

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF PHARMACY.

BY H. C. CHRISTENSEN.

Reports made by your Secretary in recent years might well serve as copy for part of this year's report, at least in so far as the work and service of the office is concerned. Each year we enthusiastically report that our field of activity is broadening and that we have had to speed up a little more to keep up with the demands on the office—and each year as Convention time brings us to an inventory of our work, we realize anew how fortunate we are in our enlarging opportunities for service. The Boards are pulling together as never before, and the Association of Boards is coming to be recognized as an increasingly important factor in the affairs of our profession.

Since our convention last year, up to the fifteenth of August, we have issued a total of 1115 reciprocal blanks, two of this number being complimentary to Board members. Of this number 612 have been reported accepted, 74 reported rejected, leaving a balance of 429 unaccounted for. We do not expect to have word right up to the time we close the records for the year, but even allowing a leeway of a month and a half since July first, we still have 298 of the blanks issued prior to that time unreported. Allowing for those states which have only two or possibly three examinations a year, and so have to hold applications sometimes for months, this percentage of unreported applications is higher than it should be.

DISTRICT MEETINGS.

Four District meetings were held during the year, District No. 4 at Des Moines, Iowa; District No. 6 at San Antonio, Texas; District No. 8 at Denver, Colorado and District No. 7 at Birmingham, Alabama. Your Secretary attended all of these meetings and at Denver—District No. 8—we were favored by having President Mortenson with us. With the exception of the Birmingham meeting—District No. 7—at which only two states were represented—Alabama and Florida—all meetings were well attended.

The subject matter discussed at these meetings was all of a similar nature, and in addition, problems of more or less local concern were gone into at each of the meetings. Comparison and discussion on standards and methods of examination—both by examination and reciprocity—particularly those phases which affect bordering states, was general, keeping in mind of course their relation to the states as a whole. Matters pertaining to proposed, desired or contemplated legislation, were also taken up. Particular attention was given to the proposition of planning for prerequisite legislation in those states in which college of pharmacy graduation requirements have not yet been enacted.

Some of the things on which discussion and action were had, are the following:

(1) Under the subject of Registration—both by examination and by reciprocity—the matter of proper safeguards to prevent fraud was discussed and recommendations made “that state boards of pharmacy adopt and enforce such rules and regulations covering requirements relating to identification, proofs of practical experience, preliminary education, college of pharmacy training, etc., as would serve to prevent imposters from securing entrance to examination or being granted reciprocal registration.” Several instances were cited where a close scrutiny of applications and candidates had been the means of preventing fraud.

(2) Discussion at these meetings brought out the further fact that there is a tendency on the part of candidates—sometimes in one locality and sometimes in another—to take examinations in some state other than the one in which they have had their practical experience and then after passing examination, apply for reciprocal registration in their home state. All meetings were of the “unanimous opinion that this practice should be discouraged.” It was pointed out that there could seldom be any valid reason for such procedure and that unless a reason satisfactory to the Board in the candidate's home state be given, that Board would be fully justified in refusing reciprocal registration under such conditions.

(3) All the meetings also recommended and approved the proposition “that reciprocal registration be not granted to an applicant who has previously failed in examination in the state in which he applies, unless said applicant has in the time intervening graduated from a school or

* Buffalo meeting, 1924.

college of pharmacy, or can show to the satisfaction of the Board a sufficient increase in knowledge of pharmacy subsequent to his failure.

(4) Another matter which received unanimous endorsement at all of the district meetings was the proposition adopted by the Secretary's office, of notifying the Secretary of the Board of Pharmacy of the recipient state, of date of issuance of reciprocal application blank, and name and address of applicants for reciprocal registration, so that the Secretary of the Board will have a check on any applicant who may proceed to practice with his application "in his pocket" instead of filing it promptly.

(5) At the Denver meeting a resolution was adopted as follows: "*Resolved*, that we favor placing upon every form of application (examination or reciprocity) a question as to whether the applicant has previously taken an examination for registration as pharmacist and, if so, when and where."

(6) Dean H. C. Washburn of the College of Pharmacy of the University of Colorado had submitted to the Denver meeting a proposition urging the adoption of a rule under which a graduate from a recognized college of pharmacy would be permitted to take state board examination upon graduation, even though he may lack the required experience; with the understanding that his state license, if one is earned, shall be withheld until after the necessary experience shall have been acquired. This proposition was opposed almost unanimously. However, inasmuch as a similar practice is in force in a few states, I recommend discussion with the point in mind that this Association should go on record either in approval or disapproval of such a proposition.

