

## EDITORIAL NOTES

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### ALKALINIZED SOLUTIONS OF ARS-PHENAMINE RENDERED HIGHLY TOXIC IN PRESENCE OF AIR.

The United States Public Health Service has published a paper by George B. Roth, pharmacologist at the hygienic laboratory of the service, on the effect of shaking certain solutions of arsphenamine and neoarsphenamine in the presence of air. The results of these studies are summarized as follows:

"Shaking alkalized aqueous solutions of arsphenamine or aqueous solutions of neoarsphenamine in the presence of air renders them highly toxic, as shown by intravenous administration to white rats. The increase in toxicity caused by such shaking is presumably due to the oxidation of these compounds to *p*-oxyphenylarsenoxide, commonly called 'arsenoxide,' inasmuch as shaking a solution of neoarsphenamine in the absence of air does not increase the toxicity of such a solution. The toxicity of alkalized aqueous solutions of arsphenamine or aqueous solutions of neoarsphenamine is greatly influenced by the manner in which they are prepared for administration."

### THE CENTENARY OF OERSTED'S DISCOVERY.\*

On August 31 and September 1 the centenary of the discovery of electromagnetic action by the Danish physicist, Hans Christian Oersted, was celebrated at Copenhagen. Meetings were held in the Town Hall and University, at which many Scandinavian men of science were present, and the occasion was marked by the publication of some of Oersted's

scientific correspondence. It was during the winter of 1819-20 that Oersted observed that a wire uniting the ends of a voltaic battery affected a magnet placed in its vicinity, and after prosecuting his inquiries some months longer, in July 1820 he published his Latin tract, "Experimenta circa effectum Conflictus Electrici in Acum Magneticum." The importance of his discovery received instant recognition. Amperc, Arago and Davy all seized on the idea, and four months after the publication of his tract Oersted was elected a foreign member of the Royal Society and awarded the Copley medal. Efforts to connect magnetism with electricity had hitherto met with little success, and Wollaston, in his discourse as president of the Royal Society, referring to Oersted's discovery, expressed the hope that "the gleam of light which thus beams upon us may be the dawn of a new day, in which the clouds which have hitherto veiled from our sight the hidden mysteries of light and heat, of electricity and magnetism, may be dispelled." Oersted, who was the son of a country apothecary, originally studied medicine, but turned his attention to chemistry and physics while at Copenhagen University, and he held that position until his death in March 1851, at the age of seventy-three. Known alike for his genial and kindly nature and for his scientific labors, he was the author of some two hundred memoirs, and received many honors at home and abroad. Twenty-five years after his death a bronze statue of him was erected on the old fortification of Copenhagen.—*Science*,<sup>1</sup> September 24, 1920, pp. 288-9. From *Nature*.

\* See JOURNAL A. PH. A., July 1918, p. 620, contribution by Edward Kremers, to whom we are also indebted for this reference.

<sup>1</sup> The *Christian Science Monitor* has a longer account of Oersted's discovery, but does not mention that his father was an apothecary.

## MARK CENTENARY OF FIRST HIGH SCHOOL.

Pharmacy schools have a deep interest in the development of high schools, hence the following data are reprinted:

Philadelphia public schools this term celebrate the centenary of the establishment of the first public high school in the United States, the English High School of Boston, established in 1821.

Central High School, the first public high school in Philadelphia, was established in 1837. Since that time the growth of public education has so increased that the Federal Bureau of Education in its latest statistics announces that new high schools have been added to the educational system of the United States at the rate of at least one a day during the past twenty-eight years.

There are now more than 17,000 high schools in the United States, attended by 1,735,619 pupils. City high schools constitute less than ten percent of the total. They enroll, however, fifty-two percent of all the pupils. The number of high school graduates increased from 21,882 in 1890 to 224,867 in 1918. The largest high school in the United States is the Polytechnic Evening High School, Los Angeles, with an enrollment of 8,440. Philadelphia has twelve high schools with an enrollment of 239,514 pupils or a greater number than was graduated from all the high schools in the United States thirty years ago.

Texas, according to a compilation made by the Bureau of Education, Department of the Interior, leads all the States of the Union in the number of high school graduates who continue their education, either at some university or some business college. The figures show 48 percent of Texas high school graduates attend universities or colleges, while 60 percent continue their education at some institution of learning.

## CENTENARY OF SIR JOSEPH BANKS.

The Centenary of Sir Joseph Banks, who died June 17, 1820, was commemorated June 17 of this year by the Linnæan Society, in London, with a program of papers relating to Banks and his work and an exhibition of objects connected with his life. One of the papers presented was, the author stated, based on the daily use of specimens from Banks' herbarium, now in the British Museum. Sir Joseph Banks, Bart., was president of the Royal Society for 42 years.

## CENTENARY OF THE RUBBER INDUSTRY.

The one-hundredth anniversary of the rubber industry, of which Thomas Hancock was the founder, was celebrated in London a few months ago. While the industry really became established in 1820, it has been only about twenty-five years since great strides therein have been made. The world's production of rubber in 1900 was 53,890 long tons; in 1919, 290,000 long tons. Last year the United States produced \$667,204,000 worth of rubber products.

