

EDITORIAL

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WHAT MAKES A PROFESSION?

THE above title is the caption of a message by W. A. Shumaker, Editor of *Law Notes* on the cover page of the November *Bulletin of the American Medical Association*; liberty is taken in quoting it:

"If there is such a thing as a profession as a concept distinct from a vocation it must consist in the ideals which its members maintain, the dignity of character which they bring to the performance of their duties, and the austerity of the self-imposed ethical standards. To constitute a true profession there must be ethical traditions so potent as to bring into conformity members whose personal standards of conduct are at a lower level, and to have an elevating and ennobling effect on those members. A profession cannot be created by resolution or become such overnight. It requires many years for its development, and they must be years of self-denial, years when success by base means is scorned, years when no results bring honor except those free from the taint of unworthy methods."

When the United States entered the war the writer of this comment prepared an article under the caption of "Loyalty to the Country and to Pharmacy."¹ Parts of the article bearing on pharmacy fit in with the foregoing and the title of the comment and are deemed timely and, therefore, reprinted. A concordant guide, prepared by the author, served as the introductory and text:

To respect my country, my profession and myself. To be a loyal citizen; to speak of my country with praise and act always as a trustworthy custodian of its good name. To be loyal to pharmacy and speak of its service with sincerity and conviction that the calling is worthy of my attachment and I a trustworthy votary. To be devoted to the cause of pharmacy, lend my best efforts to its uplift and advancement. To promote association work and thereby promote the service of pharmacy. To be a pharmacist deserving of the respect and confidence of those whom I serve. To look upon its service as an opportunity to be seized with joy and make the most of, and not as a painful drudgery to be reluctantly endured. To believe in pharmacy heart and soul, to be optimistic relative to its mission and convey assurance of its importance to those who are served thereby.

Pharmacy's most essential attribute to-day is optimism, because the best interests of pharmacy demand it: it means more than it ever did. No matter how different our views may be relative to the stock and conduct of the drug store, as far as pharmacy is concerned, there must be a unison of thought and action. The diverse drug interests in a sense may be viewed in the light of disintegrating forces and the coöperation of them results in centralizing or unifying them. We have pharmacists with different viewpoints, some inclining to what is denominated commercial and others to what is termed the professional side of their business. There is no more honorable engagement than the conduct of business on the high plane of honor and integrity, and it is not very honorable for anyone to pursue professional lines without due and sincere regard of the obligations assumed. Whether pharmacy is the profit-yielding part of a drug business or not, the thing

¹ Pennsylvania Pharmaceutical Association, 1918.

is to participate loyally and enthusiastically in the efforts to elevate and conform the commercial and professional status of the calling.

Pharmacy of the drug stores bears a relation to the ideals of the pharmacist; they characterize not only the individual pharmacy but have a powerful influence on pharmacy at large and the service rendered by it. Pharmacy is whatever we make it and represents our belief in it.

The layman's estimate of pharmacy is based largely upon that which pharmacists *exhibit*; they are not in position to render judgment anent what pharmacists *may think* of pharmacy. All the world may be willing to admit that pharmacy once had an enviable reputation, but most of the world will insist that this reputation not only be maintained, but improved. It may be advisable to remind the public of the past record of pharmacy, but they are most concerned with its present status and service. This is our opportunity and our duty—let us direct our energies, hopes and desires accordingly.

ALCOTATE AS A DENATURANT.

ALCOTATE has been described as a compound with an odor of garlic crossed with decayed eggs. If that is descriptive, its taste and odor should certainly render it unfit for beverage purposes, but there is no accounting for taste and human frailty.

Alcotate is said to be non-toxic, inseparable from the alcohol with which it is mixed, abundant and obtainable from more than one source. Its introduction and approval as a denaturant may induce a more extended exploitation of methanol in the industries, in other applications which research may develop, or the loss to the affected industry will be considerable.

The new denaturant displaces one which has resulted in effects which have provoked questionings relative to its employment; those who have directed its use will feel relieved because of the dire effects which followed the drinking of preparations containing it by those who crave alcoholics and seek to satisfy the craving at the risk of impaired health or loss of life. It is not the aim of this comment to further discuss that phase.

Alcotate will be used in completely denatured alcohol only, therefore, its introduction will not interfere with the manufacture of products wherein the odor would be objectionable.

BETTER TIMES AHEAD.

SECRETARY Robert P. Lamont on January 1st issued a statement to the press from which the following is quoted:

“That we are now approaching such a period is indicated by several significant facts. On the one hand savings deposits have been progressively accumulating, while business written by life insurance companies has been maintaining a fairly even pace and has reached a total for the year almost equal to the high level of 1929 and above the total for 1928. At the same time stocks of departments stores have been sharply reduced and there are some evidences of recent expansion of retail buying. While it is impossible to forecast at what time unmistakable evidences of improvement in business will occur, it is clear that we have reached a point where cessation of further declines and beginning of recovery may reasonably be expected.

"In a review of business activity in 1929, which was issued a year ago, attention was called to the high level of industrial output for the year as a whole and to the fact that during the closing months activity in some lines of business was in recession. 'It is impossible, of course,' the statement concluded, 'to forecast what temporary ups and downs may occur, but the nature of the economic development of the United States is such that one may confidently predict for the long run a continuance of prosperity and progress.' Despite the sharp curtailment of economic activity during the last year no evidence has appeared which would justify a revision of this statement. There can be no doubt that the inherent strength of our economic structure will enable our country to lead the world in a vigorous recovery from the present depression as we have done in the past."