(7) All of the district meetings voted unanimously expressing their disapproval of any law or consolidation plan under which the "boards of pharmacy may lose their identity and be consolidated with other boards or commissions in a department, and under a head who may have no practical knowledge of the professions or vocations over which he may be given control."

(8) The importance of "Pharmaceutical and Chemical Problems" (arithmetical questions having to do with pharmacy, chemistry, materia medica, etc.) to be given as a separate branch or subject, was discussed at all of the meetings and on motion as follows, was adopted: "*Resolved*, that all of the states of this District make the subject of 'pharmaceutical and chemical problems' a part of their examination, to be given as a separate branch or subject, in accordance with the recommendations of the N. A. B. P. Advisory Examination Committee."

(9) The meetings also went on record recommending that there be coöperation between the various states when changes in pharmacy laws are sought, especially with reference to prerequisite standards and reciprocity, in order that inconsistencies and conflict may be avoided. It was agreed that the object sought, namely uniformity, might best be brought about by a careful study and adoption of at least such parts of the model pharmacy law (copies of which are available through the Secretary's office) as apply to qualifications to be required for registration by examination and reciprocity. It was recommended that states when preparing to make changes in their laws communicate with the Secretary's office, to secure copies of the model law and such information and aid as is available.

(10) The standardization of pharmacy schools and colleges, at least to the extent of preparing a list of schools and colleges to be recognized by the individual state boards of pharmacy, was considered of importance and worthy of special consideration by the National Boards.

(11) In the discussion on fees charged in the various states, for registration both by examination and reciprocity, inconsistencies and wide variances were brought out in this respect as well as along some other lines. Some states grant registration by examination, charging a fee of \$5.00, while others charge as high as \$25.00 for the same form of registration. Other states charge a nominal fee for registration by examination and a much higher fee for registration by reciprocity, which is, to say the least, an inconsistency, in view of the fact the privileges and duties of both classes of registration are identical, and less work on the part of the board is involved in registering by reciprocity than by examination. In one state where this discriminatory charge was in force for two years, following an official ruling, the Board members were required to refund personally the excess fees charged during that period for reciprocal registrations, and adopt the uniform fee of \$15.00 for both forms of registration. It was recommended that when changes are made in any state law, efforts be made to adopt a uniform registration fee of \$15.00, or at least to make the fee the same whether by examination or reciprocity.

(12) Three of the meetings, Districts Nos. 4, 5 and 8, endorsed the recommendation of the

N. A. B. P. made at the 1922 Convention and reaffirmed at the 1923 convention to provide for reciprocity for pharmacists registered in a few states prior to a certain specified date on the basis of grades made in examination in a recognized school or college of pharmacy as evidenced by diploma and accepted by the Board of Pharmacy in lieu of Board examination. The resolution adopted reads as follows:

Resolved: That the boards of pharmacy of the states comprising this district approve the N. A. B. P. recommendation to provide for reciprocity for pharmacists registered on the basis of grades made in examination in a recognized college of pharmacy as evidenced by diploma, in lieu of board of pharmacy examination as in force in a few states prior to January 1, 1914, provided, however, that the applicant has since registration, ten or more years' experience in a retail pharmacy, and provided further that the applicant must have had, prior to this registration on diploma, the legal qualifications which would at that time have entitled him to entrance for examination in the state to which he applies for reciprocal registration.

In the handling of applications for reciprocity under this proposition the grades made by the applicant in examination in the college of pharmacy of which he is a graduate, are obtained by the N. A. B. P. Secretary's office, certified to over the seal of the college and the signature of someone in authority, and these are made a part of the permanent record of the applicant's original state board of pharmacy registration to be certified for reciprocity as having been accepted by the board in lieu of state board examination.

The meeting held in District No. 7 deemed it best, inasmuch as only two states were represented—Alabama and Florida—that this proposition be submitted direct to each of the boards constituting the district. On motion duly carried it was recommended that the Secretary submit this proposition to the various boards of pharmacy of District No. 7, for their individual action.

When it has been understood, with few exceptions, Boards of Pharmacy generally have adopted this proposition to extend reciprocity to the few registrants in states where this form of registration was in accordance with the law at a time when the disadvantages of such a method of registration were not so apparent as they are to-day.

