

THE STATE ASSOCIATION PROCEEDINGS AS SOURCES OF AUTHENTIC HISTORICAL MATERIAL.*

BY FREDERICK J. WULLING.

We pharmacists of America have as yet not sufficiently realized the great desirability, indeed the need of recording in a well-planned way our pharmaceutical development. The consciousness of that need is happily growing. Evidence of this is the establishment of the Section on Historical Pharmacy of our own ASSOCIATION and the recent creation in the Minnesota State Association of a standing Historical Committee. Possibly other State Associations have created similar committees but I have not heard of them. Such committees, if their work is enthusiastic and well outlined or planned, can do much to make the work of future recorders of pharmaceutical history easy and authentic. I suggest that our Section on Historical Pharmacy make it part of its work to enlist the interest and coöperation of all of the State Associations, by formulating a plan whereby the several associations may undertake in a systematic way, the gathering of every possible and available historical material or records relating to their several States or regions, and that they go back to the very beginning of their respective developments and continue their records in the future from year to year according to plans to be outlined or formulated. In the devising of plans or methods no doubt valuable help could be obtained from some of the already existing historical associations covering ether fields of history. I have in mind such associations as the Minnesota Historical Society which occupies a half-million dollar building and staff of competent workers who have already expressed their willingness to give Minnesota pharmacists such advice and help as they may desire toward efficient results. Older associations exist in many States and all of them, because of their interest in all fields of history, would no doubt welcome opportunities to help towards the ends I suggest.

It would be presumptuous on my part to suggest to our Section on Historical Pharmacy procedures or methods of approach to the State Associations and I am content merely to recommend a consideration of my suggestion.

Every State Association issues an annual proceeding or year book in which there could be published historical data carefully collected during the year preceding publication, to insure a proper sequence. As an illustration of what is meant I take the liberty of referring to the annual historical record in the Minnesota State Pharmaceutical Association Proceedings covering the complete record of activities and of the history of the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy from year to year since its organization in 1892. Anyone desiring to write the history of the College would find complete, detailed and authentic material in these annual records.

In every city, locality, county or region no doubt some one could be found who would be willing to consult all available sources for a complete composite local history. The older members of the profession are always willing to help and the memories of some go back very far. In cases where these are not able or willing to write out such contributions as they could make they could be interviewed and

* Section on Historical Pharmacy, A. P. H. A., St. Louis meeting, 1927.

their contributions recorded. I have interviewed several of the oldest Minnesota pharmacists and always succeeded in obtaining valuable data and facts which would otherwise have been lost to posterity.

Veteran pharmacists' associations or clubs are steadily increasing in number. All of them include members who could furnish many valuable local historical data, which would be interesting material for the State Associations to publish in their year books.

In conclusion let me say this brief article has been written hastily and with no intention of developing the thought back of it. The suggestion it contains is given for what you may find it to be worth.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON PRESENT-DAY RETAIL PHARMACY.*

BY EDWARD S. ROSE.

It is evident from the many valuable papers read before this assembly from year to year on the betterment of retail pharmacy that many are trying to live up to the Rooseveltian motto—everyone owes some of his time to the upbuilding of the profession to which he belongs.

So this paper was prepared with the hope that at least someone somewhere might be encouraged to give more attention to that part of retail pharmacy which deals with the sale of drugs and medicines.

Every pharmacist naturally is interested in the "bread and butter side" of his business and has doubtless in many instances followed the path of least resistance or has unwittingly been led by the pharmaceutical press or otherwise into the many side-lines with the hope of making money. Be it as it may, the pharmacist has permitted himself to-day to become in so many instances a mere tradesman.

Witness the able and exhaustive editorials on this subject recently published in the pharmaceutical press. The opening paragraphs of an article are devoted to a comparison of grocery stores and drug stores. If every pharmacist on leaving college had resolved to henceforth uphold the traditions of his honorable profession, no such comparison would be possible. Contrasts might be made but not comparisons.

The ever-increasing number of side-lines is proving a bugbear in retail pharmacy. In many instances they have proved an evil, resulting in loss of money and even failure in business.

"Cut prices" are a real menace to the independent pharmacist, unless he takes steps to meet the condition. As early as 1881 George J. Seabury began a series of articles in the pharmaceutical press, dealing mainly with the "cut price" evil. So at that very early date pharmacy began to experience a condition which has probably grown to be our most disastrous trouble-maker.

Short profit and "cut prices" have increased through these years, due to many factors. Manufacturers have carried on intensive advertising to the consumer, stating retail prices that meant short profit to the pharmacist. Chain and department stores have steadfastly followed the plan of cutting prices on nationally ad-

* Section on Commercial Interests, A. Ph. A., St. Louis meeting, 1927.