

PHARMACY WEEK A PROFESSION WINNER.

BY EDWARD SWALLOW.

"Pharmacy Week," the wonderfully constructive idea of Robert J. Ruth, having for its purpose the bringing before the public of the scientific and professional side of the pharmacist's calling, will be observed during the week beginning October 10th this year.

This inspiration was hailed with enthusiasm by the great majority of American pharmacists last year and the first observance of "Pharmacy Week" was certainly a remarkable success. The second showing should be a 100 percenter, with every drug store participating. At heart every pharmacist loves his profession, otherwise he would not have entered it. Dean Charles H. LaWall pointed out in a recent article appearing in the *American Journal of Pharmacy*, under "Pharmacy in 1776," that "the pharmacy graduate of to-day possesses more scientific knowledge than the foremost savant of 1776." Further, he says, "our gifts have been more abundant and our opportunities and responsibilities greater." He asks, "Who would be so daring as to forecast the pharmacy of one hundred and fifty years hence?"

We, in the profession of pharmacy to-day, realize that our learning and scientific attainments are incomparably greater than those of the 1776 apothecary. But time and changing conditions have distinctly changed things in the drug trade of to-day; some of the old-timers sense this acutely and can hardly understand the modern methods of running a drug store. Generally speaking, the retail pharmacist nowadays has to be a mighty good business man in every sense if he wishes to make a success of his store. With the ordinary pharmacist it is a case of business before professional practice, or rather we might say, "business with professional practice," with the emphasis on the "business." Conditions are such, and naturally so in agreement with the times, that the druggist has to keep all kinds of side-lines whether he likes to or not. If he wants to make a decent living he must sell many articles entirely foreign to his calling. So it has come to pass that the purely commercial side of his business is more prominently before the public than his real professional and scientific part.

This status naturally leads the public to forget that the man within the drug store is in reality a professional man by reason of his attainments in science and special experience. Hence, while a druggist may be acclaimed as successful, such recognition is applied more to his business ability than his professional qualifications. These latter have been obscured overwhelmingly by pure business cleverness.

This condition of affairs puts pharmacy as a profession into the background, and prevents the pharmacist from being credited with the respect due to him for his special training and experience in compounding and dispensing medicines used by the public for the cure of diseases and the conservation of public health and welfare. The pharmacist should have this recognition as a professional man and would have had it if he had been careful to keep his scientific attainments always before the public—prominently before the public, in the same way that the medical and dental professions have done.

There seems to be, as it were, a wall built up before the public on the one side, and the professional pharmacist on the other.

Whether it has been his own fault or not, the public cannot see the pharmacist as a professional man; this wall of commercialism stops the view, nearly all the year around.

Now here's where "Pharmacy Week" idea comes in as a winner for the profession. Here, the pharmacist, every pharmacist in this great land of ours, can make this week one that will remove this wall, break a big hole in it permanently, so the public may see him as a professional man—know something of the knowledge which he has and appreciate him and his scientific services at their true value.

If a pharmacist wishes proper recognition as a professional man he must strive for it, work for it, think for it along intelligent up-to-date lines. "Pharmacy Week" offers this opportunity to all members of our calling, and it is earnestly hoped that all of the 53,000 drug stores in the United States will devote the week of October 10th forthcoming, to make known the science and special attainments required in the service of the public. The pharmacist knows in his heart that he is a pharmacist, a professional man all the time, but the public does not know this or realize it. "Pharmacy Week" gives every member of our calling a chance to win recognition as a professional man, and thus should be "put over" by the entire drug trade of America. Every man calling himself a pharmacist should "do his bit," and thus help himself and the calling to which he belongs.

WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT FOR PHARMACY WEEK.

It no longer is necessary to introduce Pharmacy Week to pharmacists. They know that it is a great opportunity to place Professional Pharmacy directly before the public for one week out of the year. The public will more fully understand the unique position which the pharmacist holds in relation to the public health, and the splendid service which he is capable of rendering, and it is to be expected that the public will not only more fully understand its pharmacist, but it will avail itself of his services to a greater extent and with a fuller appreciation. Pharmacists will find that in the future they will have a public to deal with which will be largely sympathetic as concerns protective pharmaceutical legislation, instead of having to confront an apathetic public or one which openly opposes every effort of the pharmacist to better his status and to conserve and protect the Nation's health. In fact the possibilities of Pharmacy Week as a great movement for the constructive betterment of pharmacy, and the beneficial results which may fully be expected to follow its observance, would seem to warrant the whole-hearted support of every person in the profession.—ROBERT J. RUTH.

Dr. Edgar Fahs Smith, former provost of the University of Pennsylvania, was awarded the Priestley medal for 1926, September 7th, at the 50th anniversary meeting of the American Chemical Society in Philadelphia. Dr. Smith delivered the Priestley lecture; the

medal is awarded every three years. A pilgrimage was made to the grave of Priestley at Northumberland, Sunday, September 5. President L. L. Walton attended as representative of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION. (See pp. 583 and 596, July JOURNAL A. PH. A.)