

EDITORIAL

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THE PHARMACIST IN PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITIES, IN CIVIC AND GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

THE enactment of the Parker Bill into law gave recognition to pharmacy by placing pharmacists on the same basis—as to appointment, pay, promotion, disability privileges, etc.—as medical officers. The bill was before Congress for several years; later, passed and vetoed; but it is now a law. The original bill did not provide commissions for pharmacists, for which the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION and related organizations contended. The Surgeon General gave his endorsement to the measure as finally passed and he received the whole-hearted support of the ASSOCIATION.

Progress is now being made under the law and examinations have been held. E. M. Holt and E. B. Scott, both of Washington, who for a number of years have been pharmacists in the Public Health Service, under Civil Service status, have received commissions in the regular commissioned corps, after having successfully passed the required physical and professional examinations. They are the first two pharmacists to receive commissions and have been named by Surgeon General Cumming to conduct the examinations necessary for eligibles in the corps.

The Modern Hospital for August says editionally that "under the leadership of its president, Dr. William Gerry Morgan, the American Medical Association has entered vigorously upon a program of hospital reform."

Accidents will occur, but every effort should be made to prevent them. We have before us several resolutions deploring errors which caused deaths in hospitals, in different localities, which could have been prevented by qualified pharmacists. It is unpleasant to refer to the occurrences, but it is to be hoped that the provisional standards will demand that qualified pharmacists be in charge of the pharmacies in hospitals; without such provision unqualified men and women will be assigned duties which endanger human life—constituting an injustice to them and to the patients. To place unqualified persons in such responsible positions comes very close to an unjustifiable disregard of protection—a hindrance to professional advancement and service. We have reason to believe that physicians, as a class, desire highly qualified pharmaceutical service, because it serves and protects them, and gives them opportunities in research and development of hospital studies. It is to be hoped, therefore, that in the essentials for hospitals, the pharmacy and pharmacists will not be overlooked, because the advancement of pharmacy and its encouragement benefit the practice of medicine.

"THE QUALITY OF MEN IN PHARMACY OF FIRST IMPORTANCE."

THE qualifications of moral character expressed in pharmacy laws are nearly as important as those acquired by education and training. Our profession places in the hands of its votaries moral obligations of a high standard, and he whose character permits him to trifle with human life or health, or encourage the frailties of human nature, should not be given the privilege of becoming a pharmacist,

and it may be questioned whether one who does not fully realize the obligations assumed in handling drugs and medicines should be permitted to deal in them. The latter reference brings us to a purpose of this comment.

An object in the organization of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION was to safeguard the public by providing the means through education and legislation whereby drugs and medicines would be standardized and the dispensing of them regulated. The purpose also came into evidence when, long before the public realized the dangers of drug addiction, pharmacists studied the conditions and suggested and worked for means of correcting the evil and restricting the sale and dispensing of narcotics.—See A. PH. A. PROCEEDINGS, 1902, earlier and succeeding annuals.

The ASSOCIATION seeks to coöperate with those who study public health conditions, and it is for that reason an article is published in this issue of the JOURNAL, entitled "Adulterated Ginger Responsible for Recent Paralysis Epidemic." No member of this ASSOCIATION and we are hopeful no member of any other association of the drug-trade activities had a part in the traffic which brought death and ill health to quite a number but, unfortunately, there are some who either do not care, or do not realize the dangers that may obtain in the use of unknown drugs; they will take a chance because it is a means of making money. It is estimated that more than 15,000 individuals were victims of the product discussed; a comparatively small number died from the effects, the greater number suffered in varying degrees from paralysis. A purpose of the article is to acquaint pharmacists with the fact that tri-ortho cresyl esters were responsible for the cases of "ginger paralysis" (?) and also to suggest further study of the action by phenol esters in the human body.

In again citing the aims and purposes of the organization of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION and its watchfulness over developments in professional pharmacy, liberty is taken in referring to the August JOURNAL, pages 908-910, where brief report is made of a conference for the discussion of better control of narcotic drugs. The following excerpts from the Constitution of the ASSOCIATION may be applicable:

"To improve and regulate the drug market, by preventing the importation of inferior adulterated or deteriorated drugs, and by detecting and exposing home adulterations. To encourage such proper relations among Druggists, Pharmacists, Physicians and the people at large, as may promote the public welfare, and tend to mutual strength and advantage.

"To improve the Science and Art of Pharmacy by diffusing Scientific knowledge among Apothecaries and Druggists, fostering Pharmaceutical literature, developing talent, stimulating discovery and invention, and encouraging home production and manufacture in the several departments of the drug business.

"To suppress empiricism, and to restrict the sale and dispensing of medicines to regularly educated Druggists and Apothecaries.

"To create and maintain a standard of professional honesty equal to the amount of our professional knowledge, with a view to the highest good and greatest protection to the public."

In closing this comment the following paragraphs from an Editorial in the February issue, 1928, are repeated:

In all court decisions in which restrictive measures that apply to the sales of medicine are involved there is a question of safeguarding the life and health of the citizens; hence, aside from provisions which give such protection through

qualified pharmacists it is of equal importance that druggists be observant of their professional obligations and desirous of serving. The progress of the drug industries depends not only on the regulation of its trade practices, reasonable observation of its codes of business and professional ethics, but on bringing into active coöperation all of its divisions.

