

store is to-day the source of just as many things used in the prevention of disease as for their cure. The chances are that the results of the examinations of the average run of citizens by competent physicians will reveal something or other which either requires treatment or which should be guarded against by proper prophylaxis of one kind or another.

In the author's estimation, no better opportunity for rendering a professional service to the public, to the medical profession, and to himself has been offered the pharmacist in a long time.

THE PHARMACIST AND PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITIES.

BY ANTOINE E. GREENE.*

As a member of the medical trinity, comprising medicine, dentistry and pharmacy, the pharmacist should take his proper place beside his professional confreres in the new movement for public health and preventive medicine. That pharmacy has not taken a larger part in the new program for the prolongation of life and the prevention of disease is due in a large measure to a lack of appreciation and understanding of what public health is, and what it means to the pharmacist. The busy pharmacist must be won over to public health by discovering that public health does pay in the long run. Physicians are just beginning to develop the "Health Consciousness" which is essential to success in this new program. The pharmacist and physician have concerned themselves chiefly with the treatment and removal of pathological conditions in the sick, paying but little attention, if any, to those who are not confined to bed as patients.

Public health concerns itself not only with the care of the sick, but also takes as its field of activity the well members of the community. Thin partitions divide the realms of health and disease, and the well person of to-day often is the sick man of to-morrow. To throw the protective mantle of preventive and salutary medicine over the well is the aim of public health, to which task it has called the professions of medicine, teaching, engineering and sanitary science. Public health concerns itself with the health of the people. The health of the people comprehends their physical and mental well-being.

The busy practitioner of pharmacy will first ask what can be done in the line of public health, what his share in the work will be, and how satisfactory a program can be worked out to fit in with his daily schedule of activities, broad and varied as it is.

The present status of public health, preventive medicine and popular health education owes much to the discussions and organization activity coming as a result of the surveys of health conditions in this country by national, independent and industrial health agencies. These surveys and studies were partly occasioned by the reports of the draft during the World War. The large number of exemptions from military duty, due to physical and mental defects, pointed to a dangerously low condition of national health.

One notices the present trend of health activity by such public observances as "Health Week," "First Aid Week," "No Accident Week," "Clean City Week,"

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etc. The pharmacist reaps the benefit of much free advertising by these popular health days and weeks, his sales often taking a more than ordinary increase in volume. The public, motivated to action by the information and publicity given to the health program by organizations and interested individuals, finds a need for the merchandise peculiar to the neighborhood drug store.

With conditions as they are, the pharmacist should take advantage of the situation and use these periods dedicated to health activities and health promotion campaigns either by individual participation or by organized coöperation in this constructive and valuable work.

Having a practical training in hygiene, bacteriology and first aid, the pharmacist should be a valuable addition and asset to any community program for health work. The neighborhood pharmacy not only occupies a key position in the community as a public service station, but it is also a potential headquarters for the dissemination of health information.

The pharmacist can offer his services as lecturer, giving popular talks to assemblies, or over the radio. The pharmacists of America have entered into the spirit of "Pharmacy Week;" they should also take no little share in the health conservation program of the nation.

Pharmacists have always taken a prominent place in campaigns for pure foods and drugs. Much good work has been done by the profession in securing health laws and regulations for the sale of poisons, etc. Comes now the opportunity to participate in the public health program of the community and nation, an opportunity to be considered a privilege and duty. The pharmacist should be guided by altruism and a confidence in the value of health work. He should feel the spirit of "Health Consciousness." Wherever pharmacists have engaged in work of this sort, they have carried out their program with success and enthusiasm, winning the interest and support of the public.

Many of the colleges of pharmacy have courses in civics and professional ethics. In these courses several lectures could be devoted to a consideration of public health, its aims and purposes. It is not proposed to add another course to the already overcrowded curricula of the schools, but the relation of the pharmacist to public health should be explained and discussed.

The state and national associations of pharmacy should investigate ways and means to take an active part in health observances and programs. Such work is a legitimate phase of pharmaceutical activity, developing to the highest degree the aim of the profession to render public service.

THE WORLD'S HISTORIANS ARE PROMOTING COÖPERATION AND PROBABLY AN ORGANIZATION.

The historians of the world have started a movement for a world-wide organization, for the purpose of conserving and promoting the writing of history. It is stated that financial help has been pledged by foundations and about twenty nations have agreed to aid the movement.

It will be admitted that the undertaking is a difficult one because of the differing viewpoints, attachments and personal interpretations, but there are great possibilities for eliminating and avoiding historical errors. The latter have been the result of a desire to appeal to certain favors and, perhaps, added interest. Facts are essential for scientific history and we may be reasonably certain that the history of American Pharmacy will be written with that end in view.