## PERSONAL AND NEWS ITEMS.

**Prof. C. O. Lee**, professor of pharmacy at Purdue University for the last several years, has resigned, and sailed September 9 from Vancouver, B. C., on the steamer *Empress of Asia*, for Shanghai, en route to Wuhu, where he will open a pharmacy in connection with the Wuhu Mission Hospital maintained there by the board of foreign missions of the Methodist Episcopal church. His going to Asia is a distinct loss to the American Pharmaceutical Association as he has taken an active part in the annual conventions and was elected chairman of the Section on Commercial Interests at the Washington meeting.

His position in Purdue University has been filled by Frank Helbig of Chicago, a graduate of the Michigan University School of Pharmacy.

**Dr. Robert P. Fischelis**, consulting chemist of Philadelphia, is now located in the Foster Building, New York City. He is specializing on investigations of markets and sources of supply for chemical, pharmaceutical and biological products and the preparation of literature along these lines. He continues as a member of the faculty of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, and also as director of the technical department of the Matos Advertising Company. He has also been retained by the National Research Council to assist in securing the support of the chemical industries in the work of publishing an American volume of critical tables of physical and chemical constants.

**Dr. Rodney Howard True** has succeeded Dr. John MacFarlane as professor of botany in the University of Pennsylvania. As is well known, he was for many years with the Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, taught there for a time and also at Harvard University and Radcliffe College.

**Dr. Frederick B. Power** and **Victor K. Chesnut** have recently contributed the results of investigation on the "Odorous Constituents of Apples."\* Although in chemical literature amyl valerate is generally designated as "apple oil," it is quite certain that this compound has never been found in the apple, and in the recent investigation no evidence could be obtained of its presence. On the other hand, the characteristic, fragrant odor of ripe apples has now been shown to be due to a combination of substances, essentially amyl esters of formic, acetic, and caproic acids, together with a small amount of the caprylic ester and a considerable proportion of acetaldehyde. These substances may exist in varying proportions in the numerous varieties of the fruit, thus causing slight differences in odor.

**Allen J. Weaver** of Dallas, Texas, has been appointed head of the Bureau of Food and Drug Laboratories of the Republic of San Domingo. He sailed October 12. Mr. Weaver will also have charge of the research work in developing the native drugs and vegetable products. He is a graduate of the University of Texas.

**Fred West**, formerly chief of the Customs Laboratory, port of New York, is now chief chemist of the new factory of the United Drug Company at St. Louis.

**President Walter J. Sturgeon**, of the Pennsylvania Pharmaceutical Association, has named the following well-known pharmacists as members of the special committee on prohibition enforcement: **Edgar F. Heffner**, Lock Haven, chairman; **M. D. Allen**, Philadelphia; **I. G. Amsler**, Pittsburgh; **Croll Keller**, Harrisburg; **W. H. Knoepfel**, Scranton. The creation of this committee was one of the interesting features at the meeting of the Pennsylvania Association held at Harrisburg.

Part of the twenty-first report of the Michigan Academy of Science is devoted to a highly scientific account of the flora of Michigan by **Oliver Atkins Farwell**. In the "Notes on the Michigan Flora" collected by Mr. Farwell, the order of the genera is that of Gray's Manual, ed. 7.

**Ernest R. Jones**, for the past three or four years dean of the School of Pharmacy, Detroit Institute of Technology, is now manager of a new Detroit concern, known as George M. Schettler, Manufacturing Pharmacist.

**J. G. Munson**, who had done business in one location at San José for thirty-one years, has sold his lease on the premises at 14 South First Street in that city. He has been a druggist forty-two years. Going to San José, he organized the San José Druggists' Association, of which he served as secretary almost thirty years. He was elected president of the California State Pharmaceutical Association in 1908, and has also served a number of years as a director in the College of Pharmacy, at the University of California.

**A. L. I. Winne**, one of the editors of the *Virginia Pharmacist*, is now secretary of the Virginia Pharmaceutical Association.

**Samuel W. Fairchild** has received from the King of Belgium the Cross of Officer of Leopold II, in recognition of his services in the organization of Belgian relief during the war. Earlier in the present year, Mr. Fairchild was made a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor.

**William M. Sailer**, of Sharp & Dohme, has been elected president of the American Drug Manufacturers' Association, succeeding the late **Richard C. Stofer**.

**Carl L. Alsberg** is now the president of the Association of American Dairy, Food and Drug Officials. **L. E. Sayre** was named chairman of the Committee on Definitions and Standards. Miami, Fla., was selected as the next convention city by the Association.

**H. M. Gaylord** has resigned the position of Assistant Prohibition Commissioner (U. S.); **Captain D. Spencer Bliss** succeeds him.

**Tribute to Belgian Pharmacists.**—A demonstration of the high esteem in which M. M. Haazen, Pattou, Daminet, and Breugelmans, the leaders of the Nationale Pharmaceutique of Belgium, are held by their Belgian *confrères* took place recently, when a memorial plate was unveiled in their honor. This plate, which is a work of art, is to place on record the appreciation of Belgian pharmacists of the high sense of duty and patriotism shown by these gentlemen, and the great work they did for the profession during the German occupation. The memorial is to be placed in the meeting-room in the new headquarters of the Nationale Pharmaceutique in Brussels, and reproductions in silver were handed to each of the four gentlemen fêted as a souvenir.—*Chemist and Druggist*, August 28, 1920.

\* *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 42 (1920), 1509.