

EDITORIAL

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REVISIONS OF THE STANDARDS.

BOTH the Revision Committee of the United States Pharmacopoeia and that of the National Formulary are making real progress and along rational lines; a purpose to conclude the revisions in the shortest possible time and to have the standards conform to the needs of those who must use them in the practice of medicine and pharmacy characterizes the work of revision. The other purpose, providing standards and descriptions whereby the pharmacist and others may determine the identity and quality of the officials, is receiving careful investigation and consideration. All of this bespeaks new standards which will be practicable and conform to the needs of those who must use them as guides.

The Pharmacopoeia and National Formulary differ in many respects, but in the editions now being prepared there is a much closer relation than in previous ones. The National Formulary Committee has deleted many items which have a place in a book of formulas, and added at least two important classes—preparations used in veterinary practice and dental preparations, and have secured the cooperation in this work of men well qualified by experience. It is not the intention to enter into a discussion of what has been done along these lines, for this has been presented in papers by those who are qualified to speak, and in reports of officers and members of the Committees.

A large number of workers, not members of the Committees, have coöperated in the revision, and their efforts deserve commendation; unfortunately, perhaps, a larger number among those who must make use of the Standards have had nothing to say; a greater interest on their part might be helpful; pharmacists have exceptional opportunities of learning much about the frequency with which certain drugs and preparations are prescribed and also to make observations in compounding that would contribute valuable information to the revisers. Among this silent number there are many who are afterwards dissatisfied with results. The time to speak is now.

The Pharmacopoeia will always, to some extent, be the result of a compromise, and the National Formulary even more so. Among medical men there are some who would restrict the Pharmacopoeial armamentarium, and a few who would greatly enlarge it, but there is much difference in viewpoint relative to what should be the deletions and inclusions; there is a desire for consensus of opinions—provided these can be brought about by adopting the suggestions of the individuals. This attitude is not so different from other efforts to bring about uniformity; elsewhere even among sectarians there is the hope that the views of one sect will be accepted by the others and all will be of the faith represented by that one, and so far that has been impossible because each holds out for such recognition. In the preparation of these standards the golden mean is therefore desirable, because it will serve best, and a greater number. Our conclusions may be wrong, but there

seems to be a return to drugs among those who formerly employed only a restricted few; they have realized that advancement has been made in drug knowledge. There are others who have held out for an extensive materia medica who now agree that it should be more restricted. In an editorial of the *Pharmaceutical Journal and Pharmacist* of January 7, 1922, on "Pruning the Pharmacopoeia" (British), the Editor states:

"Theoretically it might be a great gain all around if the Pharmacopoeial armamentarium could be restricted to pure active principles, physiologically standardized extracts, and some chemical elements and compounds. Of the many medical systems that have had their day and are forgotten except by the medical historian and the curiosity-monger, there are two of modern origin which had the supreme merit of simplicity *in excelsis*. One of these, the Brunonian system, was the invention of an Edinburgh professor,* to whom it owes its name. This neglected genius held that as all diseases are due either to over-stimulation or depression, two remedies only are necessary; opium for diseases in the first category, and brandy for those in the second. Needless to say, while it lasted this was a very popular system, but as it killed more than it cured it speedily fell into disrepute. The other system, which had more pretensions to scientific sanction, was devised by a Belgian doctor, whose treatise on "Dosimetric Medicine" had a considerable vogue for some years on the Continent, and in this country. Its thesis was quite plausible, namely, that the time has arrived for the substitution, in drug therapeutics, of definite substances with a selective or specific action, for the mixtures of raw material on comparatively unknown composition and obscure action hitherto in use. Thus, morphine or some other appropriate alkaloid of opium should replace the crude drug; quinine should supersede cinchona and its galenical preparations *et id genus omne*. Accordingly, as the title of the system denotes, drug therapeutics will attain scientific precision and uniformity. The system had a fair trial, but somehow failed to fulfil the great expectations entertained by believers in it, and as a system it has now little more than a historic interest, although the nucleus of truth in it may survive to aid in vitalizing some more rational system."

But our purpose is not to comment at length along these lines, but to express satisfaction relative to the substantial progress made in the revisions and the methods followed in the preparation of the Standards; and to encourage a greater interest on the part of those who must use them when they become official. Changes, additions and deletions can be made now, but not after the work of the Committees has been completed.

E. G. E.

COMMON SALT IN RELATION TO HEALTH.

DIFFERENCE in the action of alkaloids and alkaloidal drugs and their galenical preparations is attributed to other constituents in these drugs, their combined or modified action, etc. Along related lines the advisability of removing certain substances from foods for producing a better appearing or more palatable article has received considerable attention. In concluding an article, "The Present-Day Sources of Common Salt in Relation to Health—and Especially to Iodine Scarcity and Goiter," contributed to the *American Medical Journal*, January 7, 1922, Dr. Emery R. Hayhurst, Professor of Hygiene in Ohio State University, states that an analogy should be drawn from sea life and a precept

* A theory or system founded by John Brown, who maintained that all diseases are the result either of an excess or of a deficiency in the excitability of the animal system. E. G. E.

taken from evolution; inland dwellers should look to sea water as their dependable source of iodine. Continuing, he submits:

"This substitution would appear to offer a complete solution to the iodine deficiency problem, if nothing else, while evidence would tend to show that other constituents of sea water have also an undoubted place in the economy of the higher animal organism, perhaps to the extent of precluding some diseases which are likewise, possibly, of a deficiency type. Common salt for dietary purposes should include not only sodium chloride but also sodium iodide, and undoubtedly many of its other original concomitants."

