

## ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE OF PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION SECRETARIES.

A. L. I. WINNE.

*Gentlemen of the Conference:*

It affords me pleasure to greet you on this occasion, the first annual meeting of the Conference, following its organization in St. Louis last year. In a brief way I will give account of my tenure as President of the organization, and discuss a few phases of the work which I believe should occupy the time and thoughts of the organization.

*History of Origin.*—As most of you know, this Conference came into being last year as the result of a little get-together meeting at which plans were discussed and possible results examined for what they might be worth. After a discussion of the feasibility of organizing such a body, steps were taken to perfect an organization, and officers and committees were selected. You, gentlemen, saw fit to make me your President, an honor for which I am deeply grateful, and I have tried to accomplish what I could during the year, with the assistance of our Secretary-Treasurer and the members of the Executive Board, to all of whom I wish to express my appreciation and thanks.



A. L. I. WINNE.

*Object of the Conference.*—The purpose which many of us had in mind at the time of organizing was to form an organization of association officials wherein state and local association affairs and problems could be discussed and probed into, and where such matters could be dealt with as being matters of first importance. The response to this program was whole-hearted and enthusiastic on the part of many secretaries. My files

are full of commendatory letters with reference to the work which such a conference may accomplish. The suggestions which have come to my notice have all stressed the desirability of round-table discussions, of informal presentations of the different phases of association work, and a free discussion of these problems. We shall probably never come nearer to getting at the bottom of many of the problems which confront us than by a frank and informal examination of them, with the experience of those who have had to deal with them placed before all who may be present. Our future programs should make ample provision for such discussions.

*Program of the Sessions.*—This year's conference is our initial step. We have not been allotted very much time on a crowded program, but those who have had the shaping of the program in their hands have done the best they could for us. If we find the time allotted to us inadequate we will have to insist on more time or make other arrangements for the Conference meetings. We have had suggestions that such a conference would more properly fit in with the annual meetings

of the N. A. R. D. than with that of the A. Ph. A. There is room for debate here but personally, I see no good reason why the meetings of the Conference should not be held at a time and place when so many of our potential members are in attendance upon some one or other of the sessions of the three other associations which meet together annually. I believe that we will find as many state association officials at the annual meeting of the A. Ph. A. as at any other annual gathering.

Another suggestion which has come from several sources is to the effect that this conference is of sufficient importance to hold an annual meeting of its own, independent of any other national organization, and that there is enough business which might profitably come before it to occupy it fully for a two- or three-day period. Our future plans will have to be formed by the will of those composing the body.

I would like to discuss some phases of the program which some of us believe will be of benefit to all members, and for the purpose of clarity I will take up suggestions which have come to me, and deal briefly with them.

*Round-Table Discussions.*—Almost all who have expressed themselves on the program of this conference have suggested round-table discussions as being of more potential value than any other feature which might appear on our schedule. I will not stop to elaborate on that. We are agreed that much good can come of such discussion.

*Symposia.*—It has been suggested that a symposium on some subject of interest to the association secretaries be arranged for on the program, or several of them. One member suggests that a symposium on "The Collection of Association Dues" would be beneficial. I certainly would welcome information on that subject. Another symposium subject suggested was, on "How to Obtain Advertising for a State Journal." I would like to know more on that subject. Another suggestion was also with reference to a state journal, this one being on "How to Handle the Contents of a Journal." All of us would like to know just how the different editors of these little journals get their material, and how they select what they want to use and decide on what to discard.

*Publicity.*—Publicity is a catch word. It may mean almost anything in the activities of an association official. It covers a lot of territory and may be made to cover, like charity, a multitude of shortcomings. It is, however, a recognized part of our work, and it would be of interest to all of us if we could find out what each state association is doing in the way of publicity.

In this connection I may stop for a moment to say a word about the exchange of association publicity among the several state secretaries. Shortly after organization, last year, I sent out a letter to all state secretaries, accompanied by a list of the state association secretaries, requesting that these names be placed on the complimentary mailing list of each of them, so that every secretary would receive the matter mailed out from the office of every other secretary. This was done by many, and I have heard from time to time that it is working out very well; but I believe there still remain a few who are circulating publications of some sort who have not yet made use of the exchange suggested. I would urge all these to see that all the secretaries receive any such matter as is mailed out to their own association members. Much valuable information may be passed around in this manner, and at trifling cost to any one organization.

