

to raise immense sums of money by taxes, and it is the rule to keep taxes on such products as have been taxed in the past.

For these reasons, I firmly believe, as previously said, that the manufacturing pharmacist should look to denatured alcohol as the solution to one of his problems. Of course, in the preparation of his tinctures, etc., such use will probably not be granted, but there are vast quantities of alcohol used for extractive purposes and for the manufacture of semi-solid articles, which I believe are entitled to the privileges of the tax-free article.

PRONUNCIATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL LATIN.*

BY A. B. STEVENS.

Much confusion exists in the pronunciation of pharmaceutical Latin terms. There appears to be no uniformity among teachers or text-books. Some follow the Roman system, others the English and many in actual practice use a mingling of the two systems. High schools and colleges universally teach the Roman system. Teachers of pharmacy naturally look to text-books on Pharmaceutical Latin for correct pronunciation. But comparison of such text-books shows a marked difference in practice among authors. For instance, Robinson's "Latin Grammar of Medicine and Pharmacy" uses the Roman system. Dr. O. A. Wall in his "Elementary Lessons in Latin" does not state which system he uses, but from the sounds given letters it is evident that he uses the Roman System. The same author in his excellent work on "The Prescription" devotes 72 pages to the use of Latin in medicine and pharmacy, but the only reference he makes to pronunciation is found in the foot-note on page 127 in which he very aptly states:

Incidentally it may be remarked that it is absurd to give scientific nomenclature, derived largely from modern English words, the pronunciation which was supposedly used by Cicero for the Latin he spoke 2000 years ago.

In another text-book, "Pharmaceutical Latin" by Hugh Muldoon, the author gives both the Roman and the English systems, but states that:

Though the latter system is recommended as being the more practical because of its similarity to English, it will be found that many prominent men in the profession use the Roman method, perhaps more generally a mingling of the two. . . . It is much more important for a pharmacist to be able to interpret a prescription correctly than it is to be able to pronounce in a faultless manner the Latin contained therein.

Dr. M. L. Neff, in his book on "Prescription Writing" does not allude to the pronunciation of Latin.

Clothers and Bice in their "Elements of Latin for Students of Medicine and Pharmacy" have the following to say regarding the pronunciation of Latin:

Latin is now pronounced differently in different countries. English-speaking people use either the Roman or the English method, the Roman being the one preferred by scholars generally. In this book the English method will be used as that prevails in medicine and pharmacy.

Other text-books on pharmacy, such as:

"Principles of Pharmacy" by Army, "Treatise on Pharmacy" by Caspari, and "Practice of Pharmacy" by Remington, all devote considerable space to pharmaceutical Latin but do not give anything on pronunciation.

* Read before Section on Education and Legislation, A. Ph. A., Chicago meeting, 1918.

The writer in his "Manual of Pharmacy and Dispensing" followed the English method.

From the preceding it is evident that there is a decided lack of uniformity in the pronunciation of medical and pharmaceutical names. The principal argument in favor of the Roman method is the fact that it is taught in our public schools. This would be a strong point in its favor, if the majority of those who study pharmacy were Latin students, but many of our high school graduates have not studied Latin and those who have are not strict in the use of it in the pronunciation of medical and pharmaceutical terms.

The English method is more easily acquired by English-speaking people but the strongest argument in its favor is the fact that, with one exception, the English method is used by botanists in the pronunciation of botanical names of plants. One of the first subjects studied by a pharmacy student is botany, in which he becomes familiar with the names of many drugs. How absurd and impractical it would be for a pharmacist to use one system in the pronunciation of botanical drugs, and another for the preparations made from them, and also for inorganic drugs. Under such conditions is it any wonder that those who try to use the Roman method naturally fall into the habit of mingling the two methods?

It seems as though this is a question of great importance to the study of pharmacy, and one that should be discussed, and if possible settled by the Section on Education.

From the preceding it must be evident that I am in favor of the English method. However, I would not so strongly object to the universal adoption of the Roman method if the botanists would adopt that method, but that is practically hopeless as they are a very large body of men, and practically united on the English system.

DISCUSSION.

BERNARD FANTUS: We need an authority on this subject to which reference can be made. It is most lamentable that there is no agreement relative to the pronunciation of medical and pharmaceutical terms among teachers. Students may hear Dig i tā lis or Dig i tā lis; Hy os cy á-mus or Hy os cy a mus; Sco pol ám ine or Sco pol am ine. Now which is correct, and how should we pronounce not only the Latin but also the English names of drugs? I take it in our ordinary conversation we use the English names rather than Latin names. I have great difficulty in getting authority on the pronunciation of English names of drugs. Further than that, I find it difficult to get authority on proper spelling. Especially does it seem that the proper spelling of the newer drugs is quite diversified, and it is difficult to get authoritative decisions. I have appealed, for instance, to an author of a text-book on Pharmacology for decisions on questions of this kind. He answered, "Everybody spells the way he pleases." When you look through this author's book you will find that is so. There is absolutely no system on spelling that he carries through the book.

There is this thought also that comes to me: Who should be the ultimate authority on the spelling of medical terms? Is it not the Pharmacopoeia? If so, who looks after the orthography of the Pharmacopoeia? The question of, for instance, the introduction of spelling reform is one that I believe a serious one. Take the words ending in *in* and *ine*. Those of us who are allied with the Pharmacopoeia ought to stand by it. For instance, when I write an article for publication in a medical journal, and use the *ine*, they scratch off the *e*. I believe this is an important topic for teachers.
