

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF PHARMACEUTICAL FACULTIES

PHARMACY IS A PROFESSION.

BY C. B. JORDAN.*

The validity of the statement "Pharmacy is a Profession" has been questioned by some who judge pharmacy solely by the exterior signs that are found in a modern drug store. Those who fully understand the dual nature of pharmacy and appreciate the relationship that it bears to public health have never questioned its professional status. To any mind the statement "Pharmacy is a profession" is axiomatic, but, for the purpose of discussion, I will admit that it may not be true. How, then, shall we prove whether it is true or false?

We cannot find a satisfactory definition of the term "profession;" therefore, it is best to select the outstanding qualifications of our best professions and determine whether or not pharmacy has these qualifications. Granting that medicine, dentistry, law and ministry are well-defined professions, what are the qualifications that distinguish these callings from others that are classified as non-professional? The outstanding qualifications are:

1st. The membership is selective and demands a training and competency far beyond that required of the ordinary individual.

2nd. The practice of a profession contributes to and is necessary for the public welfare.

3rd. The practitioners of a profession are inspired by a desire to serve and not by the sole desire of personal gain.

4th. A profession has a well-defined code of ethics.

5th. A profession has an organization or organizations that inspire its members to abide by its code of ethics.

6th. A profession is recognized by the commonwealths by laws that protect the public from incompetency.

7th. A profession has a literature.

These seven qualifications will be our measuring stick to determine the status of pharmacy. Let us consider them seriatim and determine whether or not pharmacy meets these requirements.

First. The membership of a profession is selective and demands a training and competency far beyond that required of the ordinary individual. Those who wish to enter pharmacy *must* meet certain specifications. These specifications vary in the different states, but in all states the applicant must be not less than twenty-one years old, of good moral character, must serve an apprenticeship of four years and must successfully pass a thorough examination. In Indiana, my home state, the applicant must be a high school graduate before entering college, must be a graduate of a reputable college of pharmacy requiring at least two years of collegiate work, must be at least 21 years old, of good moral character, and must successfully pass a thorough examination. Beginning with the autumn of 1925, no college of pharmacy will be recognized by our State Board of Pharmacy that

* Purdue University School of Pharmacy.

does not require at least a three-year course as a minimum course. Twenty states now have prerequisite laws that require all candidates to be graduates of reputable colleges of pharmacy. Prerequisite laws are being agitated in the other states and it will not be long before no applicant can enter pharmacy in any state in the Union unless he is a graduate of a reputable college of pharmacy.

The membership in pharmacy is selective and a training and competency far beyond that required of the ordinary individual is demanded of all who wish to enter; therefore, pharmacy has the first qualification.

Second. The practice of a profession contributes to and is necessary for the public welfare. Pharmacy contributes to and is necessary for the public welfare. Our national narcotic act and the eighteenth amendment recognize pharmacy and place the legal dispensing of narcotics and alcoholic liquors solely in the hands of pharmacists. Our state laws place the sale of poison, with few exceptions, in the hands of pharmacists and make them sole dispensers of physicians' and dentists' prescriptions. Therefore, pharmacy contributes to and is necessary for public welfare. Pharmacy has the second qualification.

Third. The practitioners of a profession are inspired by a desire to serve and not by the sole desire of personal gain. Pharmacists are inspired by a desire to serve and not by the sole desire of personal gain. The prescription departments of 90 per cent of the drug stores do not yield a fair return on money and time invested and yet the pharmacists retain these departments for service to the public. During the last few years the so-called drugless drug stores have appeared. These stores have eliminated their prescription departments and stopped the sale of poisons because they did not yield a fair return for time and money invested. The pharmacists have condemned this practice. In Indiana a law was recently passed at the instigation of the State Pharmaceutical Association compelling all stores that advertised as a pharmacy, a drug store, or apothecary to have a registered pharmacist in charge at all times. A similar law is now being urged by the New York Pharmaceutical Association. The above shows clearly that the pharmacists are inspired by a desire to serve and not by the sole desire of personal gain. Some have fallen from grace, but this is true of all professions. Pharmacy has emphatically shown that it condemns those who are not inspired by a desire to serve. Pharmacy has the third qualification of a profession.

Fourth. A profession has a well-defined code of ethics. Pharmacy has such a code of ethics. The American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties has recommended that all applicants to member colleges be required to subscribe to this code of ethics. Pharmacy has the fourth qualification.

Fifth. A profession has an organization or organizations that inspire its members to abide by its code of ethics. Pharmacy has many such organizations. I will mention only four. The American Pharmaceutical Association drew up and adopted the code of ethics¹ for pharmacy. It does for pharmacy what the American Medical Association does for the profession of medicine. It has no peer among the organizations of the other professions. The state pharmaceutical associations are doing for the pharmacists of the states what the national organization is doing

¹ See Volume 2, 1853, *Proceedings, American Pharmaceutical Association*, p. 45. JOUR. A. PH. A., 11, 728, 1922.

for the nation. The American Conference of Pharmaceutical Faculties, composed of the faculties of the best colleges of pharmacy in the United States, has done an excellent work for pharmacy. It has always stood for the best and has urged higher requirements and more competent practitioners for pharmacy. As mentioned above it has recommended that all applicants for entrance to member colleges be required to subscribe to the pharmacy code of ethics. The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy has done for the boards what the Conference has done for the colleges. No other profession has such an organization. Pharmacy has the fifth qualification.

Sixth. A profession is recognized by the commonwealths by laws that protect the public from incompetency. Every state in the Union has a pharmacy law that specifies certain qualifications that must be met by all practitioners and fixes penalties for infraction of the law. In addition, the United States government has recognized pharmacy as indicated in the discussion of the second qualification. Pharmacy has the sixth qualification.

Seventh. A profession has a literature. Pharmacy has such a literature and it is indeed a rich literature. The JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION and the YEAR BOOK of this Association are typical examples of scientific publications that are purely professional. The National Formulary, recognized by Congress, in the Pure Food and Drugs Act and the Prohibition Act, is published by the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION. The United States Pharmacopœia is revised every ten years by a committee, 66 per cent of whom are pharmacists. Pharmacy has representation in the National Research Council. A great amount of research is accomplished by pharmacists every year, thus adding materially to the literature of pharmacy. The *American Journal of Pharmacy* and a host of others are also adding yearly to the literature of pharmacy. I have only briefly sketched this literature, but enough has been given to prove that pharmacy has a literature. Pharmacy has the seventh qualification of a profession.

I have proved that pharmacy has all the qualifications of a profession; therefore *pharmacy is a profession.*

A NEOPHYTE OF THE SIGMA XI.*

BY H. V. ARNY.

In behalf of the initiates of 1924 permit me to express our thanks for the great honor you have vouchsafed us in conferring upon us membership in the Sigma XI. We neophytes stand before you with mingled feeling of awe and of exaltation. We shy young things of 1924 are awed at the thought of being in the presence of you, our "grave and reverend" seniors; we possess a feeling of exaltation; I might even say exultation, at being privileged to be initiates of this great organization, since we realize that membership in the Sigma Xi is a distinction, an opportunity and a privilege.

It is a distinction to be received into a select society which numbers among

* Remarks made "On behalf of the Initiates of 1924" at the annual initiation banquet of the Kappa Chapter of the Sigma Xi Society, the national honorary fraternity of research workers.