

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF PHARMACEUTICAL FACULTIES

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The Honorable Newton D. Baker, ex-Secretary of War, was invited to address the American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties at the Cleveland meeting. He gave one of the most inspiring addresses ever delivered before that body and the appeal which he makes for pharmacists to recognize the dignity of their relation to all education is most timely.

The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy was given a special invitation by the Conference to listen to Mr. Baker's address. This they did in a body and the prolonged applause which Mr. Baker received at the close of his address was only a small indication of the appreciation by his hearers of the wisdom of what he said.

The Chairman of the Executive Committee wishes to announce that the School of Pharmacy of the Agricultural College of North Dakota has been elected to Conference membership. The recent vote taken by mail at the order of the Conference was unanimous.

RUFUS A. LYMAN, *Chairman, Executive Committee and Conference Editor.*]

ADDRESS BEFORE THE AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF PHARMACEUTICAL FACULTIES AT THE 23RD ANNUAL MEETING IN CLEVELAND BY HONORABLE NEWTON D. BAKER, EX-SECRETARY OF WAR.

Ladies and Gentlemen: I assure you that I recognize myself with great difficulty when introduced as a prominent educator. I have attempted to educate but one man, and sometimes, when in recent years my duties have been so distracting, I have of necessity abandoned the course of reading in which I delighted in my youth. I have felt that my education is in a backward direction, and if I continue as I have been going for the last ten years, I will be illiterate. Yet I can say, by way of amplification, that in my experience I have had some educational contacts of an extremely interesting kind.

The one that delights me most is the greatest educational fact that ever took place in the history of mankind. When the war was over and we had something like two million men in France, it was perfectly clear that a long time would necessarily elapse before those two million soldiers could be returned to the United States. They had been taken over with the aid of the British passenger ships at a rate which, in July of 1918, reached three hundred and thirty-four thousand in a single month. But as soon as the war was over, the British needed their ships to carry their Canadian soldiers home, and their men to outlying possessions, and as many of the British were of necessity withdrawn it looked as though it would take a year to get our army home.

The question arose as to what we should do with two million men in a foreign country, with nothing to do. An army is all right while it is being formed and trained, because it has rigid and exacting duties ahead of it, and every man's attention can be centered upon the perilous things he is to encounter and the tasks he is to perform, and he realizes the necessity of preparation that he may do these things as safely as possible. But when the war is over, an army of almost any size is a danger, not only to itself, but to the country in which it happens to be, because of all the trades and occupations, that of a soldier is least compatible with idleness.

My military associates on the other side conceived the notion that the only way to keep that army from running amuck or losing its mind was to drill it all the time. They woke those boys up at five in the morning and drilled them until they fell from exhaustion. Then they would let them sleep a little while and then drill them again, and they kept that up until there was almost a riot. I think there would have been a mutiny if they had been long subjected to that process.

We were hunting for something for them to do. The suggestion was made that they might turn their home talents into the reconstruction of devastated France, but they were in no mood to build roads or houses. Their idea was that others had been responsible for the destruction. We put our ear to the ground to see what the boys themselves thought they would like to do, and I think it is a tribute to American institutions to say that the answer which came, came from the boys themselves. It was not imposed by us older people upon them, but it came from the soldiers. They said, "We want education. We have been over here a year now, and we are likely to be here a year longer. Two years have been taken out of our training for life and we want education."