

## Section on Commercial Interests

Papers Presented at the Fifty-Ninth Convention

### COOPERATION AND CONSOLIDATION.

A. R. L. DOHME.

This is the age of cooperation and consolidation of effort and interest. Everything is drifting in that direction. It is natural that it should, for it makes for economy and result. Those trades or professions which have been successful and advanced their status, their efficiency, and their general welfare are those in which cooperation and consolidation have progressed furthest. If this cooperated and consolidated effort is well directed and honestly managed on the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number, it invariably benefits all concerned, and the best instance of it is the American Medical Association, which has accomplished wonders in helping its members, advancing their standing as professional men, and obtaining desirable and necessary legislation for its members.

Cooperation and consolidation are beneficial to all concerned in the following ways:

*First:* Commercially, in dollars and cents. Dues for several organizations cost more than for one; expense to attend several meetings costs more than one.

*Second:* Legislatively, in accomplishing better but less laws for state and nation. One large organization representing the entire profession would receive a respectful and effective hearing where a division in the rank and file weakens their effectiveness. How can a committee of Congress or of a legislature pay any heed to the recommendations of the legislative committee of the A. Ph. A. when these recommendations may be offensive to the N. A. R. D. or vice versa?

*Third:* Socially, in pleasure and enjoyment and status before the people. To feel that we belong to a national organization of one's own profession fills one with just pride and pleasure, but this cannot well be the case when we have two or more separate, distinct bodies each fighting its own battles, and at times fighting the efforts of the sister organization. How much more pleasure to attend a large meeting of all the profession and meet all of them instead of only a portion of them. How much more advanced and high is the standing of a united organization than a divided organization in the eyes of the people and of the press?

*Fourth:* Generally, in generating harmony and good fellowship among the profession. Harmony in a profession is a wonderful asset when it comes to accomplishing anything in which it is interested. As long as there are several organizations of the same profession, absolute harmony cannot and as a matter of fact does not exist.

Let us look among the allied branches of the profession and what do we find?

There is only one wholesale druggists' association, the N. W. D. A., which as its motto says, "buiided better than it knew." There is only one proprietary association, "The Proprietary Association of America," and how effective and beneficial it has been to practically all its members is well known to you all. There is practically only one medical association of national scope among the allopathists and its tremendous membership and its wonderfully broad, successful, and instructive meetings speak louder than anything I can say for the efficiency of consolidation and cooperation. Why then should pharmacy be the exception and persist in maintaining a divided household? Is there any rational reason why the A. Ph. A., founded in 1851 and busying itself heretofore principally with scientific pharmacy, and the National Association of Retail Druggists, founded in 1894 and busying itself principally with commercial pharmacy, should not amalgamate into one large, representative, and influential organization? Personally, I can see no real rational reason why they should not, as, for instance, what name shall such resulting association have and which shall submerge itself? To me those seem minor questions to the general broad problems of let us join hands in good fellowship and brotherhood. It has always been clear to me that the A. Ph. A. has not paid enough attention to the commercial side of pharmacy and thereby lost the interest of that great number of pharmacists who have realized that the pharmacy of today is largely merchandizing and requires close attention to and intimate knowledge of merchandizing and commercial usage and practice. You will find that as a rule the most successful pharmacists are usually not the scientific kind, just as the most successful merchants are not the scientific kind. The latter no doubt themselves know more about their preparation, their solubilities, incompatibilities, assay, purity, etc., but their trouble is that they pay so much attention to the preparations themselves that the store soon looks unclean, the clerks look much the same way, the store does not study the public demands and the question of profit upon goods sold is of secondary importance. Their theory is, rather make your own tincture of belladonna and assay it yourself so you know it is correct in every minutia and make not one iota of profit upon it than run chances of its being wrong. Every one of our cities can point to dozens of such druggists. They are great on discussing the theory of the profession but mighty weak on putting it into practice. What you all are looking for is increased volume and profits in business. This is commercial pharmacy, involving knowing how to advertise to the public, how to please your customers and how to gain and hold the physician's confidence. There is no doubt we have too many pharmacists in most of our cities, just as we have too many physicians, and the result is that the survival of the fittest comes into play, and this means that those pharmacists who combine in themselves the ability to select the capable and honest helpers, actively advertise their business, keep their store scrupulously neat, clean, and up to date, and secure the acquaintanceship and confidence of the physicians of their city, will survive. The man who can and does make all his tinctures, fluid-extracts, emulsions, pills, capsules, plasters, etc., and in doing so lets the store look dingy and does not keep up the books and the cash account will sooner or later be superseded and fall by the wayside. My only purpose in bringing out this point is, that the reason the N. A. R. D. ever had a reason for being born and growing into the strong body it now is, is because the A. Ph. A. had too many

"watch your percolator" members and too few "watch your profits" members. The follower of the "percolator" philosophy never seemed to increase his bank account, while the follower of the tidings of his cash register seemed to wax richer and fatter and happier.