*Types of Association Meetings.*—The type of meeting which the individual state

association should hold is engaging the attention of many secretaries to-day, and a discussion of this matter in this body will, undoubtedly, be helpful. Just a few days ago I received a letter from a state association secretary, in which he noted that the membership was taking very little interest in scientific subjects, scientific papers and speakers on scientific subjects. He was considering altering his program to a more commercial slant. In my own personal experience I have found that the group which I serve do not care for scientific material on the program. They will stand for a little of it, but they will sit it out to the bitter end with an interesting speaker who talks "turkey" about drug store selling, stock keeping, buying, discounts and such topics. I sensed this some five or six years ago, and we have had a great deal more enthusiasm for association meetings since we have turned our programs into somethings which we are able to handle intelligently. I think we are safe in trusting the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION to bring out the best scientific thought in America, and to preserve this thought in its literature, and to present it to those who are interested in scientific material. Few state associations have many members capable of doing much scientific work. The drug store worker has no time for this, and the more leisured member, usually associated with some teaching institution, certainly would prefer the presentation of any scientific work which he has done to the national body rather than to the state group. If he presents it to a state group he will usually present it also to the national body to insure its publication and preservation. So why waste our efforts on work that in all probability will have to be twice done? Certainly a discussion of state association programs will be found profitable here.

*Speakers.*—The securing of interesting speakers is a problem which every association secretary has found an annual matter of concern. We have an opportunity to here discuss the merits of the speakers who have appeared before our several groups. Some have been found excellent, and others not so interesting. We have little opportunity to gage a speaker before he appears in our midst, and sometimes he proves disappointing. If we could talk about speakers here, discuss their merits and demerits, we would all be in a better position to know whom to invite to our meetings and could insure for our associations more interesting entertainment.

A suggestion has been made to me that some arrangement might be perfected in this organization to route speakers, facilitating their attending as many annual state meetings as possible while on a single trip. This is already done by the speakers themselves, as far as is practicable, but we might lend a hand and improve existing practice. Another suggestion made is to the effect that associations might occasionally secure speakers from outside of the ranks of pharmacy by paying them and share in the expenses by using the speaker at more than one convention when the time of meetings permitted such an arrangement.

*Joint Meetings.*—I have long believed that much good could come of joint meetings by state associations adjacent to each other, and would like to hear this matter discussed by some who have had experience along this line, or who have given the subject consideration. If the members of a state association were given the opportunity to mingle with their fellow druggists of a neighboring state for a few days, it certainly would do no harm, and might conceivably give to many members new slants on the conducting of a retail business.

Such meetings could be arranged for, allowing each state association to hold its

own separate business meetings, and holding joint sessions when speakers were used and when a general discussion was engaged in. Such entertainment as might be provided could be arranged as a joint affair, and thus afford opportunity for many pleasant and perhaps profitable contacts.

*Coöperation with National Associations.*—In this body we have opportunity to discuss the extent of coöperation given by the several state associations to the larger nation-wide associations functioning in the interest of the druggist in the store. I feel confident that most associations coöperate in some degree with movements of both the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION and the National Association of Retail Druggists. It is by such coöperation, or concerted activity, that much good has come to retail pharmacy. We should guide our constituent members in the good work undertaken by these national organizations. They cannot accomplish much without the aid of the men scattered throughout the nation, who are in turn affiliated with our state organizations.

The pharmacy headquarters building movement is an outstanding example of what may be accomplished when there is the will to do, and the clipping of taxation burdens, recently accomplished, is another example of what may be done. None of these things could have been done by any individual person, or by any single national body or state body. These accomplishments have come about by team work on the part of all. As local association officials it is our duty to assist in such work by directing the thoughts of our own members. There remains much yet to be done, and the realization of many of our hopes may be speeded by an intelligently directed measure of coöperation with the national pharmaceutical organizations.

Many appeals come to association secretaries for help. We are importuned to write and telegraph our senators and representatives about this, that and the other thing. We must use discretion in listening to these appeals. Not all of them seem to warrant the course indicated in the appeal. There are times when a letter to a representative is helpful and there are times when one would be hurtful. We must use our best judgment. There is such a thing as overdoing these matters, but as a general proposition we ought to coöperate with the national organizations as fully as possible.

*Other Subjects.*—Suggestions made by members as subjects worthy for consideration by this Conference include such matters as the following: Service to Members, Publications and News Letters, New Activities for State Associations, Legislation, Ownership Laws, Store Registration, Sale of Poisons, Sale of Narcotics and Membership, and a great many others will readily suggest themselves to all of us. We will never run short of live topics for discussion. As local association officials we are constantly brought closely into contact with the problems of our own organizations and with the problems confronting the men in the retail stores in our own states. These contacts will supply a constant source of material for live discussions of many sorts.

*The Commercial Side of the Drug Business.*—Besides the professional side of the average drug business all of us have had reason to be brought closely into contact with the bread and butter side of these enterprises. The professional end of the average pharmacy probably represents in cold figures about ten per centum of that business's activity. Some estimate it as low as six per centum. Accepting the higher figure,

we have a side of this business which bulks around ninety per centum of the total activity, and on which depends the success or failure of the undertaking. State associations can well undertake a serious study of the commercial side of the drug business and bring to the attention of their members all the information possible, so that they may appreciate their associations as sources of information and as their representatives in many concerted movements. We all know that pharmacists learn very little about actual business practice before they enter the drug store. The schools may teach business methods and economics, psychology and finance, but putting these things into practice is another story. Experience is the real school, and it is my belief that associations through their publications may place much valuable information in the hands of their members, and may actually occupy the place of a post-graduate school for them, continuing to educate them in all the years following their departure from their *alma maters*. It is an accepted fact that the average druggist who may do little or no reading outside of the drug field (constructive reading, I mean), and who might not read any of the national drug journals, will read his own state journal. Here is the opportunity for the state association to reach him and to convey to him, perhaps in spite of himself, much information which he should possess.

