

# EDITORIAL

E. G. EBERLE, EDITOR

10 West Chase St., BALTIMORE, MD.

## THE PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETINS.

IN ADDRESSING the Maryland Pharmaceutical Association several years ago, Gov. Albert C. Ritchie emphasized the importance of pharmacy in public health work, and named the latter as one of the two essential activities of the state; the other function being the educational training of the young men and women so that they will be physically as well as mentally fit to keep in the struggle of life and perform the duties of citizenship. Governor Ritchie closed his remarks by stating in substance that it was the public health contact that made the pharmacists' activities of great significance for the state and because of this he took a keen and very active interest in it.

The point of contact is brought about not only by the professional service rendered by pharmacists but through their daily business transactions with their patrons. This reliance of the public places upon the pharmacist a deep responsibility. Public opinion of the pharmacist and his profession through centuries is one of the most valuable possessions of pharmacy. Even those who must of necessity or otherwise almost entirely neglect professional practice or relegate it to a more or less obscure place in the conduct of the business freely admit the value of the prestige of the professional aspect of pharmaceutical practice.

In the Charters' Report the following statement is made which is particularly applicable to the bulletin on the transmission of disease by flies, published in this issue of the JOURNAL.

"The pharmacist is the chief source of information and materials for the control of insects, fungi and parasites. He has a definite responsibility for the carrying of insecticides, fungicides, fumigants and similar products, and for giving information concerning their use and dangers in their use. This is particularly necessary in rural communities where commercial uses are important—as in sections engaged in the fruit industry."

The United States Public Health Service has just issued *Bulletin* No. 150 of the Hygienic Laboratory entitled "Key-Catalogue of Insects of Importance in Public Health." Ordinarily insects and their relation to health and disease are viewed chiefly from the standpoint of being external parasites. The present publication carries the subject much more into detail. In the body of the *Bulletin* numerous insects are arranged systematically according to their more or less generally adopted classification with notation as to their public health importance and their geographic distribution. In making use of the catalog if any one wishes to know what particular insects are known or suspected of transmitting a given disease, all that is necessary is to refer to the disease in question and follow the subject along the lines of the index. Reference is made to this publication to further impress the importance of the *Bulletin* on the transmission of disease by flies. It requires no flight of imagination to grasp the significance of the opportunities for pharmacists to assist in various ways to cut down the tremendous losses from sickness and destruction due to insects.

## INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE PRACTICE OF PHARMACY AND OF MEDICINE.

**P**UBLIC health service and the work of the divisions of medicines will be enhanced by the growing recognition that there is an interdependence of medicine and of pharmacy, of the laboratories and the practice of medicine. There must be specialization but a linkage is necessary that coördinates the branches named for a common service. The laboratory workers seek new and more efficient products for application by the practitioners of medicine and also search for the causes of diseases in order to acquire more definite knowledge regarding them.

Every new and old medicinal agent has advocates, many of whom overlook the possibilities of misuse which results in creating doubt relative to the value of the drug in question. Instead of arriving at a rational conclusion as to its value it is replaced by another preparation, thereby the *materia medica* is added to and some very useful products are no longer employed, because their action or the reaction in the individuals under treatment is not fully understood.

For example, the dangers are proven of certain hypnotics that, when first brought into use, were recognized as efficient agents; rather than discard them would it not be better to study how they may be properly dispensed and administered? Their misuse, in some instances, may be due to being prescribed unnecessarily, or without the proper adjuvant or corrective. The terms "adjuvant" and "corrective" in this connection are not to be interpreted only in the sense generally applied but in a wider significance; as an example, a drug may prove satisfactory in some cases wherein its alkaloid is not; other constituents of the drug may, perhaps, be considered under one or the other term.

It is quite probable that all hypnotics may, under certain conditions, prove to be dangerous in one way or another, or be productive of unexpected results. This constitutes one of the problems in medical and pharmacy studies, investigation by the laboratories and close observation by the practitioners of medicine. Pharmacists follow the instructions of the latter but their training and relations should, more and more, make them better qualified and place them in better position to discuss such questions as herein referred to with the physicians.