After considering the subject and giving many references relating to the use of iodine in the prevention of goiter and associated conditions; its infrequency in maritime districts; the geochemistry of salts and the sources and preparation of common salt, the author comes to this conclusion,—if land animals, including man, must have iodine as a necessary content of their food intake, its one reliable source is sea water which, however, must be handled and provided in a manner to retain the iodine, and this probably in its organic form; and further on in the article he presents this question: "Should not total sea salts or, indeed, plain sea water, be used as the proper and complete condiment for man and land animals? It must be remembered that it contains not only the two discussed essentials, sodium chloride and sodium iodide, but also many other physiologically important salts and salines. It is not poisonous. It can be filtered free of foreign matter, even bacteria. Plants and animals, both sea and land forms, show a selective action for such elements as they need for their economic processes." He also asks: "May not the absence of bromine from our usual food intake play an important part in the occurrence of various excito-motor conditions?"

The main question involved is not a new one, as evidenced by the numerous references noted by the author, and during past years several editorials on the iodine value in foods have appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The author of this paper presents the subject in a somewhat different way, and he makes the suggestion quoted, that sea water or the total of its salts be used as the proper and complete condiment for man; others have advocated the addition to salt of sodium iodide, 1 to 5,000, for the use of human beings. Our comment has largely been prompted by the space given to the article in the *New York Times* of January 22.

E. G. E.

AS IT SEEMS TO US.

THERE is no intention to present a political discussion, which has no place in the Association or its official organ, but we are all concerned in the solution of problems before Congress and in the betterment of conditions, so that we may reach normalcy, and have our industries and commerce grow as they should under the advantages that this country possesses. According to many, one reason for the hindrance of progress in national affairs is that *pro bono publico* receives less consideration than political contention, which not only neutralizes the energies of legislators in the work before them, but creates public unrest, and the uncertainties of legislation are harmful to labor and capital. What is needed is co-

ordinated effort; the public is willing for a time to overlook party advancement and give those credit who formulate working plans regardless of the party to which they may belong. The War possibly would not have been won without unity of action; it is probable that none of the nations could have succeeded without such spirit. We are generally agreed that parties would not continue in strength unless their interest is that of the country; they may differ on ways and means, but among thinking men, in a readjustment period, there must be a way of arriving at conclusions unless selfishness, prejudice, antagonism and hostility prevent. The purpose of a good American legislator is to serve, but his vision is sometimes blinded by obligations.

The Hon. Thomas B. Marshall recently said, in substance, in another connection, which may find application in this comment, that in the midst of a political campaign he had an inherent right to be a party man by voice and vote; the expression of sentiments as to the good of the country is guaranteed by nature and by law, but above this inherent right arises a solemn duty as an American.

The Hon. Lloyd George, in a recent speech, speaking for national unity, said: "***When I say national unity is necessary it is because I believe in all consciousness it is essential until the country is restored to something like normal conditions. ***What is there to quarrel about? Private enterprise, the resistance to revolutionary policy, to the overthrow of the individual enterprise that has made this country? What is the difference between Liberals and Conservatives there? The Liberal says, 'I believe in freedom, therefore I am opposed to fettering industry with any such regulations. I am therefore for private and individual enterprise.' That is the way he approaches the question. The Conservative says, 'I am in favor of maintaining the institutions that have created the greatness and prosperity of this country. I consider private enterprise to be one of them. I approach it from that point of view.' But they are both serving the same purpose."

So here and there we have similar conditions and viewpoints, while in the halls of Congress new problems are presented affecting the Treasury without providing over-burdensome means for taking care of those under consideration nor shaping adequate legislation that will be incentive and encourage manufacture and commerce. The prosperity of the nation is the combined prosperity of its individuals. "Legislation follows real or supposed public sentiment. What we need as a people is to learn that prosperity for one means prosperity for all. Regulation if wise and free from politics should be welcomed." Speaking pharmaceutically, it seems to us the country needs a penetrating liniment more than warm poultices or political emollients.

E. G. E.

PHARMACEUTICAL PROGRESS AND THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES.

MMUCH has been written about the chemical industries in their relation to medicine; as a matter of fact, pharmaceutical application of the chemicals and search by pharmacists for a better and more extensive materia medica have contributed largely to our knowledge of chemistry. That thereafter more extensive use was made of the chemicals for other purposes simply adds greater credit to the service of pharmacy, without detracting from that given by other professions and

industries; in fact, these have grown up and developed under the stimulation one provided for the other.

