

THE RELATION OF EDUCATION TO LEGISLATION.*

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When this Section on Education and Legislation was proposed and created many years ago the mental reaction of the writer toward such an intimate union of two such seemingly different subjects, or subjects of such different aims, was that his curiosity was aroused. Was not the combination unnatural, and was it not a strained and artificial relationship? But in time it has dawned upon him that the connection is quite harmonious and that their mutual coöperation should affect, or deal with the fundamentals of this section. Unfortunately, may it be said, education must seek for legislation and legislation *does* concern itself in some degree with education.

It is well known, perhaps, that from a very early period laws have been proposed not only to recognize educational attainments, but to induce and stimulate individuals to attain education by authorizing certain honorariums in the arts, sciences and other cultural refinements; this legal authorization being based on the theory that such attainments contribute toward progress in civilization. It is well known that in countries where proper legislation is withheld or withdrawn illiteracy becomes a threatening calamity. In pharmacy and medicine the state has recognized these callings and, following the historical precedent, has enacted laws, and, in a peculiar way, has protected those who through personal endeavor attain a certain status in these vocations.

It is not the writer's purpose to go into the history referred to, but rather to emphasize a phase not related to history, which is perhaps familiar to all.

Quite recently, and after this paper was partly written, a communication was received from our distinguished member, Dr. H. V. Arny, in which he commented upon the proposed reorganization of the Association. According to his scheme this section might be abolished, since the proposed House of Delegates will have to do with all matters of legislation, with certain plenary powers. This proposal, indicating the abolishment of this section, has changed somewhat the complexion of the present paper from that which the author had originally in mind. What I may say, somewhat indirectly, I hope will lead to a discussion of the proposition referred to, which I trust will have fair consideration.

What this section has had to do in the past—what its supporters have had in mind, at least—has been legislation bearing more or less directly upon education. It has been, in such matters, considered an advisory body rather than one clothed with power to act.

We have now, it seems to me, arrived at a period when we have unprecedented conditions to deal with and novel adjustments to be considered.

We need the support and advice of those entrusted with legislative power. An unprecedented attitude of mind toward education is needed if we may hope for progress in pharmacy, or if we may hope to maintain our proper relative position among allied professions, such as medicine. This will mean a stimulus, not merely by resolutions, but the latter well supported by legislation. The generation following us seems to be losing sight of the fact that pharmacy has a distinct place in the world of science and fails to grasp the idea of its real service to humanity.

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Our guild should, in every way possible, through legislation and education, endeavor to stem this tide of lowering our professional standard.

The Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties has been slow to adopt the high school requirement. Last year, by legislative enactment, the Kansas legislature incorporated this requirement in the pharmacy law; members of the board of pharmacy, with a proper vision toward the future, were courageous enough to endorse this requirement in advance of the period set by the Conference. In that state candidates for registration must now have the high school degree. I am not so much concerned, as some seem to be, as to how pharmacy shall be labeled—whether a vocation, a business, a profession, or all three combined. What I am concerned about is that pharmacy shall take and keep its proper place in rendering the service for which the calling is responsible. This service varies as medicine and allied sciences progress. The service required is not the same as it was twenty years ago. How few can meet its present demands!

It would prolong this paper unduly to enumerate the many branches of study that medicine has added to its curriculum during the past twenty years.

How few of our students realize this advancement and what it means to pharmacy? Students are just beginning to realize the importance of bacteriology—a study that should have been added to the pharmacy curriculum years ago in order to keep a respectable pace with medicine. How few students of to-day have any notion of the importance of this subject? Is this lack of interest in it due to apathy or because we could see no money in it that it was not duly recognized? A little internal persuasive legislation within the association, perhaps, would have brought much sooner this subject in pharmacy courses to the status of a required study. In most of the colleges it is now only an optional one, and many there are who think that it does not connect up legitimately with pharmacy, yet the state which permits a professional title and a monopoly, so to speak, assumes that the pharmacist has certain knowledge of the compounds and preparations he dispenses—including these are the products of the bacteriologist; the state presupposes this intimate knowledge as belonging to his professional equipment, whether such knowledge is profitable or not, commercially. What has been said of bacteriology is equally true of pharmaco-dynamics. It would take too much of the valuable time of this body to elaborate on this point.

In his recent work—"The Story of Drugs," H. C. Fuller, well known to the profession, has given us a very instructive chapter on legislation. Unfortunately he confines himself principally to legislation relating to the Food and Drugs Law. He might have shown how these laws, so essential to public health, had been more or less intimately connected with pharmaceutical education. The United States Pharmacopœia—antedating these laws by scores of years—has been and is now a model upon which these laws and their regulations are based.

Anyone who reads pharmaceutical history aright will see how the building up of the U. S. P. standard has been peculiarly interwoven with education and legislation. If the author of the "Story of Drugs" should revise his interesting and instructive work it is to be hoped that he will add a chapter on legislation pertaining to education. I think he can also show that this section is not only worthy of maintenance, but that its abolishment would be a mistake. It stands for a continuous and persistent stimulus to education in pharmacy.