

EDITORIAL

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"THE FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY."

THE birthday of no one who has died a century or more ago has ever been memorialized with a celebration comparable with that of George Washington. The birthday of some may have been celebrated with greater pomp, but no one has received finer expression of devotion and, giving due consideration, the citizens of this country may justly question whether one has ever lived who is more deserving of every tribute and honor paid him. It seems strange that so great and good a man as the "Father of Our Country" should have died prematurely, saddened by the unseemly political defamation which made him (perhaps) question whether the Republic—for the life of which he was willing to give everything and had devoted his life—would survive him, because of the aggression and greed of foreign influences and the selfishness and meanness of some of his own people. Now the citizens of his country and the world honor his memory and hold him before each generation as outstandingly worthy of emulation.



It is a fact deserving of thought that the world of that period seemed almost at its worst, overshadowed by a world war and suffering from a financial depression relatively worse than that at the present time. One wonders how one man during a period of his life accomplished so much, and so successfully and efficiently. He brought into his circle a number of outstanding men in various activities and he was able to hold to himself, under most trying times and great suffering, men of most sterling manhood.

In the October number of the JOURNAL, for 1930, there is an article on the Washington Bicentennial in which reference is made to a number of pharmacists and others who had a part in the beginnings of American pharmacy.

This comment is to pay tribute to the one who is first in the hearts of American citizens.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ADVOCATES PROMOTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH BY EDUCATION.

PHYSICIANS in public health work must have the coöperation of the people, and doctors practicing curative medicine must have the coöperation of their individual patients, if either are to be entirely successful, the United States Public Health Service stated February 16th.

"The broad doctrine of modern public health is the promotion of health through the education of the public rather than through the enforcement of sanitary laws," the Service explained.

NOTE: The half-tone of George Washington in the above article is from a photograph of the famous Houdon Bust of George Washington made from life at Mount Vernon, by the great French sculptor, in 1785. This bust has been selected by the Portrait Committee of this Commission as the official picture of the Father of His Country for the Bicentennial Celebration.—The photograph was loaned by the George Washington Bicentennial Commission.

In regard to the relationship between a physician and a patient, the Service pointed out that "it will be observed that the increase in knowledge and skill on the part of the physician has tremendously increased the obligation on the part of the patient to play his part in the treatment of his own disease, or else he should not expect the physician to assume complete responsibility for results."

The Service states further that "physicians engaged in preventive medicine, or public health work have long since learned the lesson that progress can not be made in this field without the intelligent coöperation of the public. The broad doctrine of modern public health is the promotion of health through the education of the public rather than through the enforcement of sanitary laws. This movement enlists, therefore, the intelligent coöperation of the public as the chief weapon which preventive medicine can use, and experience has proved the soundness of this policy. Without an educated and intelligent public to support him, the sanitarian can make very little real progress." Pharmacists have a part in this educational service, because of the information they can give and the direct contact they have with the public. Their knowledge is valuable because it is possible thereby to acquaint the public with the means employed by those engaged in public health service.

Turning to the field of curative medicine the Service states that "the situation is somewhat different, but the principle remains the same. The need of intelligent coöperation by the physician and by the patient who seeks his advice is much emphasized by modern medical methods. Such coöperation was always necessary; but with increased knowledge the skill in the diagnosis and treatment of disease, the demand on the part of both physician and patient for intelligent coöperation has been tremendously emphasized and has placed upon the patient, particularly, demands perhaps not fully realized." Here again the pharmacist has a part in developing the means whereby the physicians can render better service. In a bulletin to the public the pharmacists' service may be made the subject of information, but in these columns references to the surveys now being conducted for revising the United States Pharmacopœia and National Formulary serve the intended purpose. In these surveys of constituents of prescriptions and studies for improving the preparations, standardizing and preserving them, pharmacists are rendering a distinct service to physicians and patients. Coöperation with physicians and exhibits at medical association meetings invariably arouse an appreciative interest.