The progress of pharmacy depends in a large degree on that of its correlated professions and industries; with some of these the interdependence is so nearly complete that it is difficult to discern the dividing lines; the same is true of research in these activities. "American Pharmacy," in many places throughout the report on "The Future Independence and Progress of American Medicine in the Age of Chemistry," could replace the names of "American Medicine" and "American Chemistry"—safeguarding the American chemical industries will contribute largely to the advancement of pharmacy; research in the sciences will bind together the industries, technical schools and universities—it has a coöperative influence or force.

The vision of professional men and others engaged in the industries is broadening—there is a growing realization of their opportunities and that better results follow their work with more intimate knowledge of what is needed in practice and of what the laboratories produce; that they are coöperators, and the professions do not lose standing by such contact; one is essential to the other—application cannot precede production, and production is useless unless use is made of the product. The Conference idea is a coöperative one, its effectiveness is based on truth; the same is true of the relation which it has been attempted to outline. It is unnecessary and it may be very difficult to figure the unit value of the work of a physician who applies, for comparison with that of the one who discovers the agent or prepares it, but there is a relation. All, including the laymen, will benefit greatly by the coöperation of the hospital, doctor, pharmacist, chemist and the laboratory. Incentive, motive and conditions differ in these activities, but the influences extend to the health and prosperity of the country, and we might say protection, for many of the medicinal agents and the manufactories for them are readily convertible to serve such purposes, as was shown during the war. The statement has been made that a soldier may carry a flag, dyed with the chemical explosive that wounds him, and the wound thereafter be antiseptized with it.

The questions bearing on safeguarding the American medicinal chemical industries are many and important, and what is said of the chemicals applies in a way to items not usually classed as such; in many pharmacy and medicine have a deep interest, and theirs is also largely that of those served by them. The remarkable results obtained by American pharmacists and chemists during the past few years speaks well for their education, training and ingenuity; the fact that the prices of many chemicals and dyes are lower than before the war evidences that our American manufacturers do not seek the gain others have exacted. But now there is a foreboding of an uneven contest between American and foreign manufacturers, and it is a question in which every pharmacist and everyone interested in pharmacy as a science is vitally concerned.

The limitations of this comment preclude the bringing in of details relative to pre-war and present conditions; but much has been said and written about the expense of maintaining research laboratories and cost involved in perfecting a product. With that must be considered the difference in American wages and those of other countries, and prevailing conditions. It is largely a question of whether

the American medicinal chemical industries shall be protected during a period of development; probably no other industry offers greater benefits to art and science, if not to commerce; without protection much of the work accomplished will represent a loss. The manufacture of medicinal chemicals will stimulate research; that it has done so is the proof of the assertion; this in turn encourages the establishment of research laboratories in schools and in manufacturing establishments, and from here the influences extend to every activity and seat of learning.

The United States has proven that it is big in every way, especially big enough to be generous and fair; its resources are large, and it has the brains and ingenuity that can convert them into useful and usable material. As a general proposition there is disinclination to protect manufacturing industries, but in this instance we have what for America is a new venture and an undertaking that requires time and much capital to place it on a footing to compete with other nations, and this really is a minor phase; the benefits therefrom, as has been indicated, are most important because of the influence these industries exert in other directions; pharmacy is affected in many ways; pharmaceutical organizations are on record for protection of these industries, and pharmacists have opportunities to acquaint the public with the need of it—"the cards can be laid on the table, face up." E. G. E.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, 1922.

Chairman Fuller, of the Board of Canvassers, A. Ph. A., reports that there were 1,462 votes cast in the recent election, resulting in the election of the following officers, who will be installed at the Cleveland Convention, August 1922:

President, Julius A. Koch, Pittsburgh, Pa. *First Vice-President*, F. N. Gathercoal, Chicago, Ill. *Second Vice-President*, Lyman F. Kebler, Washington, D. C. *Third Vice-President*, Clyde L. Eddy, New York, N. Y. *Members of the Council*, Charles E. Caspari, St. Louis, Mo., S. L. Hilton, Washington, D. C., W. L. Scoville, Detroit, Mich.

THE FAIRCHILD SCHOLARSHIP FOR 1922.

The members of the American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy are respectfully requested to read the report of the Fairchild Scholarship Committee, pp. 710-712, September 1921, JOURNAL A. PH. A., and also the remarks relative thereto in the December number, pp. 987-988.

Please communicate to the Chairman your views regarding the subjects in which the candidates should be examined. There is a possibility of applicants for the award who, although they have only concluded their first year in a Pharmacy School, have had a premedical course, or pursued studies in chemistry or other subjects, which gives them an advantage over the average one-year pharmacy student. Can this be prevented—is it desirable to exclude such students, and what should be the action of the Committee?

The Fairchild Scholarship Committee welcomes your suggestions; their desire is to handle this matter in a way that will be generally acceptable, or as nearly so as possible.

Please respond promptly, for the first year of work of pharmacy students is coming to a close. Also give your preferred date for holding the examination; June 12th is suggested.

Thanking you for coöperation,

Glad to be of service,

E. G. Eberle, *Chairman*,