

Taking into consideration the transactions and the men who participated in the convention, sincerity of honest purposes was evident strengthened by faith and hope. The definition of the "modern newspaper," its duties, obligations and responsibilities is set forth in the prelude to the "Canons of Journalism" adopted as basic principles of the profession:

"The primary function of newspapers is to communicate to the human race what its members do, feel and think. Journalism, therefore, demands of its practitioners the widest range of intelligence, of knowledge and of experience; as well as natural and trained powers of observation and reasoning. To its opportunities as a chronicler are indissolubly linked its obligation as teacher and interpreter."

The following declaration of principles was adopted without a dissenting vote:

"A newspaper cannot escape conviction of insincerity if, while professing high moral purpose, it supplies incentives to base conduct, such as are to be found in details of crime and vice, publication of which is not demonstrably for the general good. Lacking authority to enforce its canons, the journalism here represented can but express the hope that deliberate pandering to vicious instincts will encounter effective public disapproval or yield to the influence of a preponderant professional condemnation."

In framing the code of ethics the American Society of Newspaper Editors has grouped "Sincerity, Truthfulness and Accuracy," fundamentals of our own code; the best and better practices of newspaperdom have been drawn upon for the guidance of its members; the time-honored, modern and better practices of pharmacy served in constructing the revised code of ethics of the American Pharmaceutical Association. The hope is restated and wishes extended that the efforts of the Society may be eminently successful; it is more or less concerned with all activities, but speaking for pharmacy—the realization is growing with its hopes and aspirations, in faith, that a better understanding of its aims will aid in promoting the greater work of the American Pharmaceutical Association, and make possible greater and better pharmaceutical service.

"Faith is the backbone of the social and the foundation of the commercial fabric; remove faith between man and man, and society and commerce fall to pieces."

E. G. E.

THE EFFICIENCY OF HYDRATED OXIDE OF IRON AS AN ANTIDOTE FOR ARSENIC.

To the Editor, Journal A. Ph. A.:

It is perhaps unusual to criticize the conclusions of a scientific investigator without adducing new evidence. The matter, however, is of so great practical importance that I feel justified in questioning the interpretation of the experimental results in the paper of Drs. McGuigan, Atkinson and Brough on the antidotal efficacy of ferric hydroxide in arsenic poisoning, in the April number of the JOURNAL.

The conclusion of the authors that this traditional antidote is of no practical value in the treatment of arsenical poisoning seems to me not only unproved but in direct contradiction to their published experiments.

In the first place, the basis of the claim for antidotal action of the iron salt is that it forms a relatively insoluble compound of arsenic that will be less rapidly absorbed, not that there is a complete destruction of the toxicity of the arsenic. To gauge the efficacy by simply following a superfatal dose of arsenic by the antidote

with no provision for the removal of the precipitated compound is not a fair criterion of the value of the antidote in clinical conditions. In arsenical poisoning vomiting is an almost constant symptom and if it had not occurred the antidote would certainly be associated with emetics and laxatives.

The neglect of this factor offers an explanation of the difference in the results obtained by the present authors and those by Dr. Watt many years ago. Watt (*Ohio Med. and Surg. Journal*, 1861, 287) administered to dogs arsenous acid *in solution* in doses ranging from $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{2}{5}$ grain per pound (equivalent to from 0.023 to 0.057 Gm. per kilo). Four animals received no antidote, all of whom died within less than 8 hours, while out of fourteen animals that received the antidote there was only one death and that in a dog which had received $\frac{2}{5}$ grain per pound. While a theoretical objection may be raised to his experiments on the ground that he does not definitely state that the animals were observed for two weeks after apparent recovery to detect a possibility of late evil results, the facts that in the untreated dogs there was progressive aggravation of the symptoms until death, and that in the dogs that received the antidote there was an almost immediate abatement with complete disappearance of all symptoms within a few hours, seem to demonstrate that the antidote had a beneficial effect, even if we do not concede that its use reduced a 100 per cent. mortality to 7 per cent.

It is also worthy of note that in the experiments reported by Drs. McGuigan, Atkinson and Brough, even in their fatal cases there was an evident prolongation of life. Moreover, in their dogs poisoned with Fowler's Solution: without the antidote the mortality was 100 per cent., but of those that received the antidote 20 per cent. lived the arbitrary period of two weeks which the authors have accepted in the body of the paper as evidence of survival. In the dogs poisoned with solid arsenous oxide the mortality without the antidote was 81.5 and with the antidote 65.4 per cent.

The authors state that the volume of the antidote makes no difference in the result and yet in their published tables with solid arsenic, of the fatal cases among those dogs that received 100 cc death occurred on the average within 24 hours, while in those cases in which 200 cc or more were given the average duration of life in fatal cases was 167.8 hours. (In their summary of this table they give average duration of life as 95.7* but there is either a misprint in the published tables or a miscalculation in this average.)

The authors of the paper do not appear to have made any study of the literature of this subject, the only authority quoted being Busscher. Although there has been very little study of the subject for the past several decades the universal approbation of this antidote by practically all toxicologists was not based on mere tradition. In the middle of the last century there was a great dispute concerning the relative value of magnesia and iron in arsenic poison which led to a considerable experimental and clinical study of the value of these antidotes.

For these reasons I do not think that the time has come for us to abandon this time-tried antidote. Even if it will not cure every case of arsenic poisoning without any other remedial measures, the evidence is very strong that it is of real value.

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* Authors' Correction—Last line of Table XII, *Recapitulation of Data*, Table XI, April JOURNAL, p. 331, should be (55.0), 107.7 and 95.8, instead of (55.0, correct), 95.7, 74.0.