

## EDITORIAL NOTES

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### HATBAND SKIN DISEASE APPEARS IN DENMARK.

An epidemic of hatband disease in Denmark is reported in the *British Medical Journal*. The disease is caused by a substitute for leather. In some men only a narrow strip of skin is affected, but more susceptible persons get inflamed blisters around the nose and mouth.

In some cases one day's wearing of the hat produces ulceration of the forehead, great swelling of the face and a red rash over the trunk and limbs.

### DISCUSSION ON VITAMINES BY SOCIETY OF AMERICAN BACTERIOLOGISTS.

Some of the virtues popularly attributed to vitamins were cast aside at the annual convention of the Society of American Bacteriologists in Philadelphia. The meeting attached so much importance to the subject in general that the opening sessions were almost entirely devoted to discussions of the scientific aspects of the vitaminic theory.

Dr. D. H. Bergey, president of the eastern Pennsylvania chapter of the society, declared that the only advantage of the vitamin in combating disease bacteria in the human system was in the stimulation of the bodily tissues. "But," he said, "the bacteria thrive in the vitamins as well as they do in bodily tissues. Thus it is apt to be an unequal race."

In further discussion of the subject, Major A. Parker Hitchens, of the Army Medical School, Washington, stated: "Vitamins are like an antiseptic. Those that kill the germs also kill the bodily tissue. Again the types of vitamins that feed the tissues also feed the bacteria. So what are you going to do about it?"

The discussion that followed these two papers aimed more direct attacks at the vitamins as an economic issue than has been made in previous conventions of the society. Scientists who have devoted the past year to research work on vitamins expressed themselves as being strongly opposed to many of the extravagant claims that have been made for vitamins by certain commercial concerns.

### QUANTITATIVE METHOD FOR DETERMINATION OF VITAMINE.

A quantitative method for the determination of vitamin has been devised by Roger J. Williams (*Journal of Biological Chemistry*, 1920, xlii, 259-265). The method is for the quantitative determination of the vitamin which prevents beri-beri, and this abstract is reprinted from the *Journal of the Franklin Institute*. "A synthetic medium is prepared, each liter of which contains 20 grams cane sugar, 3 grams ammonium sulphate, 2 grams monopotassium phosphate, 1.5 grams asparagine, 0.25 gram calcium chloride, and 0.25 gram magnesium sulphate. One hundred cc of this medium is diluted to a volume of 110 cc, sterilized, inoculated with a suspension of fresh compressed yeast in sterile water containing 0.3 milligram of yeast and having a volume of 1 cc. The culture is incubated for eighteen hours at a temperature of 30° C.; growth is stopped by addition of formaldehyde solution; the yeast is collected by filtration of the culture through a weighed Gooch crucible, washed with water and with alcohol, dried for two hours at a temperature of 103° C., and finally weighed. This is the control experiment, and the yield of yeast is approximately 2.5 milligrams. At the same time, 100 cc of the synthetic medium and a definite

volume of an extract representing a definite weight of the substance to be tested for vitamine are mixed, diluted to a volume of 110 cc, sterilized, sown with the yeast as already described, and then treated in exactly the same manner as the control experiment. The yield of yeast above that in the control is a measure of the vitamine content of the substance tested. The 'vitamine number' of a material may be defined as the number of milligrams of yeast produced by the addition of its extract minus that produced in a control solution, under given conditions and within certain limits, computed to 1 gram of the original material tested."

#### A NEW PROCESS FOR HYDROGENATION OF FATS AND OILS.

The invention of A. Granichstaden and Dr. E. Sittig, for the hydrogenation of fats and oils, consists in the use of a double silicate of magnesium and nickel. The compound, says the *Chemical News*, is credited with remarkable results; by its use as catalyzer, the oils, even at a temperature of only 35° to 40° C., acquire an unusual degree of whiteness. With most of the known methods, the dark oils utilized for alimentary fats must be first or subsequently bleached, but those hydrogenated by this new process are perfectly white, and ready for the manufacture of alimentary fats. The catalyzer is prepared by precipitation of the double silicate so as to obtain as uniform a product as possible.

#### SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CONTRIBUTES TO A NATION'S SUCCESS.

The following abstract of the transactions of the Forty-fifth Congress of the French Association for the Advancement of Science is taken from the *Chemist and Druggist*. M. Rateau, chairman of the Congress, in his opening speech, claimed that the French victories of the Revolutionary epoch were largely due to the "energetic coöperation of men of science—Berthollet, Fourcroy, Chaptal, Vauquelin, Monge, and their colleagues." The German successes in the late war were of similar origin. He quoted M. Moureu's maxim, "The whole nation ought to participate in the scientific movement," and insisted on the fact that nowadays the secret of a nation's success is the active pursuit of research work combined with the practical and industrial application of its results. The following day's proceedings had for their chief feature the lecture delivered by M. Georges Claude on scientific research

and the resources of science. He spoke of Madame Curie's great discovery, and finally alluded to the half-century of effort necessary to synthesize ammonia, from 1860 to Ramsay and Young's little experiment in 1884, and Haber's production of synthetic ammonia in 1909. M. Georges Claude then explained his own solution of the production of synthetic ammonia—by means of a pressure of 900 to 1,000 atmospheres, giving an output of over 40 per cent of ammonia. He then effected in their presence the synthesis of ammonia, with a compression of a thousand atmospheres, and also performed some curious experiments in lighting by neon gas, the distillation of liquid air and of synthetic ammonia.

#### THE VACUUM FLASK IN THE LABORATORY.

In a monograph contributed to the *Chemical News* of December 23, Messrs. Bourlet and Thomas point out some of the uses to which a thermos flask may be put in the chemical laboratory in respect to its power of maintaining substances at temperatures above the normal. This property may be utilized for conducting reactions between liquids at elevated temperatures, and is particularly useful in the oxidation of organic compounds with potassium permanganate. It is also applicable to the separation of emulsions which may be conveniently "split" by warming and standing overnight in a thermos flask. Other applications indicated by the authors are: the separation of colloidal and flocculent precipitates; the development of color reactions; and the carrying out of reactions in gelatinizing media. Finally, it is pointed out that, at a pinch, the flask will serve as a portable incubator for bacteriological work.

#### LENGTH OF METER UNCHANGED.

Recently it was declared that the standard meter measure kept in the International Bureau of Weights and Measures had in some mysterious way increased in length until it was nearly a hundredth part longer than the scientific measure, which was said probably to be due to the fact that there was more heat this year than normally.

French pride was touched in view of the fact that Japan has just adopted the French standard of measure. The eminent scientist, M. Guillaume, has now stopped these rumors by his report to the Academy of Sciences in which he declares that only the measures usually employed for purposes of comparison,

had lengthened for some unknown reason, but that the real standard metal bar measure had not changed enough to write home about, the utmost variation being thirteen ten-thousandths of a thousandth part of a meter.

#### SYNTHETIC GOLD SOON.

Dr. Paul Darwin Foote, physicist of the Bureau of Standards, is quoted by the press as saying that we are on the way toward finding a method of transforming mercury into gold.

Prof. Irving Fisher was in Berlin last month studying the German currency problem and, incidentally, to investigate the claims of an unnamed German inventor, who was purported to have produced synthetic gold. Newspaper accounts state, "a Berlin scientist informed Professor Fisher that the inventor(?) is a fraud and has a prison record."

#### 1921 DRUG OUTPUT.

According to a preliminary statement compiled by the Department of Commerce more than \$400,000,000 worth of drug products were manufactured in the United States during 1921. The figures are based upon the returns from 524 establishments primarily engaged in the manufacture of druggists' preparations, with products valued at \$114,596,900; 2468 in the manufacture of patent medicines and compounds with products valued at \$212,185,700; and 570 in the manufacture primarily of perfumery and cosmetics to the value of \$59,630,100. At the census of 1914 the industry "Druggists' Preparations" comprised 416 establishments with \$48,009,700 in value of products; patent medicines and compounds 2903 establishments and \$102,463,400; perfumery and cosmetics 496 establishments and \$16,899,100. In the aggregate these classified industries involved 3562 establishments in 1919 with products valued at \$386,413,000 and 3815 in 1914 with \$167,372,000, an increase in value of \$219,041,000 or 131 per cent. In addition like products to the value of \$23,357,100 were made and \$9,374,800 in 1914 by establishments in other lines of manufacture.

The production of biological products—serum, vaccines, toxins, etc.—was valued at \$15,876,400, an increase of 155 percent with respect to 1914; patent and proprietary medicines \$162,471,900 (a) for sale in unbroken unit packages to the general public \$132,970, (b) ethical pharmaceutical specialties \$29,501,600, an increase of 94.7 percent; phar-

maceuticals—tinctures, syrups, pills, tablets, etc.—\$77,295,900, an increase of 187 percent, and perfumery, cosmetics and toilet preparations \$69,470,400, an increase of 263 percent.