It is to be hoped that what Secretary Lamont said will come to pass, and that the depression in business may be a lesson, if not a blessing in disguise. Too many have sought to make gain on the other man's investment or labor; there has always been a large class who ignore the law of service, and during the past ten or fifteen years its numbers have increased. Machinery has brought about over-production and it may be necessary to adjust supply and production with needs which will permit of profit; increased overhead also has had something to do with diminished profits and so there are many problems which are being discussed now that were ignored during the period of more satisfactory conditions. What applies to other activities applies as well to the drug business, to pharmacy, to professions as well as commercial enterprises. The law of service is to be considered in the adjustment of affairs, and creative energy which characterizes our people; fewer laws and better observance of them, less inflation and imagination are essential for establishing better times. Strengthened coöperation of the Government and the people is expected and hoped for.

PRELIMINARY WORK ON NATIONAL DRUG STORE SURVEY STARTED.

A FIRST active step in carrying out the scientific study of drug store merchandising methods planned by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce in coöperation with the National Drug Store Survey Committee will be taken with the departure to-day of a group of trade analysts of the department for St. Louis, where the survey is to be made. Mr. Wroe Alderson, Business Specialist of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, is in charge of the party which is to do the reconnaissance work for the survey. Other members are Mr. W. H. Meserole, Mr. Nelson A. Miller and Mr. John R. Bromell of the same Bureau.

The National Drug Store Survey is a part of the general campaign of the Commerce Department to aid American business to determine the sources of waste in distribution which is estimated to cost American business from \$8,000,000,000 to \$10,000,000,000 each year. The survey will be carried out along the general lines of the grocery store survey which was recently made by the department in Louisville, Kentucky.

The preliminary work on the drug survey will include the selection of the ten metropolitan drug stores and one small-town store which are to be used as the laboratories for this analysis of drug retailing methods. In some instances advance installation of additional recording methods will be advised, and a measurement of warehouse facilities is planned. The Commerce Department representa-

tives will also advise with the local committees in charge of the survey to work out financial and other preliminary details.—*Bulletin of the Department of Commerce*, January 5, 1931.

The National Drug Store Survey is of far-reaching importance. Editorial references have heretofore been made—see July JOUR. A. PH. A., page 674 and the December number, page 1280.

FLUECKIGERIANA.*

BY EDWARD KREMERS.

VI. Flueckiger letters to Power, 1882–1890.

Strassburg, Sept. 16, 1885.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I must apologize for not having sooner replied to yours of Aug. 5th, which I found on my desk on my return from Switzerland (1). Many thanks for the pamphlets (2) dedicated to the meeting of German Naturalists; they show that you are in good progress.

As to the "Grundlagen" (3) there is no objection if you like to translate them; both the authors would be much pleased and the publisher informs me that he is willing to have the engravings reproduced, for an American publisher, on reasonable terms.

The "Pharmaceutische Chemie" is in slow progress, owing to my rather uncertain health (4); I can no longer work in the same way as a few years ago, being frequently suffering more or less.

It will certainly take one year more to revise the whole; I have as yet arrived at the essential oils.

As to Mr. Foster's paper on "The Medicinal Plants of Wisconsin" in your contributions (5) it would be interesting to discuss whether *Sinapis*, *Althaea*, *Tussilago Farfara*, *Inula Helenium*, *Artemisia Absinthium* can with good reason be considered as indigenous to your State (6).

I see you are quite correct with regard to chloral hydrate; it is a mistake, which I am very glad to correct.

18 Sept.

The meeting took just, with great satisfaction, notice of your "Contributions No. 1" and directed me to acknowledge very thankfully and respectfully the receipt of the same, congratulating you to this very first step and wishes good progress to you and your Department.

Yours very truly,

F. A. FLUECKIGER.

(1) Apparently Flueckiger had been spending the summer vacation in Switzerland, his native country.

(2) Flueckiger here has reference to No. 1 of the Contributions of the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Wisconsin. In a previous letter he had informed Power of the meeting of the Verein deutscher Naturforscher und Aerzte to be held in Strassburg in 1885 and of the proposed organization of a section devoted to Pharmacy. He had also asked his former pupil to send a contribution or two. It was, no doubt, in response to this invitation that Power had the graduation theses of his first class, also a few other papers by himself and Professor Trellese, then Professor of Botany, published. (See also Note No. 6.)

(3) Flueckiger u. Tschirch, "Grundlagen der Pharmacognosie, Einleitung in das Studium der Rohstoffe des Pflanzenreiches" had appeared in 1885. It constituted the second edition of Flueckiger's "Grundlagen der Warenkunde: Einleitung in das Studium der Pharmacognosie" of 1873. The English translation by Power, "Principles of Pharmacognosy; an introduction to the study of the crude substances of the vegetable kingdom" appeared in 1887.

(4) At the time of writing Flueckiger was only 57 years old.

(5) Charles A. Foster, The medicinal plants of the State of Wisconsin, page 7 of "Contributions from the Department of Pharmacy, University of Wisconsin, No. 1, 1885. Dedicated to the Pharmaceutical Section of the Society of German Naturalists. In Convention at Strassburg, Germany, September 17–22, 1885." Foster does not use the word indigenous. His statement reads: "In regard to plants which have escaped from cultivation, only those which are proven beyond doubt to have become naturalized have been included."

(6) During the interval the Verein deutscher Naturforscher und Aerzte had met in Strassburg and the reorganized "Sektion: Pharmacie" which had to struggle for its existence was no doubt pleased to receive a contribution from abroad for the first meeting.

* Continued from December JOUR. A. PH. A., 1930, page 1278.