A purpose of the comment is in behalf of improving the *materia medica* and its application; the main aim, however, is to point out the value of coördinated coöperation of the divisions of medicine and of pharmacy and their joint responsibility to the public.

In the latter connection we have a number of recent unfortunate cases in mind wherein, seemingly—if not actually—the errors were due to deficient knowledge and, hence, joint responsibility was not impressed on those into whose hands the lives and health of the individuals were entrusted. Two of the accidents referred to occurred in drug stores and four in hospitals; they emphasize the statement of the last lines of the preceding paragraph.

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THE ALUMNI AND THE ASSOCIATIONS.

**C**OMPARISON may be made of the relation of alumni to their Alma Mater and that of pharmacists to their associations. During the month of June most of the schools and colleges of pharmacy hold their commencement exercises,

which means that hundreds of young men and women will enter the drug activities. The writer is repeating, in substance, what he has written on a former occasion—"They will influence pharmacy and this influence will express in a degree the ideals and viewpoints of the institution from which these students have received their credentials."

Every graduate is either an asset or a liability to the Alma Mater and the profession for which he has been educated. If this is true, and it seems reasonable to assume that it is, then it points out the necessity to the faculties to keep in touch with the trend of the drug business, so that they may acquaint the young men and women with present-day conditions, how to meet them and assist in shaping them for general good. The statement will be permitted that the young pharmacists can best carry out their duties, achieve success and contribute to the advancement of pharmacy and its service, by coöperating with those who now welcome them to share in the work of local, state and national associations.

It has been said before in these columns that the druggist is not playing fair when he withholds his support from his State Association. It is through the workers within these organizations that a professional or business standing in the respective communities is maintained for the individuals. Herman J. Stich in one of his "Two Minutes of Optimism" asks the questions of his readers—"Are you keeping up your end?" "Are you reciprocating?" "Are you playing fair?" It is well for all of us, perhaps, to ask these questions at this time when important changes are taking place within the drug business.

Governor Ritchie in the *Atlantic Monthly* for May, in an article on "The Imperialism of the Dollar," discusses some of the problems which concern everyone and, unless solved, will bring about undesirable conditions, or perhaps better stated—conditions that will become hurtful to a large number. Writing of investment banking, he states—"Corporations spring up over night to make it easy and pleasant for people to mortgage their future. The business, in its incipient stage, has seemed so profitable that investment bankers create new corporations in order that these corporations may in turn create new securities for the investment bankers to sell." Referring to the banker, the Governor asserts—"he puts a valuation on commodities, bridges over the period between production and consumption, asserts power over buyer and seller, often determines your success or failure. He can encourage or check the speculative impulses of the nation and shape its expansions and retrenchments." He also makes a statement which reminds us of Judge Dickinson's opinion of the Pennsylvania Drug Store Ownership Law. "A banking and credit system with its eye only on the investor's return, and measuring business only by its profit-and-loss account, puts the dollar too high in the social scale. It dehumanizes both business and the dollar."