Comment has been made in previous issues of the JOURNAL relative to sales of medicines by others than pharmacists; the guiding thought in the decisions bearing thereon has been of late, if not in the past, the greater safety and better service rendered by those qualified by education and training. Unless there is more involved than handing out a package, more than an ordinary sale wherein one salesman has no better understanding than another of what the package contains, the decisions have not favored restriction; but in cases wherein knowledge gave the public protection, the decisions rendered have, by inference if not otherwise, stated the importance of pharmaceutical service.

THE THREE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST RECOGNIZED USE OF CINCHONA.

THE Missouri Botanical Garden has issued a preliminary program for the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the first recognized use of Cinchona and the celebration is fixed for the last day of October and the first day of November of this year. There is to be an exhibition of books, pictures, crude materials and drugs pertaining to Cinchona. Prof. Leo Suppan is to speak of the history of the drug, Dr. Edward Kremers of its constituents, Dr. Dock of its medicinal use. Dr. M. Kerbosch, director of the Government Cinchona Estate and Cinchona Experiment Station (Java) is to speak of "The Cinchona Industry of Java," and Dr. Wilbur L. Scoville of "The Pharmaceutical Preparations of Cinchona;" Dr. Frederic Rosengarten has as his subject "Minor Alkaloids of Cinchona Bark," Dr. Torald Sollman "The Cinchona Alkaloids in Medical Science," and Dr. Kenneth F. Maxcy will discuss "The Present Conception of the Action of Quinine and Malaria."

The first authentic record of the use of Cinchona bark dates back to 1630 when Francisco Lopez de Canizares, Corregidor of Loxa, was cured of the fever by its use; the wife of the Spanish Viceroy of Peru, Countess Ana of Chinchon, about ten years later, brought some of the bark to Spain; the first general introduction of the drug into Europe was by the Order of Jesuits. These references give us four names applied to Cinchona—"Peruvian Bark," "Loxa Bark," "Jesuits' Powder," Cinchona. About 100 years after the experiences referred to, the source of Cinchona became known through Charles Marie de La Condamine, a French scientist who had gone to South America with Pierre Bouguer and Louis Godin for an entirely different purpose; namely, to measure an arc of the meridian on the plain of Quito; aside from bringing back specimens of the tree, which he described, he also made the rubber tree known in Europe.

In 1820, Pelletier and Caventou, French pharmacists, demonstrated the alkaline character of the principle discovered by Bernardino Antonio Gomez, a Portuguese physician and botanist, and gave it the name of cinchonine.

Reference is made in "Flueckiger's Letters to Power, 1882-1890"—*JOUR. A. PH. A.*, 19 (1930), 879 to "Chinarinden," by the former; later, translated by Dr. Power—see April *JOURNAL*, 1922, page 381, also "Centenary of F. A. Flueckiger," June 1928, page 615. The selections made for the program speak for an interesting celebration and the Director and Trustees of The Missouri Botanical Garden are to be congratulated on the motive which prompted them to undertake it.

PROGRESSIVE RESULTS OF PHARMACY'S RECOGNITION IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

IT has been said before in these columns that the basic standard of pharmaceutical progress is in the employment and development of the energies of the individual pharmacists, and in the realization and exercise of their respective powers alone, or in coöperation with others through a combination of single and collective activity. It is in that spirit that the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION entered into the movement for securing better recognition for pharmacists in Government Service, knowing that thereby and by raising the standards of pharmacy better service would be possible.

Having gained recognition by the commissioning of pharmacists in a most important service, we may look for further progress if it is shown that better service is rendered by the selection of trained pharmacists and that better protection is afforded to the men and women in Government services. It follows, however, that to the degree in which the individual pharmacists fail to develop their opportunities, to that extent the individuals and pharmacy lose. Pharmacists can be selected who will meet the requirements of duties to be assumed, and the measure of their confidence and assurance will have a large part in the progress which pharmacy will make in other directions. The recognition means much—it will encourage others to enter the service which they will honor, who are prepared for the work by education and training, and will reflect credit on themselves and their profession. It may be that men who have served long and faithfully deserve preferential favor or recognition, which may be deemed justifiable in instances; certain it is that the educational and training requirements should become fixed and progressive, for the good of the Service and of pharmacy. The most effective results come through the helpful coöperative efforts of all concerned.

The interest and purpose of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION is founded on assurance of qualified service and merit which deserves distinction. It congratulates those who have been commissioned and hopes for the success of others. Its efforts along related lines¹ will be continued with sincerity of purpose.

TIME, PLACE AND HEADQUARTERS HOTEL FOR THE 1931 A. PH. A. MEETING.

AFTER a spirited contest at the Baltimore meeting, Miami was chosen as the place for the 1931 meeting of the ASSOCIATION. The Florida pharmacists

¹ See August *JOURNAL A. PH. A.*, page 907.