

EDITORIAL NOTES

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REPORT ON EGYPTIAN GUMS AND OTHER DRUGS.

Professor Perrot, of the Paris Faculty of Pharmacy, has returned from a trip to the Far East, where he had gone to study the gums of the Egyptian Sudan. In an extended report he describes various gums, present methods of collections and suggests improvements; also a scientific standard of comparison, based on adhesion, viscosity, solubility, color, etc. He remarks that Sudan senna, *Cassia obovata*, is not official, yet this was the first known to botanists; this seems to be the only species indigenous to French West Africa, and worthy of investigation. He also refers to Egyptian henbane, *Hyoscyamus muticus*, which is rich in atropine. The report is accompanied by interesting snapshots.

WILD FLORA DO NOT ALWAYS GROW IN MOST CONGENIAL HABITAT.

At a lecture given in Chicago before an assemblage of geographers and biologists representing several societies, Dr. D. T. MacDougal, director of the botanical research department of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, described the results of a series of experiments extending over fourteen years and embracing 139 species of plants, the experiments tending to show that the wild plant is not always found in the environment most suited to it.

The coastal laboratory at Carmel-by-the-Sea and the desert laboratory at Tucson, Ariz., are two of the experimental stations which were used in this work. In these experiments plants from the mountain tops, some from the height of close to one and one-half miles above sea level, were found to grow much more luxuriantly, producing more leaves, flowers and fruits at sea level than they

had in their native habitat. These plants were not cultivated, protected or fostered in any way in their new situations. Once placed, they were to all intents and purposes wild flowers and had to fight their own battles and take chances as before.

THE CENTENARY OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY OF MEDICINE.

The Academy of Medicine was founded by Royal decree of King Louis XVIII, continuing the work of the Royal Society of Medicine and the Royal Academy of Surgery, and responsive to the demands of the Government in everything concerning public hygiene, the examination of new remedies, etc. The ceremonies continued for three days, beginning December 20, the day on which, one hundred years ago, the ordinance of King Louis was issued. The opening was presided over by the President of France. Relative to the constitution of the Academy we are quoting from the *Chemist and Druggist* of January 1, 1921:

"There were originally three sections: Medicine (forty-five titular members and thirty honorary), Surgery (twenty-five titular, twenty honorary), and Pharmacy (fifteen titular, ten honorary); besides various associates ('free,' 'ordinary,' and 'foreign') and 'adjoints.' Although the new body was ultimately destined to be self-elective, the first nominations were made by the King. Louis XVIII named, for the Pharmacy Section, Vauquelin, director of the Paris School of Pharmacy; Lougier, assistant director; Professors Deyeux and Robiquet, and Assistant Professors Pelletier and Henry. Besides these school officials, he appointed the Royal Head Pharmacist, Fabre, and two Parisian pharmacists, Boullay and Planche. All these were

'titularies.' The 'honorary' pharmaceutical members were Professor Bouillon-Lagrange and Assistant Professor Bouriat, Cheradame (treasurer of the school), and three retired pharmacists, Cadet de Vaux, Charlard, and Boudet (the uncle). Within the following year these elected six new titular members: Caventou (who had just distinguished himself by his discovery of quinine), Clarion (ex-pharmacist to the Emperor Napoleon I), Boudet (the nephew), Cadet, Laubert (head pharmacist of the Army), and Derosne. The 'adjoints' included such names as Berthelot, Chaptal, Cuvier, Gay-Lussac, Geoffroy de St. Hilaire, Lacépède, and Thénard. Considerable alteration has been made. The three sections have been increased to eleven, Pharmacy being now the eleventh. The distinction between honorary and titular members was abolished and various other changes made, but the *raison d'être* of the Academy is very like what it was a hundred years ago. Much might be written as to the interesting personalities of the members of the Academy of Medicine of 1920. Clarion, for instance, was an ex-private of Bonaparte's famous 'Army' of Italy before he entered the Deyeux's laboratory. He was in charge of the Imperial Pharmacy at St. Cloud when Wellington and Blücher marched on Paris after Waterloo. The grim old Prussian Marshal proposed to carry off the contents of the pharmacy for his ambulances, but, thanks to Clarion's energetic attitude, he was induced to abandon his intention, and the French Government retained possession of 150,000 fr. worth of medical stores. As soon as the Bourbons were restored, the old soldier of the Empire promptly offered to resign the post where he had served so well, but Louis XVIII sent a high official to beg him to retain it. When General Bonaparte decided to study chemistry, Bouillon-Lagrange was recommended by Berthelot to give the necessary demonstrations, and Napoleon and Josephine both keenly appreciated the young professor's skill. The Pharmacie Vigier, well known to all Parisians, was once Bourriat's *officine*, and the name of Charlard may still be seen on a chemist's frontage on the Boulevards."