Another helpful means is being developed by exhibits at state pharmaceutical meetings to which physicians and laymen are invited. The encouragement given by the interest of physicians in U. S. P. and N. F. preparations, joint local and state meetings of doctors and pharmacists to discuss them, and the other coöperative efforts referred to will contribute to the advancement of curative and preventive medicine for the benefit of the public and the professions engaged in the service.

ANTOINE LOUIS BRONGNIART (1742-1804) was the son of a pharmacist and himself pharmacist to Louis XVI. He served as military pharmacist and was placed on the Council of Health of the Army. He was for a time Editor of the *Journal des Sciences, Arts and Metiers*.

A KNOWLEDGE OF PRESCRIPTIONS.

JUST as a study of medicine embodies a knowledge of the functions of the body, so that its disorders may be corrected by the means which experience and science have made known, so a knowledge of prescriptions includes an understanding of the remedial agents which enter into their composition and their preparations; to this end the studies which are part of the pharmacy curriculum are systematized to acquaint students who seek to become pharmacists with the requisite knowledge and to instil the duties and responsibilities assumed by them.

One of the means which leads to a proper understanding of prescription practice is a knowledge of what agents are employed in the treatment of disease, and in preparing the components of prescriptions and properly completing the products. To this end the prescription surveys being carried on have a useful application for physicians and pharmacists. These studies represent more than tabulating the ingredients and determining the number of prescriptions, however essential—there is a why and wherefore in every tabulation. It leads to information regarding the drug, its preparation, its effect, preservation, prescribing and compatibilities in their various relations, and informs the physicians, pharmacists and manufacturers, producers and distributors about the *Materia Medica*. The information derived extends further, even to the proper purchase, storing and packaging, and, with all of these, inculcation of the responsibilities which obtain in these activities for the protection of those engaged and the people.

The surveys will contribute to the progress of the professions concerned and promote better service. All knowledge has value, and the discussion of the surveys next April, in which the U. S. Department of Commerce has been at work, seeking a better understanding by coöperating with those engaged in the important service, will acquaint the Government and the members of the profession with the importance and greater possibilities of these activities.

The progress of the surveys has brought about a realization that these industries are greater by far than heretofore known to the Government and even to those engaged in them. Active participation by pharmacists in these surveys will develop pharmacy and its industries, strengthen professional relations and, may we say, stimulate a better understanding and higher appreciation of pharmacy as a public health service.

OPINIONS ON PRESCRIPTIONS OF ALCOHOL.

UNDER above title the *Journal of the American Medical Association* of February 13th comments as follows:

“Hearing before the Senate committee that is concerned with the bill introduced by Senator Bingham to modify the prohibition regulations have brought to light some astounding testimony. Among those who have participated in giving evidence was a former president of the American Medical Association—Dr. Arthur Dean Bevan. It is unfortunate that physicians should testify beyond their scientific opinions regarding the effects of alcoholic liquors on the human body. Dr. Bevan seems to have ventured positive statements on the social effects of alcohol and on the ethical aspects of medical prescribing. In proffering his opinions, Dr. Bevan demonstrated an extraordinary lack of confidence in his professional

brethren. He moralized on the terrific temptation confronting the profession through the fact that many physicians have incomes of approximately \$2500 a year and, in the right to prescribe, have seen, in his opinion, an opportunity to make \$1200 extra. Dr. Bevan is apparently familiar with the cost of whisky per case at corner drug stores; he asserted that a considerable number of physicians were providing the signed prescriptions that permitted druggists and bootleggers to sell this liquor by the case. The *Journal* wishes to protest editorially against this expression of opinion by one of the past-presidents of the Association. If Dr. Bevan has actual evidence that any physician is selling his prescriptions *en masse* in order to permit druggists and bootleggers to dispose of whisky in case lots, he, and all of those who possess the information, are equally guilty with those who are violating the law in permitting the violation. If he has not the evidence, he is certainly without warrant in making such a statement to a Senate committee; in any event he is not justified in indicting the entire profession for the misdemeanors of a few. His statement reflects great discredit on a profession whose ideals are certainly as high as those of any other professional group in the country. As a leader of that profession for one year, he should be more familiar than he seems to be with its ethical standards and with the extent to which physicians actually are guided by a proper appreciation of moral values."

