut and concise and their tests, etc., usually limited to the worthy only. These books cannot be pushed aside in pursuing pharmacognosy, but they fail to serve as teachable guides in the subject. Then let them find their true place, so far as pharmacognosy is concerned, as most excellent reference works, and not be used as exclusive text-books for that study.

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FALLACIES IN POPULAR PSYCHOLOGY OF SALESMANSHIP.*

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The best psychology is the exercise of courtesy, alertness and good judgment and it promises reward to the man who never forgets it.

About 100 years ago the empirical system of psychology, known as phrenology, was formulated by Gall, and developed by his followers, especially Spurzheim and Combe. Gall claimed, that with him, it was the result of a series of independent observations which he began by correlating the outward appearances and mental qualities of his schoolmates. Though Gall claimed to have originated this system, it is only a modern expansion of an old empirical philosophy and its parentage is easily traced.

The development of phrenology followed the discovery of the localization of sensory and motor functions of the body, in particular regions of the brain. Enthusiasts ignored the fact that these particular brain areas simply controlled other parts of the body as eye, ears and limbs, and jumped at the conclusion that every trait of character, every mental aptitude, every virtue, every vice, ability, interest

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