

EDITORIAL

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RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICE OF PHARMACY.

A PURPOSE of all pharmacists should be to have pharmacy deservedly recognized and given due credit for the achievements of pharmacists, and not permit the records of their achievements to be absorbed or adsorbed by those of other arts and professions. There is no desire to take away the glory of others and of other activities, but pharmacy should have due credit for its work. Dr. W. W. Charters in "Basic Material for a Pharmaceutical Curriculum" said that "the beginnings of pharmacy are lost in the mists of antiquity, and its history is replete with substantial achievements."

As striking, outstanding examples of what is meant, Scheele may be referred to; he was, throughout his life, from youth until his death, a pharmacist; true, his work largely related to chemistry, but he studied these sources of his investigations, because he was brought in contact with them in his pharmacy. He discovered glycerin in the manufacture of lead plaster, the basis of plasters and some cerates and ointments; that he was observant is revealed by a study of his many discoveries. Seldom is Scheele spoken of as pharmacist or apothecary; chemistry was enriched by his discoveries and researches—pharmacy should have credit accordingly.

Both Caventou and Pelletier were pharmacists, but they are seldom referred to as such; the same applies to Baumé; Sertürner is, perhaps, more frequently spoken of as pharmacist—all of them rendered distinguished services, the first, by the isolation of quinine; Baumé by his hydrometer, but also for his successful efforts in removing many of the traditional superstitions which for a period burdened and afflicted the materia medica with polypharmaceutical combinations of disgusting ingredients; the discoverer of morphine was a pharmacist throughout life, from youth up. Pharmacy shares with chemistry the honors of Woehler and Liebig, but holds a stronger claim to Unverdorben, and so these references could be continued, and American pharmacists brought into the picture also.

Errors should be corrected as promptly as possible and facts brought into light when the mists of misapplication obscure or hide them.

President F. H. Carr, of the Society of Chemical Industry in England, in 1928, questioned whether a picture in the Chemists Club, New York—supposedly Sir Humphrey Davy and Michael Faraday, as helper—was in accord with facts. The story of the picture is told in an article of this issue, wherein there is sufficient evidence for stating that the picture is of a laboratory of a well and favorably known English pharmacist. Without determining the facts, the assumption, that the picture was that of a chemist's laboratory, is readily understood.

Dr. John Morgan, who was pharmacist and physician, said nearly two centuries ago—"We must regret that the very different employment of physician, surgeon and apothecary should be promiscuously followed by any *one* man; they certainly require different talents. Let each cultivate his branch apart, the physician, surgeon, apothecary (etc.); the knowledge of medicine will then be

daily improved, and it may be practiced with greater accuracy and skill." The deduction is that men of different professions may work together, but each class is best qualified to render service in the department for which the individuals have been trained by experience and education.

Pharmacy is making progressive advances in pharmaceutical education and professional service; it needs the background of its accomplishments and the records of its achievements, and pharmacists are justified in being solicitous for the honor and interests of their profession.

EBERT, MAISCH, RICE—PHARMACISTS.

THIS is the 25th anniversary year of the death of Albert Ethelbert Ebert, the 90th year of his coming to the United States. It is also the centenary of the birth of John Michael Maisch, and the 90th anniversary year of the birth of Charles Rice. The purpose of these lines is to direct attention to these pharmacists in very brief tributes, if the few words may be so termed.

The last words of Albert E. Ebert were: "The AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION—it was my life, it gave me a profession." He founded the Ebert Prize Fund in 1873, and after his death practically all of the property of which he was possessed was by his will given to the ASSOCIATION. He received his doctor's degree from the University of Munich.

In 1863, through the efforts of Dr. E. R. Squibb, John M. Maisch became the chemist in charge of the U. S. Army Laboratory in Philadelphia, and had charge of it until its discontinuance at the close of the War. Although the laboratory was started late, the records show that thereby the Government was saved the sum of nearly \$800,000.