Prof. Émile Bourquelot, elected the 1921 Vice-President of the Academy of Medicine, was born in 1851 in the Ardennes. He was called to the chair of Galenical Pharmacy in 1897. (For brief sketch see THIS JOURNAL, p. 757, August 1920.)

THE U. S. PHARMACOPOEIA IN CHINESE.

According to reports received by the U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, from Commercial Attaché Arnold, an American publishing house in China is contemplating a standardization in Chinese of the U. S. Pharmacopoeia.

Mr. Arnold believes that if the Chinese could be induced to recognize that drug standard it would be a big step in the development of our chemical and drug trade in that country, as American standards would then have general recognition and American manufacturers would be in a particular position of advantage. This is particularly desirable at this very important time in China, he adds, when the people are building up institutions patterned after the western models. Reference is made to the German influence on the Japanese pharmacopoeia.

INFLUENCE OF CHEMISTRY ON MEDICINE.

F. W. Andrews, writing in the *Lancet*, October 23, 1920, states that chemistry has influenced medicine from the days of alchemy onward; Paracelsus and Van Helmont stand out as picturesque figures in its history. In England the rise of physics and chemistry began in Harvey's lifetime with those meetings of scientific men which later gave birth to the Royal Society. It must not be forgotten that the work of such men as Boyle, Hooke, Lower, and Mayow practically solved the problem of respiration not long after Harvey's death—a problem second only in importance to that of the circulation—though a century was to elapse for its full meaning to become clear with the discovery of oxygen. Every advance in physics and chemistry has borne fruit for us in its turn; to-day we can almost affirm that the chief issues in physiology and pathology are to be sought in the chemical activities of the human body. These, again, are bound up with physical conditions, and there is one recent branch of chemistry, the possibilities of which are only beginning to be appreciated in medicine. If we reflect that the body, from a chemical point of view, consists almost entirely of colloids, the behavior of which is still imperfectly understood, it will be realized that advances in colloidal chemistry are destined to throw a flood of light on the processes of vital activity.

DESTROYING OUR CONSULAR SERVICE.

In a letter to the *New York Commercial*, Hon. William C. Redfield adds his protest to that of manufacturers and business men, to preserve and strengthen the Consular Service. He writes:

"The action of the House Committee on Appropriations in reducing the funds for the operations of the consular and diplomatic service is one against which a widespread protest should and doubtless will be made. It calls for prompt action on the part of organized business bodies and of all business houses interested in our foreign trade.

"Strangely enough the report which accompanies the bill gives the best of reasons why the bill should be different. It points out the value of doing that which it refuses to have done and offers unanswerable reasons why the services should be at the least maintained if not increased instead of being sharply reduced.

"This is no time to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Neither is it the time to cut down either the quality or the quantity of American representation abroad. Surely those have little vision who do not see that our country needs more than ever before to have its consular and diplomatic services maintained on the broadest and most efficient basis.

"These services have done their work admirably and the value of their services increases from year to year. The interests placed in their care were never as large and as important as they are to-day.

"It would be ridiculous if it were not tragic to select this particular productive work for an exhibition of parsimony.

"I hope that the business world will so make its voice heard that this most unfortunate action will be blocked before it is too late."

PERSONAL AND NEWS ITEMS.

George V. Haering, Madison and Jefferson Streets, Chicago, has been elected president of the Chicago Retail Druggists' Association.

Ambrose Hunsberger is the 1921 president of the Philadelphia Retail Druggists' Association. He is also chairman of the Arrangement Committee for the 1921 meeting of the Pennsylvania Pharmaceutical Association.

S. A. Eckstein, Milwaukee, was elected president of the Wisconsin Pharmacal Company; **E. G. Ræuber** is the secretary-treasurer.

Joseph C. Piercy, Tonopah, Nev., is a member of the State legislature, a member of the Nevada Board of Pharmacy, and a director of the Tonopah school board.

George W. Smith, Honolulu, has sold his controlling interest in Benson, Smith & Co., to W. C. McGonagle; Mr. Smith continues as a director in the corporation.

Prof. J. U. Lloyd is convalescing in an entirely satisfactory manner, but he will not resume his work in the laboratory for some time.

Dr. H. H. Rusby has been confined to his home by an attack of influenza; we are advised that he is recovering.

Thomas H. Potts, former secretary of the N. A. R. D., is now a resident of New York City. He is vice-president and secretary of the American Medical Products Co.

Jesse L. Hopkins has been re-elected treasurer of the New York Board of Trade and Transportation.