The consumption of alkaloids, their salts and alkaloid materials, as reported, cost \$6,398,320, comprising cinchona bark, 1,220,000 pounds, \$450,300; quinine, 183,516 pounds, \$2,718,238; coca leaves, 584,000 pounds, \$292,800; cocaine, 516 pounds, \$90,454; opium, 102,761 pounds, \$956,354; morphine, 3984 pounds, \$635,912; caffeine, 39,413 pounds, \$312,285; strychnine, 16,414 pounds, \$872,304; codeine, 2312 pounds, \$296,392; and heroine, 702 pounds, \$178,585. The industries used 2,980,500 gallons of grain alcohol costing \$14,466,200; 796,900 gallons of denatured alcohol, \$524,000, and 73,200 gallons of wood alcohol, \$106,100.

#### AMERICAN BUSINESS SPIRIT.

Quoting an editorial of the *New York Commercial*, January 28, and also an article of the December *Scribner's*:

"European business men visiting this country frequently comment upon the activities of our trade associations. They consider it remarkable that there should be such a generous interchange of ideas between men who are rivals in business, not having themselves absorbed the idea that anything that helps business as a whole helps them all individually. Thus we find our trade associations working for better standards of business and coöperating in general development, leaving it to individual merit to overcome competition. It is considered against American business ethics to 'knock' a rival. Salesmanship is based on convincing the buyer that one has the particular goods best adapted to his needs and leaving the buyer to make his own mental comparisons.

"American business is honestly and honorably conducted. The percentage of dishonesty is no greater than is to be found among men in general. Because there have been some dishonest people in business the preceding administrations have only too often assumed the attitude that all business was dishonest and needed watching. Laws have been made restricting the free operation of business on the theory that some one might be wrong rather than providing adequate penalties for those who actually did wrong. Big business is no longer under suspicion just because it is big, and President Harding has promised that

business men shall be considered honest until they are proved to be dishonest."

"Happily, the world of business is a noble world. If we have failed to find true nobility in it, it is because our eyes have been closed or because we ourselves have not been entirely fair."

#### FELONS.

The following is found in *Poulson's Advertiser*, Philadelphia, of January 21, 1822: "Friend Poulson will serve the cause of the afflicted by inserting the following recipe for the cure of Felons, or Whitlows, which for a number of years has been successfully recommended by a respectable female of this city, viz.:

"Take of Indian Turnip and Garlic, each two parts, Bread, Dutch Cheese, Butter, Salt, Honey, Gin and Yeast, each one part.

"After having grated the Turnip and Cheese the whole of the ingredients may be intimately mixed in a mortar and applied to the part affected in the form of a poultice; observing to let it remain on 48 hours, which seldom fails in performing a cure."

#### PERSONAL AND NEWS ITEMS.

The second shipment of botanic and zoölogical specimens has recently been received from the Mulford Research Expedition; these will be distributed to scientists, museums and research laboratories.

**F. R. Eldred** has resigned as chemical consultant to Eli Lilly & Co., to take charge of the New York offices of Eldred & Atkinson, Inc., consulting chemists and engineers. A dinner was tendered to Dr. Eldred by the Indiana Section of the American Chemical Society, January 9, at the University Club. A feature of the evening was the presentation of a watch-lob to the guest of honor. **E. B. Carter**, president of the Section, presided as toastmaster, and made the presentation.

**Leonard A. Seltzer** addressed the Prescott Club, University of Michigan, at its January meeting on the subject, "Practical Pharmacy."

**Prof. C. C. Glover** is spending his leave of absence from the University of Michigan in botanical research at Columbia University.

**Wilhelm Bodeemann** has made the discovery, incidental to his misfortune, that nurses must pay 10 percent at the registry office for cases assigned to them. He refers to an article on "The Nurses' Trust" by Dr. C. A. Mayo in which the latter states that nurses would have to

come down with their prices, or hospitals would have to get along without them. Mr. Bodeemann suggests that druggists should open up a list of nurses, and that this be free at the service of the patients; that would reduce the cost of nurses somewhat and be an ad for the druggist, at the same time an accommodation to the medical profession, to the druggists' trade and nurses.

**Dr. A. R. Bliss, Jr.**, professor of pharmacology in the School of Medicine of Emory University at Atlanta, was elected a member of a national coöperative committee of the A. O. A. C. at the recent Washington, D. C., convention of this association. The duties of this committee consist of coöperative work, along the lines of methods of analysis and standardization of drugs, with the Committee of the Revision of the U. S. Pharmacopoeia. The coöperative committee consists of Dr. L. F. Kebler, chief of the Division of Drugs at Washington, Dr. A. R. Bliss, Jr., Dr. H. C. Lythgoe, Dr. H. C. Fuller, and Dr. W. S. Hubbard.

