

THE MENACE OF THE "PLUGGING" SCHOOL.

FAR too little attention has been given to the "plugging" institution in the past. The fact has come home to us since the entrance of the United States into the war, for, whatever else may stand in the way of recognition of pharmacists by the Government, *one* of the difficulties is the inadequate preparation of many so-called pharmacists.

There is a wide difference in the requirements of Conference colleges as well as the product which they turn out but when one considers these other institutions, which do not even deserve the title of school, the difference becomes vastly greater. For some years a score or more of these so-called schools have been in existence. The number of young men and women, who have prepared for board examinations by spending from six weeks to three months in one or the other of them, runs into the thousands. They can enter with no preliminary education whatever and, when they have passed a board examination, they are free to practice on an unsuspecting public.

Standard colleges have probably shown too much indifference. So far as harm to the college itself is concerned they might be ignored because few who are attending them could be admitted to a college. However, that is altogether too self-centered and short-sighted an attitude to take. Besides the liability to error due to incompetence and the consequent menace to the public, these people obtain their registration with such small expenditure of time and labor and money that they are willing to work for much smaller remuneration than college-trained men and this results in a competition that is quite unfair. In some states a class of men have been attracted to this as a means of getting the necessary document that would permit them to operate a business of more or less questionable reputation in the guise of a drug store, thus adding another disagreeable feature to the competition. Now we are beginning to comprehend the fact that these institutions have had much to do with the attitude of other professional people in contending that pharmacy is solely a business.

Prerequisite laws have been enacted in several states but the movement has been far too slow. It is high time that we waken to the danger of permitting these institutions to exist longer. No fear need be felt that an insufficient number of young men and young women will take up the study of pharmacy to supply the necessary helpers. It doesn't work that way. It has been demonstrated conclusively that real pharmacy attracts a greater number and a superior class of young people when they know that they are not to have the competition of untrained workers and that they will be associated with men and women who have ideals and a higher valuation of the services of pharmacy. ZADA M. COOPER.
