

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

The following paper by Professor Zufall is a continuation of the discussion on *Materia Medica* which appeared in the last issue of the JOURNAL.

The address of Dean Rudd, appearing in the *Purdue Pharmacist*, deserves, I believe, a wider circulation because of the many helpful things for students of pharmacy contained therein.—
C. B. JORDAN, *Editor*.

SOME WAYS OF STIMULATING THE STUDENT'S INTEREST IN BOTANY.*

BY C. J. ZUFALL.

This paper is based upon the assumption that a student learns a great deal more when he is interested in the subject being taught. It is also assumed that it is the duty of every teacher to make every possible effort to arouse this interest in the student.

In teaching Botany, the question of proper material for laboratory study is an important one. It is evident that the material must be suitable to the occasion, but the interest of the student could be aroused decidedly in a great many cases by the use of "crude drugs."

This plan is, of course, a valuable one in teaching Pharmaceutical Botany, but even the student of pure science, or the high school student would be more interested in such a study if he knew that the material under observation had some curative property.

I think I am safe in saying that many students of botany finish their four-year college course without the realization that there is a close relation between botany and medicine. How many graduates in botany know that the latex of a seed pod relieves more pain than any other substance in the world? Or how many have the fact brought to their attention that the leaf of the pretty foxglove is the most valuable heart tonic known? How many consider the danger to animals and children of the poisonous seeds of the common castor bean, although, from the same seed, our harmless castor oil is expressed?

These crude drugs, of course, are available to schools of pharmacy, but other schools may secure them at a small cost from a wholesale drug house. This material will be found in the dry state, but it is remarkable what can be obtained from it.

Beginning with the lowest forms of plant life we could very well use purified siliceous earth. The beginner in microscopy finds this material easy to mount and there is no difficulty in finding what is wanted. The variety of peculiar forms of diatom skeletons makes the study attractive and there isn't much trouble in getting satisfactory drawings. Considerable emphasis should be placed upon the point of getting the student to feel that his first attempt in microscopy has been a success. In the same laboratory period the living diatoms should be studied. If time permits of more extended study of diatoms, Agar could be examined for the circular skeletons of *Arachnoidiscus*, which are nearly always present in this substance, and make an interesting study.

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