I believe that state associations may properly interest themselves in commercial problems and help their individual members to meet some of the conditions of modern-day business. In such matters as accounting, store location, window dressing, counter displays, salesmanship and the proper appreciation and continued development of personality, the state association may be of service. In the study of chain store tendencies and practices, cut-price merchandising, price-maintenance legislation, the too-often unrecognized competition set up in non-competitive fields; principally, by the spaced payment plans of selling such articles as autos, radios, phonographs and so on, the state association may be of service. In the conducting of educational campaigns of various sorts we have our places. It may be a public health matter or one concerning the likelihood of the public being gypped when they attempt to get something for nothing while nibbling at cut-price bait.

I believe that associations may profitably advise their members with reference to the sort of merchandise it is to their interest to keep in stock and sell. I am aware that there are laws which limit activity along this line, and all should be careful to keep within the scope of these laws, but there is no law which forbids the commendation of a product or a line which yields a fair margin of profit to the retailer handling it. There is no law which forbids urging our members to look for profitable merchandise and push it, and there is no law which prohibits us from bringing to the attention of our members the desirability of developing lines of merchandise of their own; and we may legitimately direct the attention of our members to many phases of the present-day business program which may cause him to change his style of doing business, sometimes greatly to his profit.

It is entirely proper for an organization of this sort, or for any state association, to discuss in general terms such matters as store overhead, price of goods per dozen or gross, discounts, margins and net profits, and to demonstrate whether merchandise bought at one price and sold at another yields sufficient margin to meet the overhead and still leave a satisfactory net profit. We should discuss such matters in an effort to establish whether our constituent members, as store operators, are

not handling a great deal of unprofitable merchandise and to demonstrate to them, if possible, what percentage of margin they must look for in order to make any money on the goods sold. This is just one matter of interest; there are many such, and many will occur to you if you will give the subject thought. A portion of the time of this organization can profitably be employed in examining some of these problems. We have not in mind the singling out of any particular manufacturer's products for commendation or condemnation. We should be particular not to let our discussions deal with specific merchandise. We may more profitably deal with general principles and general practices.

I have gone more into detail than I intended when I started out, but trust you will pardon my intrusion on your time, and hope that I may be partially successful in engaging your thoughts in some matters which I believe may, as the years go by, be profitably examined and discussed by this Conference.

Again expressing my appreciation of the honor which you have given me, my thanks for the coöperation of those associated with me during the past year, and with the hope that the guidance of the destinies of this Conference may ever fall into stronger hands in each succeeding year. I admonish those who come after me to safeguard the organization from the evil influences of petty politics, to the end that the organization may be one of service to the several state associations and, ultimately, to the retail pharmacists of the country. I pass the office on in the hopes that I have merited the confidence reposed in me.

---

#### HIGH SCHOOL PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The following pledge of allegiance is exacted of all graduates from Texas high schools:

"The public school is the bulwark of the American nation. I acknowledge the obligation that I owe to the state and to this community for the training which I have received; and as an expression of my gratitude I, here and now, in the presence of these assembled witnesses, cheerfully and unreservedly pledge myself ever to give such support to the public schools as my financial ability will permit and always to exert my influence as a citizen of Texas to uphold their ideals and to increase their usefulness in the preparation of the boys and girls of to-day to be the men and women of to-morrow."

The pledge may easily be adapted by changes for professional institutions, including those of pharmacy.

#### KAPPA PSI CONVENTION.

The spirit of fraternity brought about fifty Kappa Psi to Portland preceding the meeting of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIA-

TION. Those who were of the opinion "it could not be done" did not have the intensity of fraternal spirit of Grand Regent W. Bruce Philip nor of Grand Registrar A. R. Bliss. All sessions were busy hours, even at the festive hours where genuine, jovial fraternal enthusiasm effervesced. The fine brotherly relationship was always in evidence and those who had the pleasure of sitting in felt the *esprit de corps*, and years were equalized—those who had passed the half century line were on as good behavior as those who had gone a few years beyond their majority.

The reports of the meeting were interesting and encouraging; the financial statement had a tonic effect on the transactions and was suggestive of better, better, every year. Honorary membership was conferred on Secretary H. C. Christensen and former President of the N. A. B. P. John Culley. The officers of the year are: *Grand Regent*, W. Bruce Philip, San Francisco; *Vice-Grand Regent*, Florin Amrhein, Boston; *Secretary-Treasurer*, F. D. Stoll, Louisville; *Grand Registrar and Editor*, A. R. Bliss, Memphis; *Grand Historian*, L. K. Darbaker, Pittsburgh.