If the N. A. R. D. and the A. Ph. A. would consolidate and each continue its present occupations and activities, but merely meet at some time and place, it would be a great step in advance. If you please, let them meet together as separate organizations at the same place and have their amusements only in common—shake hands and meet socially. The next year, let them repeat this but hold joint meetings upon topics which they have in common, and the third year let their program committees get their heads together and have a joint program throughout. If this greatly to be desired object can be accomplished in less than four years, all the better for all concerned. That it should be accomplished will, I feel sure, meet with the hearty concurrence of practically all of the members of both associations. That its accomplishment will greatly advance the standing of the profession of pharmacy, and the welfare of its members seems self-evident to me.

#### DISCUSSION.

MR. GUILFORD: "It seems to me that the callings of the two associations are so different—the one commercial and the other professional—that it would not be feasible to consolidate them, though I speak without giving the matter any particular thought. It does seem to me, however, that it would be well if we could get nearer together, that is, if we could hold our annual conventions at the same place, the one immediately following the other, so as to offer a greater opportunity for members to attend both meetings. I think this would increase the attendance and that both associations would profit by it."

H. P. HYNSON: "The subject dealt with by Dr. Dohme's paper has caused me a great deal of thought because I believe we must decide that question. There is absolutely no reason for wanting the N. A. R. D. to consolidate with this Association. This is an association of pharmacists where the educational and professional features are emphasized. The retailer has other problems than these, commercial problems which can best be decided by the N. A. R. D. The Wholesalers' Association does not desire to come into this association, and yet it would be just as practicable for the Wholesalers' Association, the Proprietors' Association and the Chemistry Association to consolidate with this society as for the N. A. R. D. to do so.

"I know something about the National Association of Retail Druggists, and it is a matter of pride and pleasure to me that I have had something to do with its origin and development. I am glad to see it coming out of tribulation into the field of usefulness, and I believe the N. A. R. D. is going to solve its own problems.

"We should have a Legislative Conference of all the pharmaceutical interests of this country, and I want you to think of the possibility of this catholic association of ours forming a conference on National legislation."

C. A. MAYO: "I believe Mr. Hynson's suggestion of a National Legislative Conference is the proper solution of the question of national legislation. In New York City we had imposed upon us a regulation most onerous and objectionable. A conference was called of every pharmaceutical organization, each of which was invited to send two delegates. We then went to the Board of Health and said, 'Gentlemen, we represent seventeen different pharmaceutical organizations of New York City, we represent every pharmacist in this city.' And they listened to us."

MR. GUILFORD: "The N. A. R. D. has called a Conference on Legislation to meet at the Niagara Falls Convention, and one session of the convention has been set aside for legisla-

tive work. The session will be presided over by the Chairman of the Legislative Committee and any druggist will have the privilege of the floor at this time.

"We have invited the president of every pharmaceutical association in the United States to send a delegate to attend that particular session. I want to invite all of you gentlemen, especially those who have never attended the N. A. R. D. to meet with us this year.

"While we do not go into the professional part of pharmacy, we do try to do everything we can for the retail druggist in a commercial way. We are officered by retail druggists for the interest of retail druggists, and our association was never in a better condition financially or in membership than at present."

T. V. WOOTEN: "I, too, have been much interested in the relation of the two organizations, the A. Ph. A. and the N. A. R. D. I am inclined to agree that there are so many things to be considered by the two organizations that it is almost impossible to form one organization that can adequately accomplish the business of both. It does seem feasible to me, however, that these two organizations should hold their annual meetings quite close together, if not the same week, then parts of two weeks which come together; one meeting the latter part of one week and the other the early part of the next week, or some similar plan."

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#### THE DRUGGIST'S PLAIN DUTY.

When a piece of drug merchandise is labeled "consumption cure" or "cancer cure" is it not at least as much the business of the druggist to know whether it is what it pretends to be and to refuse to offer it for what it is not, as it is the hardware man's business to know the difference between stamped sheet-iron, tinned, and block tin? And are there not "shoddy" goods in cod liver oil preparations that are as far from being true to label as their congeners in the dry goods world are from being first-class woven worsteds? Then what about the preparations advertised in the fake beauty column of the daily papers, the poisonous mercuric freckle removers, and the others which are positively harmful or just plain humbugs? That a great many people want, or think they want, these things, is true; that they expect the druggist to supply them is also true. A third truth which should be considered in this connection is that the public are influenced in their estimation of the value of such preparations by the attitude toward them taken by the druggist. The public believe, and have a right to believe, that the dealer is in a position to know, and does know, better than they the value of the goods he handles. If he endorses an article, actually or tacitly, he should know that it is worthy of his endorsement. If he knows, or feels, or has good reason to suspect, that the piece of merchandise asked for by a customer is not what the customer believes it to be, it is his duty as an honest merchant to advise the customer.—*Druggists Circular.*

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#### MORBID FAITHFULNESS TO DISCIPLINE.

"They tell us of the 'sublime nobleness' of the Roman soldier at Pompeii, whose skeleton was found centuries afterward, imbedded in the once molten lava which swept down upon the doomed city. He was still standing at one of the gates, at his post of duty, still grasping a sword in his crumbling fingers. His was a morbid faithfulness to a discipline from which a great convulsion of nature had released him. An automaton would have stood there just as long, just as boldly, just as uselessly."—*William George Jordan.*