

## EDITORIAL

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### THE SIXTY-SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION.

**T**HE valuable results of a convention are estimated from its accomplishments or the progress made in its laudable endeavors. The attendance at the Chicago meeting of the American Pharmaceutical Association was not as large as it would have been in normal times, but the registration records were very satisfactory and beyond the expectations of officials prior to convention dates. The accession of membership exceeded that of last report; 410 names were added during the year.

Throughout the proceedings the purpose to advance the opportunities of pharmacy was evident, and this determination found expression in the transactions of the affiliated bodies, of the Sections, the House of Delegates and the General Sessions of the Association.

Federation of the Drug Industries did not become an accomplished fact, but the movement has progressed by the expansion of the National Drug Trade Conference through the inclusion of delegates from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy and the American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties. Another step toward federation was taken by enlarging the functions of the House of Delegates of the A. Ph. A. and admitting representatives of State Pharmaceutical Associations to participate in its deliberations and promotions. Quoting from the report of the Federation Committee: "The National Drug Trade Conference and the House of Delegates will be as two piers of a great bridge, and when, as the years go on, there is completed between the two a connecting span in the shape of service features, so vitally needed in American Pharmacy, the federation will then be a realized dream."

The conclusions reached by the majority in attendance were that if a Pharmaceutical Corps is established in the U. S. Army only properly qualified pharmacists will be commissioned in that department. It was also recognized as essential that Congress and the public must be convinced of the significance of pharmaceutical service. In the present crisis coöperation with the Government in conservation is of paramount importance, and both the desire and ability to be helpful were clearly indicated in a number of the papers presented.

As a part of the program of the Scientific Section, Dr. H. H. Rusby delivered a lecture, illustrated by lantern slides, on "The Recognition at Sight of Poisonous and Medicinal Properties in Unknown Plants;" a series of papers dealt with the effect of the war on drug supplies, the manufacturing pharmacists, chemists, re-

tail pharmacists, etc., while others related to the development of *materia medica*. Instructive discussion in the Section on Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing added value to contributions on the conservation of alcohol, sugar and glycerin, all important items of the conservation list. In the Section on Commercial Interests, following the reading of a paper by Dr. A. R. L. Dohme, action was taken to provide for a Conservation Committee to which the Association signified its approval. Related work is now also engaging the Committee on Revision of the United States Pharmacopoeia and that of the National Formulary, all of which should convince the Surgeon General, the Medical Department of the Army, and Congress, that pharmacists have contributed, can, do and are willing to render service of the highest importance to the Medical Department, and that they are entitled to better recognition than has so far been accorded to them. The remarks made before the Association by Colonel Henry Raymond, representing the Medical Department of the U. S. Army, emphasized the necessity of furnishing convincing proof that pharmacists are in a position and qualified to render an indispensable service to the Medical Department,—he admitted that in the Army rank made greater efficiency and authority possible. It required no stretch of imagination to deduce that technicians and professional men should serve in the capacity for which they are qualified by training and education and should be given commissions commensurate with the service. Without unveiling his thoughts he commended the dentists for their past activities, and referred to their signal success in having a dental corps made part of the Medical Department of the U. S. Army.

The report of the Committee on the Status of Pharmacists in the Government service, printed in this issue of the *JOURNAL*, is of particular interest. The recommendations of F. H. Freericks, presented in a paper, that provisions be made now for looking after the welfare of pharmacists when they return from service abroad, received the hearty endorsement of the Association.

Provisions were made for a committee to devise ways and means for the creation of a loan fund for distressed pharmacists in the war zone.

Another subject—and this will be the final consideration of this writing—was presented in several papers and addresses, and related to the separation of pharmacies and drug stores. A committee was appointed to study the proposition, not only from the standpoint of practicability but of necessary legislation and applicable school curricula for both divisions. The thought is not new, and such distinction obtains in some European countries. It may not be altogether impracticable to make a division of this kind at this time, but as the convenience of the public enters into the move along with the inclinations of druggists and pharmacists considerable time will elapse before workable plans are stabilized for the decided changes that are involved. The general expressions on the

subject, however, indicate that there are some who would pursue exclusively the practice of pharmacy if those who are most interested in merchandizing would be willing to discontinue the pharmaceutical departments of their stores, and there are, doubtless, many druggists who would welcome the opportunity.

There was about a balance of arguments, pro and con, relative to the practicability of the proposition. The majority admitted that if it was possible to effect such a change pharmacy would acquire its professional standing and the druggists would attain a higher degree of proficiency and more general success in the business world. In other words, it was acknowledged that there was a degree of incompatibility under present conditions which interfered with the development of both pharmacy and the drug business.

The suggestion was made that because of the present status of the drug business recognition was not forthcoming to pharmacy by the establishment of a pharmaceutical corps in the U. S. Army. On this question the consensus of opinion was that there were many qualified American pharmacists, that their work conclusively proved this, and there was no expectancy of commissioned rank except for those pharmacists who could meet the requirements proposed in the Edmonds Bill.

Cicero said, "Certain signs precede certain events;" someone else has paraphrased this: "Great events have sent before them their announcements."

E. G. E.

#### PHARMACY IS AN "ESSENTIAL SPECIALTY" OF ARMY MEDICAL PRACTICE.

**L**ET us be frank. The "lion in the pathway" of securing the establishment of a Pharmaceutical Corps in the U. S. Army is Surgeon General Gorgas, who has consistently and persistently opposed the movement for the establishment of the corps, the crux of his objection being that the practice of pharmacy in the Army is a non-essential specialty. (See Memorandum of War Department, February 13, 1918.)

There is, of course, a ready and complete answer to this. If pharmacy, which is a branch of therapeutics, is essential in civil life, it is equally essential in Army life. If the 150,000 physicians of the country require 50,000 retail pharmacists for civil medical practice, as they do, and if it is necessary for the 48 States of the Union to have pharmacy laws for the protection of the public against the serious dangers of incompetency in the compounding of drugs and poisons, as they have—surely the men of the Army deserve as skilled pharmaceutical service as they received at home, and this they do not get. There is no commissioned rank for pharmacists in the Army and no adequate pharmaceutical service.