Twenty-six states have given approval to date, and I have no doubt that when the proposition has been brought directly to their attention and thoroughly explained, it will be generally accepted by the remainder of the boards. It seems the fair thing to do. Certainly these graduate pharmacists are as fit and worthy as the average pharmacist—graduate or non-graduate—registered to-day with probably the minimum of experience.

Taken as a whole, the district meetings held were profitable as well as interesting. The lack of representation from three of the five states of District No. 7 was sincerely regretted. The presence of the entire Alabama board and four members of the Florida board, and the extreme interest and enthusiasm displayed by these delegates, made it doubly regrettable that the other three member states had no representative present at this splendid meeting. This was felt so keenly by those members who were present that the following resolution was approved:

"Realizing keenly the necessity of a full attendance by the five boards composing the seventh district of the N. A. B. P. namely Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi, in order that the best benefits might accrue to the above-mentioned states, and that the importance of a thorough discussion of all affairs pertaining to the advancement of Pharmacy and reciprocity may be had, so as to reach a better understanding regarding sectional conditions, *Resolved*, that the members present at the district meeting held in Birmingham, Alabama, February 13th and 14th, 1924, deeply deplore the absence of representatives from Louisiana, Georgia and Mississippi, and would urge upon each member of the Pharmacy Boards in these states the great importance of seeing that their states are represented at future meetings, as it is only in this manner that we can get together and straighten out harmoniously the differences that are likely to arise from time to time, as regards reciprocity, interchange, grading papers, etc.

Be it further resolved that a copy of these resolutions be sent to each Board Member of the States composing the Seventh District, also to N. A. B. P. Headquarters."

The necessity for complete representation at these district meetings, the reasons for which are so well set forth in the foregoing resolution, is recognized officially by the N.A.B.P. Executive Committee, which spread upon its minutes at the April 1923 meeting the following:

“ . . . It is the sense of the meeting that not to exceed four district meetings may be held . . . provided that the Vice-President of the District in which meeting is to be held can give assurance of attendance of at least three members from each state in his district.”

Your Secretary also attended the annual state pharmaceutical meetings of New Jersey, and of South Dakota, and President Mortenson attended the Arizona state meeting. Invitation to attend the New Jersey meeting came through Dr. Robert Fischelis, acting as Chairman of the “Committee on Papers and Queries” and the subject assigned was “The Value of the State Board of Pharmacy to Pharmacists and to the Public.” The meeting was one of the very best state meetings it has ever been my good fortune to attend—enthusiastic and full of live topics having to do with real pharmacy, as well as matters pertaining to the commercial side. Before adjournment, the New Jersey convention passed a resolution, unanimously, directing the Board of Pharmacy and the Legislative Committee of the Association to take the necessary steps to have the state pharmacy law amended so as to enable the Board to “take advantage of agencies which are available”—meaning membership in the N. A. B. P.—as would give the pharmacists of New Jersey the same privileges and advantages of reciprocity as are available for pharmacists of forty-four other states and the District of Columbia. Later, your Secretary had a very pleasant conference with the members of the Board of Pharmacy at which all of the five members expressed themselves freely, as in favor of membership in the N. A. B. P. when their law is changed or amended as is deemed necessary. I have no doubt, therefore, that New Jersey will join the ranks of our Association in the not very distant future.

My attendance at the South Dakota meeting was by request of the Board of Pharmacy of that state, to give such aid as I could in preparing to amend their pharmacy law so as to provide for college of pharmacy prerequisite for entrance to examination for registered pharmacist. The meeting was well attended and much enthusiasm shown in discussion of the various matters brought before the convention. Drafts of amendments will be prepared by the Legislative Committee, using the model law propositions as a basis, and I feel certain that with the pep and push displayed by the South Dakota Association, a prerequisite law will be enacted at the coming session of the Legislature of that State.

President Mortenson attended the state conventions of Arizona and California, and took an active part in both of these meetings.

In addition to attendance at the state and district meetings mentioned, your Secretary, as Chairman of the Advisory Examination Committee, visited several state boards during the year, where methods of examination, questions, proposed changes in laws, etc., were discussed.

(The Secretary then gave a history of the development and growth of the Secretary's office.)

It is worth while noting that applicants for reciprocity pay the fee of \$15.00 without complaint, and in many instances express themselves as heartily appreciating the reciprocal privileges made possible so generally between the various states by the state boards of pharmacy acting through their National Association, the N. A. B. P.

