

Section on Historical Pharmacy

Papers Presented at the Sixtieth Annual Convention

REPORT OF THE HISTORIAN.

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It was at its jubilee meeting in Philadelphia in 1902 that the American Pharmaceutical Association found sufficient leisure in its onward march to look backward. Not only were the exhibits of an historical character, but the occasion had arrived for the association to express a willingness to devote a small part of the time of each annual meeting to considerations of an historical character.

In order to put to a test the desire for reflection of the past and for permanent historical activity at the Philadelphia celebration, a committee was appointed to prepare a suitable program for the next year. The Council provided one session for the program of the Historical Committee at the Mackinac meeting in 1903. This meeting proved of sufficient interest to warrant the continuation of this arrangement for another year. The meeting of the Historical Committee at Kansas City in 1904 having proven the stability of the interest of those historically inclined, the Association granted permission to establish a regular section to be known as the Historical Section. Although no money is at stake in the matters presented to this section, although not even the glory of new discoveries attaches to the facts unearthed, this section has not only held its own, but the interest taken in its work has increased rather than diminished as one year's program succeeded another.

It is now ten years that your reporter has been closely affiliated with this new line of work on the part of the Association; for two years as Chairman of the Committee, and since the organization of the Section as Historian. When urged at Kansas City to accept the Chairmanship of the Section, your reporter positively refused to do so for the good of the Section and for the future of the work which it represented. The success of the Section has demonstrated that in this particular instance at least your reporter was right and that his good and well meaning friends were wrong.

For the good of the Section, your Historian now desires to state that under no circumstances will he consider a re-election. Not that he has lost interest in the work, nor that at any time he has had even a suspicion of misunderstanding with his associates. For the good of the cause, however, he desires to express certain views to which he could not give expression if re-elected.

All members of the A. Ph. A. who have the welfare of this Association and of American pharmacy truly at heart have at all times revealed an unselfish willingness to put their shoulder to the wheel and also to put their hands into

their pockets so far as their means permitted. Hence we accept without hesitation the gift of time, energy and money bestowed by temporary officers of the Association at large, also of the sections. However, when it comes to those officers which are regarded as more or less permanent, we feel that we have no right to accept year in year out such gifts which, in the long run, could not be regarded as gifts but as sacrifices.

Like the officers of General Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter on the Progress of Pharmacy, and Editor of the Journal, that of Historian should be an office filled by the Council. Ex-officio the Historian should be an associate of the temporary officers of the Historical Section. Two years ago the Historian was made ex officio a member of the Council. The time seems opportune for taking the second step in the right direction and to make him an officer of the Council.

As a permanent officer of the Association, the Historian should attend each and every annual meeting unless prevented by sickness or other unforeseen circumstances over which he has no control. It is not right, however, to expect him to attend these meetings at his own expense year in year out. The Association may not be in a position to offer the Historian an honorarium, much less a salary, but it should not accept for an indefinite period his services from one end of the fiscal year to the other and then not even offer to pay his traveling and hotel expenses while in attendance upon the meeting as one of the permanent officers.

Before making these remarks, I made the statement that I desired to make them because I had the future of the historical work, at heart. Permit me not only to repeat these words, but to add that what little I have been able to do and give during the past ten years has been given most cheerfully. Indeed I should like to continue in the same course, did I not feel that the office of the Historian should not be made light of, if it is to command the respect of this Association.

The American Pharmaceutical Association was the first to establish an Historical Section. In the establishment of this Section and its progress during the first decade of its existence I have naturally taken some pride. Much as I may regret to sever my official connection with the same, I feel that the time has come when its future and that of the Historian of this Association should be made secure. That I shall always continue to take a personal interest in this section, it is needless to state.

Anticipating my retirement from office, and looking forward to the establishment of permanent quarters for the collection in connection with the National Museum at Washington, the Historian has for the past two years made a special endeavor to put into shape not only for shipment but for use many of the numerous documents received for the Archives of the Association. With but relatively little additional work, these can now be shipped to Washington or to such other permanent or temporary abiding place as the Association may direct.

With the kindest greetings to my numerous pharmaceutical friends who have come together at Denver, I sincerely regret that I cannot be with you at the present time.