**Walter D. Adams**, Forney, Texas, has succeeded W. H. Cousins of Dallas as Secretary of Texas Pharmaceutical Association, of which he is an ex-president. Mr. Adams is a frequent attendant, accompanied by Mrs. Adams, at the American Pharmaceutical Association meetings.

**J. W. Graham**, Austin, Texas, has concluded fifty years of service in pharmacy in his home city. The *Austin American* of December 18 gave considerable space to a review of the city's growth and development and that of our fellow-member's business career. Aside from the drug business, Mr. Graham has taken a deep interest in municipal and State affairs; he recently retired as one of the city commissioners and was for a number of years regent of the State University; he also served on the Board of Pharmacy.

O. Henry Drug Company occupies the old Fariss-Klutz store building at Greensboro, N. C., where William Sydney Porter (O. Henry) spent many of the earlier days of his life while in the employ of his uncle, Clark Porter, who owned and operated a drug business there.

"The *Journal de Pharmacie et Chimie* devotes the whole of its December number to an interesting account of the life and work of the late Professor Bourquelot, in which the singularly active life and unpretentious character of the

deceased savant are described in a manner which will be appreciated by those who knew him personally."

*The Practical Druggist* celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary with a "silver" January number; therein is much of interest in the way of historical reviews and illustrated subjects. Congratulations on the completion of twenty-five years of service are extended with best

wishes for a long continuance.

#### MONUMENT TO THE INVENTOR OF ICE CREAM SODA.

Robert M. Green died May 21, 1920, leaving an estate of \$352 000. He laid claims to being the originator of "ice cream soda," and it seems that records establish the fact, which will be further recorded on the tombstone in West Laurel Hill cemetery, Philadelphia.

### OBITUARY.

#### W. ARTHUR SKILLERN.

W. Arthur Skillern, president of the Texas Pharmaceutical Association and member of American Pharmaceutical Association, died January 10, at his home in Dallas, Texas. He had been afflicted with Bright's disease for a year or more, but his condition was not thought to be serious until the day before his death.

Mr. Skillern was president and general manager of a chain of retail drug stores in Dallas, operated by Skillern & Sons. He was a Scottish Rite Mason, a member of the Shrine and of the Dallas Rotary Club. He

was born at Lewisville, Texas, 36 years ago, and had been a resident of Dallas twenty-five years.

The respect in which the deceased was held was shown by the closing, for a short time, of more than one hundred and fifty retail drug stores and the four wholesale drug houses of Dallas. The druggists of Dallas and representatives of the State association attended the funeral in a body. He was one of the assistant secretaries at the recent N. A. R. D. Convention.

Mr. Skillern is survived by his wife and a daughter, his mother, a brother and several sisters.

### SOCIETIES AND COLLEGES.

#### KEEPING UP THE MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATIONS.

Many trade organizations throughout the country to-day are worrying over resignations ranging from 10 to 50 percent of their total enrolment, according to Arnold A. Mowbray, director of public information, National Association of Credit Men, who has just issued a "Membership Maintenance Manual" in which he tells how to conserve man power in a commercial body during a period of depression.

The National Association of Credit Men is the largest commercial organization in the United States, having a membership of approximately 33,000 bankers, manufacturers, wholesalers and jobbers and 134 affiliated branches throughout the country.

Despite the period of retrenchment, the National Association of Credit Men obtained 4,985 new members last year and hopes to report a substantial increase at the convention to be held in Indianapolis in June.

How the various affiliated associations of credit men are able to obtain and retain thousands of members is revealed in the manual written by Mr. Mowbray, who is national

director of the membership department. He is an expert on the subject discussed and has traveled from coast to coast, delivering addresses and instructing volunteer solicitors how to obtain and retain members. Mr. Mowbray believes that the volunteer committeeman is the logical solicitor, because the prospect who is being invited to join knows that the volunteer has no pecuniary motive in approaching him. A continuous membership campaign is advocated by the National Membership Committee which is not enthusiastic over whirlwind drives, as members thus obtained often are not fully informed regarding the benefits of membership and after having joined merely to oblige a friend, usually resign at the expiration of a year, during which time they have not used the facilities of the organization.

#### NEXT ANNUAL CONVENTION OF AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION.

The American Pharmaceutical Association, the American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy will meet in Cleveland August