"Thoroughly versed in almost every cultivated language, Charles Rice had far greater abilities than any of his friends realized. He spoke French, Spanish, Portuguese, German and English fluently; he could speak Turkish and Dutch and had studied the Lithuanian language. He knew Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Arabic. He was known as a Sanskrit scholar, here and abroad, and his rack for the great Sanskrit lexicons became famous." This is the 90th anniversary year of the birth of Charles Rice and the 50th of his (51st) election to the chairmanship of the U. S. P. Revision Committee.

CONTRIBUTION OF SCIENCE TO PUBLIC WELFARE.

THE late Dr. Richard Bishop Moore, former Dean of Science, in Purdue University, was largely responsible for the opportunities of the use of radium in the United States. He collaborated with Madame Curie for many years and on her recent visit to this country Dr. Moore was asked by President Hoover to accompany her to the ceremony at which the formal presentation of a gram of radium was made.

Dr. Moore's name is not only linked with the development of the use and availability of radium, but also with having made helium available for air transport. In 1917, at the Kansas City meeting of the American Chemical Society

Dr. Moore presented a report which resulted in the experimental helium plants in Texas, and it was due to his research that the non-inflammable gas came into practical and extended use. In 1919, after several years' connection with the Bureau of Mines, Dr. Moore was named chief chemist of the Bureau; in 1926, Purdue University selected him for its Dean of Science and in the same year he received the Perkin medal for outstanding achievements in chemical research. He studied at Argyle College, London, then at Edmund's College, and in Paris. After returning to the United States he came to the University of Chicago and, in 1916, earned his D.Sc. at the University of Colorado. As instructor and teacher he was connected with Oswestry High School, England, and Birkbeck Institute, London; as assistant in Chemistry at the University of Chicago, as instructor in Chemistry at the University of Missouri and professor of Chemistry at Butler College, Indianapolis.

He was connected with the Laboratory of Physics and Chemical Investigations, as chemist in charge of Chemistry and Metallurgy of Rare Metals, chief chemist and chief of the Division of Mineral Technology. He made a survey for the U. S. Geological Survey of the thermal waters of the Yellowstone National Park for radioactive properties and had charge of all helium work for U. S. Bureau of Mines; he was a member of the U. S. Helium Board. His modesty bespoke his merit; in a way, his death probably resulted from cancer developed as a result of his work with radium during many years. His radium researches have given relief to many afflicted with cancer and other diseases, and helium provides greater safety for the crews and officers of air crafts than would be possible without his researches that made larger production possible. Dr. Moore died at the age of 50 years; the memory of his labors should and will live on.

BIOCHEMISTRY IN THE UNITED STATES.

WE ARE taking the liberty of quoting parts of an editorial of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* of February 21, 1931.

"Physiologic chemistry—or biochemistry, as it has been commonly designated more recently—has long since come of age. The subject has become an important and integral part of the study of medicine and the practice of the art. The special technic of biochemistry has been introduced into clinical diagnosis to such procedures and with bacteriologic and immunologic methods of examination and research. A recent writer¹ has remarked that to-day it is quite safe to state that in the United States there is hardly a university worthy of the name that does not have on its staff one or more competent investigators in physiologic chemistry and a well-equipped laboratory with resources adequate for at least some lines of research in this field."

Extended references are then made to other centers for this important work and its development in Europe and in the United States. Reference is also made to the work of the American Physiological Society and that of the American Society of Biological Chemists, soon to celebrate its 25th anniversary. The comment concludes with the encouraging statement that "the entire development of this fundamental prerequisite of medical progress still partakes of the characteristics of youth with all its potencies for development. Little wonder that Chittenden has concluded "that there would seem to be good ground for the belief that the future of physiological chemistry in this country is full of promise, and that what has been accomplished is but the forerunner of more nearly perfect knowledge."

¹ R. H. Chittenden, "The Development of Physiological Chemistry in the United States," New York Chemical Catalog Company, 1930.