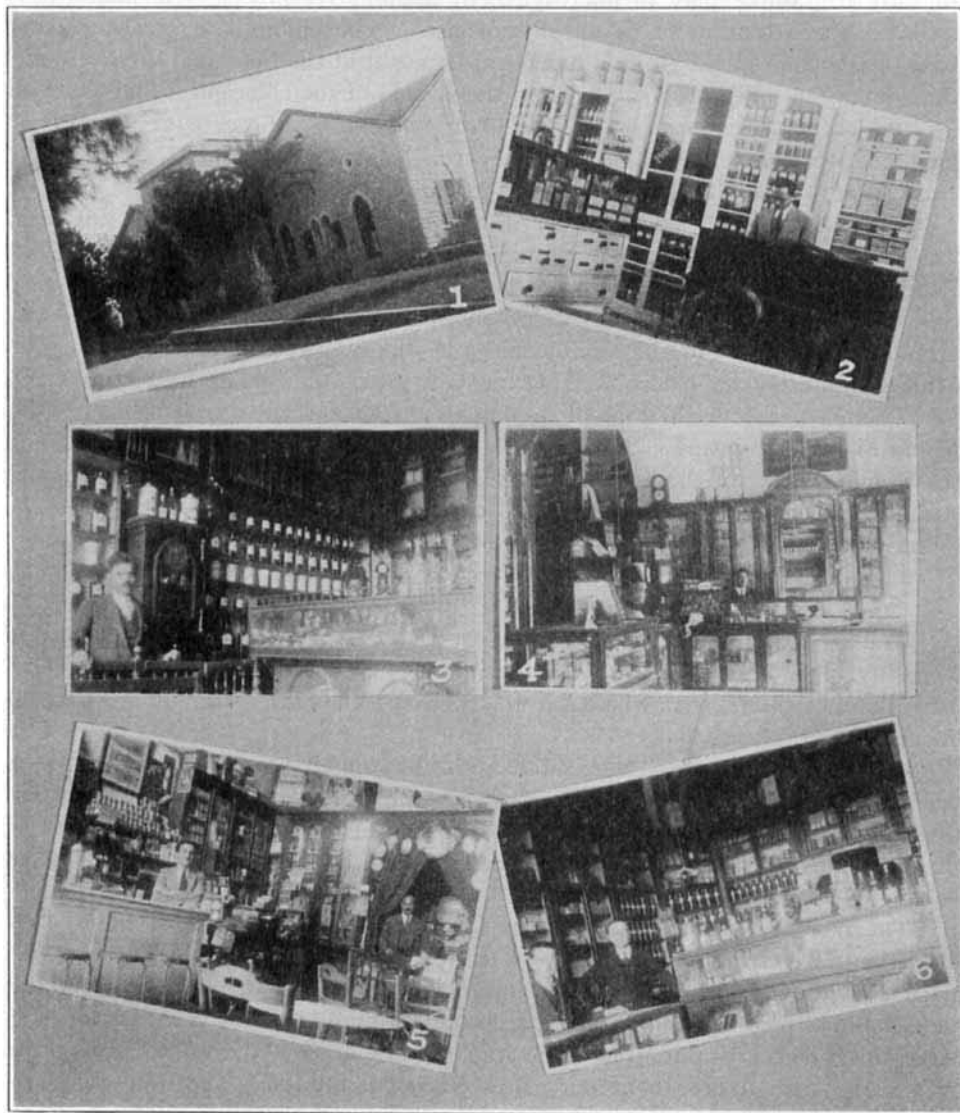
Judge Dickinson said:

"There enters into every business the two motives, of a wish for profit and a sense of duty obligation towards those with whom the management deals. When these are joined the latter operates to some extent; the moment they are separated the former is in sole control. This thought deals with the relation between things which should be joined and the public policy of not permitting them to be separated."<sup>1</sup>

The Pharmacy schools, the boards of pharmacy, the associations of the drug trade

<sup>1</sup> See JOURNAL A. PH. A., February 1928, pp. 109 and 195.

and pharmaceutical industries, have a part in shaping pharmacy and the drug business. There is no standstill—to some extent all activities are in a state of flux and the development will largely be in accord with the thoughts and actions of the votaries. The comment presents viewpoints on important questions which concern our business and profession and will in one way or another, directly or indirectly, enter into the discussions at Association meetings.



THE PRACTICE OF PHARMACY IN SYRIA.\*

No. 1, shows the School of Pharmacy, American University of Beirut, Syria; the pharmacies shown are also in Beirut—No. 2, University Pharmacy; No. 3, Nahoul's Pharmacy; No. 4, Baroody's Pharmacy; No. 5, Metni's—the only Pharmacy in Syria, having a soda fountain; No. 6, Garzuzi's Pharmacy.

\* See p. 1160, December 1927, JOURNAL A. PH. A.