As a matter of fact, I think that the casual applicant for reciprocity thinks little about the fee. The advantage and economy of registering by reciprocity instead of undergoing the expense and anxiety of taking an examination makes the fee an insignificant matter.

Now that we can view it in retrospect, it is perfectly plain that the Association in employing a full time Secretary, and providing income, adopted the only course to insure permanent success. The experience of national associations of all kinds bears this out—Chambers of Commerce, Trade Associations, etc., all employ permanent officers of some kind and provide means for the payment of salaries, rent and other expenses just as an individual or business organization would do.

PRESENT SITUATION.

I think we may justly be proud of our achievements up to the present. I am confident we are on a solid foundation. There remains a great deal of detail work to bring our organization to the point of perfection we all desire. Our biggest outstanding fault is still, I think, lack of uniformity. There is a wide variation in our practices which needs to be narrowed before we will be on as smooth-running a basis as we should be. This can only be attained by each individual state giving its unreserved support to the National Boards of which it is an integral part. As our President has so ably pointed out, we meet annually, pass resolutions enthusiastically, then, too

often, we go home and forget about it. Like buying an auto and then neglecting the bolts, joints, lubricating system, etc., and expecting the thing to run and make easy riding. You've all had enough experience to know the result. That is not enough. We must get behind and push. Not push two or three days in a year, but push 365 days a year. We are prone to approve resolutions in annual convention—with a mental reservation. We approve something for the other fellow, without being willing to observe the rule ourselves.

In spite of our differences—wide as some of them are—existing between states, it is a marvel with what amicable agreement reciprocity is carried on. We are like the average family. We disagree on a number of things—each sticking more or less to his own ideas, and yet as a family, we hang together and turn up each year at the annual convention good friends, anxious and ready to work for what seems to us best and in the interest of our chosen profession.

This Association—our Association—of which each member board of pharmacy is a part, equal to that of any other member board stands ready to help any or all of the individual boards in a number of ways. Failure to ask or permit the Association to help frequently leads to a blunder on the part of a state. Let me illustrate by just one example. Copies of the draft of a "model pharmacy law" which is the result of joint efforts of the A. Ph. A. and the N. A. B. P. are available through the Secretary's office. It is basic and can be adjusted as a whole or in part to fit the conditions in any state. Note now what happened in one of our states which recently enacted a college of pharmacy graduation prerequisite law. It made college graduation mandatory; but it specified in that law that the candidate for examination for registered pharmacist must have two years of drug-store experience in addition to college graduation. That is O. K. while we are on a two-year college course basis, but see what happens when we go to three years. That will enforce five years before a man can take the examination, and if the colleges go to four years (they probably will, eventually) it will mean six years before one can qualify for examination in that particular state, unless the law is changed. Now, supposing that law had been worded a little differently—worded as in the "model law," copies of which were furnished this particular state—starting with a requirement of four years of drug-store experience which harmonizes in that respect with the laws now in force in nearly all the states; then require graduation from a school or college of pharmacy recognized by the Board of Pharmacy and credit on the experience requirement the time of attendance at college. So long as the two-year course is continued to be the recognized course, give credit for two years, leaving two years of drug-store experience. And when a three-year course or a four-year course was adopted, then give an additional year's credit, provided however, that the candidate must give proof of never less than one year of drug-store experience. The draft of the model law provides for this in a plain common-sense manner; so why not use it as nearly as possible in the form presented, instead of making changes and taking chances on inconsistencies creeping in and leading away from instead of toward uniformity? I can plainly see that state in a jam inside of the next five years. I am not holding up this state as a "horrible example," but its experience illustrates the point I am trying to make. We meet in annual convention and discuss and adopt the propositions along the various lines of our activities—laws, standards, examination methods, etc., and then too often we go back to our respective states and follow our individual whims in these important matters. This Association should not be placed in the position of having to coax and cajole states into accepting things which they themselves as members of the Association have approved.

All of our work is of national scope and the individual states benefit by it only when they put into effect in their own states the things which are generally acknowledged as beneficial. The waters of the spring quench the thirst of only those who drink. Our newspapers and magazines teem with advice, by recognized experts, on how to keep well, yet not an individual can cure a headache by simply reading the advice—he must act on the advice; he knows the advice is sound; he knows benefit will follow if the advice is adopted, but old human inertia just prevents him. So, too often, it is with our various units. The help is there, but we seem to prefer the headache. However, we are on our way. We may be like the proverbial black-strap in midwinter, we flow slowly, but eventually we flow.