Miss Neida Humphreys, daughter of **J. D. Humphreys**, Huntsville, Alabama, has made her debut as prima donna at the Castanzi in Rome, Italy, in grand opera. Miss Humphreys received her musical training in New York City and has appeared at Carnegie Hall and Madison Square Garden.

Carl F. G. Meyer, of Meyer Bros. Drug Co., was re-elected president of the St. Louis Drug & Chemical Club.

The **La Pierre** Drug Co., of Boston, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary on January 3.

Dr. Carleton Simon, the alienist and criminologist, is special deputy police commissioner of New York City, in charge of drug cases.

Dr. Herman Schlundt, professor of chemistry in the University of Missouri, at Columbia, Mo., is in Europe to spend a leave of absence in the Cavendish laboratory at Cambridge University, England. He will be associated there with Sir Ernest Rutherford in the study of radioactive substances and their radiations.

Dr. William Duffield Robinson, who had charge of the dinner in honor of Dr. W. W. Keen, is president of the Alumni Association of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy.

Dr. Frederick G. Cottrell recently resigned as director of the U. S. Bureau of Mines to become associated with the National Research

Council. When a young chemist in a California university, Dr. Cottrell transferred to the Smithsonian Institution his patent for a successful process of curing the smoke evil, which made possible the collection of potash from the smoke-stacks of blast furnaces. The earnings from this patent have been used to further scientific research for the benefit of American science and industry. The Research Council handles and administers the funds.

Prof. *Émile Bourquelot* recently read to the Academy of Medicine a review of his twenty years' study of glucoside in plants. He has discovered (by his biochemical method in his own laboratory) fifteen new glucosides, all laevogyrate, which may be hydrolyzed by emulsine. Many of these glucosides are found in plants of widely different botanical species. Glucosides have thus been discovered and isolated in fifty-six species of plants. Of 281 phanerogams examined in his laboratory 205 have been found to contain glucosides. There are, therefore, still 149 of which the glucosides have to be isolated.

Dr. W. W. Keen Honor Guest at a Dinner.

The past, the present and the future were viewed and reviewed from the apex of eighty-four years of life by Dr. W. W. Keen at his

birthday party, January 20, at the Bellevue-Stratford, Philadelphia. He said:

"Eight epoch-making medical events have transpired in my life. They are anesthesia; Pasteur's researches—the foundation of the new science of bacteriology; Pasteur's fundamental discoveries in immunology, or the science of specific prevention of disease; Pasteur's and Lister's researches resulting in anti-septic and aseptic surgery in obstetrics; the discovery that insects carry diseases; the discovery of radio-activity and, especially for medical use, the X-ray; the development of a medical literature written by American authors; the founding of the great laboratories of research.

His spirit is shown by the following:

"Mix merry laughter with earnest labor. Always have some as yet unfinished, but not too urgent job waiting outside your door. Then you will never know ennui. To 'kill time' is murder in the first degree.

"Ultimately, no doubt, I shall get out of your way, but do not overlook the fact of my maliciously good health and that a collateral forbear reached the mature age of one hundred and six."

More than five hundred guests were present and congratulations came from all parts of the world.

OBITUARY.

AUGUSTUS GEORGE SCHLOTTERBECK.

Augustus G. Schlotterbeck, for 60 years engaged in the drug business in Portland, Me., died January 3. He was the last charter member of the Maine Pharmaceutical Association, organized half a century ago. Born in Birstein, Germany, 77 years ago, he came to this country when 10 years of age, and had lived in Portland since 1865. He was known as the "father" of the local Masonic Temple, having taken an active part in financing the construction of the building.

Mr. Schlotterbeck joined the American Pharmaceutical Association in 1896. A sketch appeared in *THIS JOURNAL*, April 1917, p. 339.

CHARLES H. SCHMIDT.

We have notice of the death of Charles H. Schmidt, member of the American Pharmaceutical Association, Hoboken, N. J., January 14. At this writing we have no data from which to prepare a sketch.

MRS. SIDNEY J. COFFEE.

We are advised of the death of Mrs. Sidney J. Coffee, Missoula, Mont. Besides her husband, one son and one daughter survive the deceased.

J. E. BARNABE.

J. E. Barnabe, president of the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association, 1919-1920, died at his home in Montreal, December 3. He was also a past president of the Quebec Pharmaceutical Association, and a member of the pharmaceutical examining board of that Province.

DR. HENRY A. BUMSTEAD.

Dr. Henry A. Bumstead, head of the National Research Council, died while en route from Chicago to Washington, Saturday, January 1. He was a noted physicist and was working out a great constructive program for the council. He had a laboratory at Yale University.

During the war Dr. Bumstead was an at-