The prescribing of medicines, alcoholic or otherwise, comes within the province of the medical profession; pharmacists compound prescriptions and the law requires that those for spirituous liquors can only be dispensed on written prescriptions of physicians; a like requirement obtains with prescriptions containing narcotics.

In accepting the duties assigned to pharmacists, under the laws referred to, they assumed serious obligations, and it is a source of pride that they have met their responsibilities with the approval and satisfaction of those who look after the enforcement of these laws. No one acclaims perfection, but it is not just that those who perform duties, not altogether of their choosing, be charged by inference with being activated by mercenary or other unworthy motives and submit to attempts at having their profession discredited.

PROF. LEON GUIGNARD died, March 7, 1928, at his home in Paris, France, aged 75 years.

In 1876, he gained an internship as pharmacist in the hospital of Paris, later taking charge of the laboratory. In 1883, he was elected Professor of Botany at the University of Lyons and four years later to a like chair in the Pharmacy School of Paris. Many honors came to him on account of his achievements and among the distinctions and degrees were silver and gold medals of the internship, the superior diploma of pharmacy, the doctorate of natural science, the Bordin Prize of the Institute and the Buignet prize of the Academy of Medicine, and he was honored with the presidency of the Botanical Society of France, the vice-presidency of the Society of Biology, as honorary president of the Society of History of Pharmacy, and of the Association of Students in Pharmacy of France. He was a former president of the French Academy of Science, a member of the Academy of Medicine, and the National Academy of Agriculture in France, officer of the Legion

of Honor, member of the Superior Board of Public Instruction, of the Board of the University of Paris, and of a great many other commissions and committees, both foreign and of France.

Prof. Guignard largely contributed to research by his investigations of diastases, glucosides and principles which furnish cyanhydric acid in various plants, and the constituents of the cruciferous and other families. To him is also ascribed much knowledge relative to mucilage secretions that exist in the *Laminaires* and of the oleoresins of the *Copaisfera* and of other leguminous plants, and also valuable studies on the origin and structure of seeds of a large number of plant families.

DR. JOHN G. GADAMER (April 1, 1867, died April 5, 1928) was one of the foremost German pharmacists engaged in research work. Dr. Gadamer succeeded the late Prof. Ernst Schmidt at the University of Marburg, where he carried on most of the work that contributed to his great name in research. After the death of his predecessor he revised and reëdited the several books of which Professor Schmidt was author.

After graduating from the "gymnasium" at Waldenburg, Germany, he accepted an apprenticeship under Apotheker Dankwortt in Magdeburg; following service, elsewhere, in other pharmacies. In 1891, attracted by the work and reputation of Prof. Dr. E. Schmidt, he matriculated at the University of Marburg. Up to this time, Gadamer had shown great interest in botany, but under the tutelage of Prof. Schmidt he soon took a deeper interest in chemistry.

In 1893, he passed the State Board examinations and in the same year became Private Assistant to Prof. Schmidt. The following year he was elected University Assistant in the Chemical-Pharmaceutical Institute at Marburg. In 1895 he presented a thesis on "Thiosinamin and Its Halogen Addition Products" and obtained the Ph.D. degree. He now decided to devote his life to academic work and, in 1897, because of his work on the constituents of black and white mustard he was appointed Assistant Professor of Pharmaceutical Chemistry and of Food Chemistry. At this time he determined the constitution of sinigrin, sinalbin and sinapin. After considerable more work on similar glucosides, he took up the study of the alkaloids and explained the conversion of hyoscyamine into atropine and of *d*-scopolamine into *i*-scopolamine. In 1902, he was appointed professor at the University of Breslau, where he not only organized the Pharmaceutical Institute but also found sufficient time to continue his research work. Dr. Gadamer developed a theory on the formation of alkaloids in the plant and of their biological value to the plant.

Pharmacists Have Responsibilities of Service and Also Duties Which Include Making the Public Acquainted with Pharmacy, Its Mission and Its Part in the Life of the State and Nation.
