

EDITORIAL

E. G. EBERLE, EDITOR

10 West Chase Street, BALTIMORE, MD.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF PHARMACY TO PUBLIC HEALTH.

THE deposition of Dr. Virgil E. Simpson,¹ in a case in Court of the Kentucky Board of Pharmacy, has an interesting bearing on the relationship of pharmacy in public health. He stated that pharmacy was one of the learned professions—a very essential part of the practice of medicine. He stressed the importance of the pharmacist's training and education in the preparation of medicines for properly exhibiting a drug so that the physician may obtain the desired results and safeguard the patient, and that his service protects the public from the dangers of unwise use of drugs.

Dr. Robert P. Fischelis, on the occasion of the award of certificates to registrants in New Jersey, said: "when an individual becomes a member of a profession, he ceases to be an individual as far as his public acts are concerned. He becomes a member of a class which is judged by the experience of the public with that class."

In addressing New Jersey Board of Pharmacy registrants, to whom Governor A. Harry Moore presented certificates, Dr. Robert L. Swain emphasized the relation of pharmacy to public health in these words—"Pharmacy must be seen as a service, as a public function, as an essential public health agency, as one making an unending contribution to the public welfare."

The Committee on the Costs of Medical Care urged in Recommendation 5 that pharmaceutical education place more stress on the pharmacists' responsibilities and opportunities for public service.

Dean Frederick J. Wulling in addressing the Lyon-Lincoln Counties (Minnesota) Medical Association said: "Physicians and pharmacists exist not for themselves but for the public welfare, and their aims and aspirations are all directed unselfishly and altruistically toward that end. These facts must be kept clearly in mind before they assure the realization, which not all physicians have as yet, of the necessity of much united and concerted work toward public health. The two professions should cooperate more willingly and effectively. They already do in a very respectable measure, but the cooperation should become much more general for the best results."

A resolution now before the Council of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION speaks of the responsibilities of pharmacy in relation to public health in the quoted paragraph and also for the watchfulness of pharmacists in matters that affect the public. The action was responsive to proposed legislation in which it was suggested that alcoholic malt beverages might be distributed through drug stores.²

"WHEREAS, the distribution of alcoholic malt beverages in drug stores would be most inappropriate because it would be contrary to the essential purpose and

¹ Dr. Simpson has practiced medicine for more than a quarter of a century, is a member of the Revision Committee of the United States Pharmacopœia and professor of medicine, University of Louisville.

² See Council Letter No. 7, this issue of the JOURNAL.

important responsibilities of pharmacy in relation to the people and to public health, and because, through such distribution, an activity foreign to its purposes and ethics would be introduced."

CALIFORNIA'S APPALLING DISASTER.

THE world sympathizes with Southern California, because of the recent seismic disturbance, which resulted in the loss of more than one hundred lives, injuries to several thousand of its citizens, and property loss mounting up to many millions of dollars. As citizens, the members of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION extend their sympathy in the great loss and trials, and to those of the drug-trade activities who are sharing in the suffering and financial distress it expresses hope for early recovery.

The courage exhibited by the people of San Francisco after its experience in 1906 gives assurance that the citizens of Southern California will meet their affliction with fortitude and hopefulness. The rapid restoration in San Francisco astonished the people of other sections; within a very few years the city was restored and assumed even a greater prominence in the affairs of state and country than before the fire.

It was this writer's duty, in 1909, to preside at the Los Angeles meeting of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, because of the serious illness of President Oscar Oldberg. He recalls with appreciation the many courtesies extended in the beautiful "City of the Angels." A delicate touch of sentiment was lent to the California welcome accorded when a committee of ladies and gentlemen met the incoming visitors twenty miles out from Los Angeles in the midst of orange-groves and almond-orchards, with not only words of greeting, but gifts of fruits and flowers.

The situation of the present intensifies that occasioned by the earthquake, by the destruction and misery that accompanies such disasters. The country pauses to sympathize with Southern California and is hopeful that the courage which characterizes its people will abide with them during the restoration period. Those who are suffering will find little comfort in discussing the cause of the disturbances that upset the earth's equilibrium, as delicately poised as the pharmacist's weights and drugs on a prescription or analytical balance. Our hope is that misery may be relieved and financial burdens lightened.

BETTER CONDITIONS ARE FOUNDED ON YESTERDAY'S EXPERIENCES.

THIS comment is founded on hope and encouragement to give determined support to the efforts being made to restore confidence. It seems to be an easy matter to come to a decision as to who should make such a change possible, but suggestions as to how this can be brought about presents the great difficulty.

Selfishness has been most influential in developing the conditions complained of—greed, disregard of fairness, honorable methods and questionable means for

acquiring wealth; if improvement is to be expected there must be greater courage to do right and discouragement of means and methods which destroy confidence.

John Grier Hibben, former president of Princeton University, said (in *Forum*, condensed in *Reader's Digest*) "we are not merely passive observers of a stupendous national drama. Our destiny is certainly not independent of our resourcefulness or of our character. As we look back over history it is evident that our progress has been due to the fact that there were men and women in every generation who believed in something higher than themselves. Not only were they courageous in expressing their convictions, but their lives measured up to their faith."

If changes for the better come, as all of us hope, we must be prepared to make use of and apply them rightly or, if betterment is long deferred, it will require great courage to hold up under our disappointment.

In more recent years there seems to have been an under-valuation of essential attributes and qualities—honesty, purpose, conscience, duty and responsibility—because they interfered with selfish desires. The shock received within the past month may bring about an awakening to a realization that they are fundamental to individual and national life. Seemingly there is in all lines a degree of weakness—a lack of courage to do the right, which freezes the assets that characterize a useful citizen—trust, confidence and enthusiasm are essential qualities, without them progressive sense atrophies; periods of prosperity seem to develop a spirit of covetousness. We must recreate greater confidence in government, in industry and commerce and the individual needs to strengthen confidence in ourselves for "he who has not confidence in himself cannot have confidence in his fellow men. When he ceases to believe in his ability to find opportunity, he has lost most, if not all, of his belief in the existence of opportunity."

President Roosevelt asserts that our leaders must have vision and act speedily. Those who are leaders in commerce and industry, in the professions and arts, in state and civic affairs, in the courts, church and educational institutions must be wise and vigorous and have courage to do the right, so that we may be freed from the incubus of depression and become normal once more. Yesterday's experiences unfold to us a knowledge of how to better our conditions.

PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICE IN EUROPEAN ARMIES.

The Indian and Eastern Druggist published a report from the *Bulletin*¹ of the International Pharmaceutical Federation on the position of pharmaceutical service in the armies of twenty-four European countries. The report shows that the principle of a pharmaceutical corps has been adopted even by neutral countries like Switzerland, which have only a militia, and, with the exception of Great Britain, all those countries which took part in the last war and have retained a standing army have developed their pharmacy corps. This is put forward as a proof that the pharmacists who were mobilized (at the front or in reserve) were of great value, either in the permanent pharmaceutical service or as immediate collaborators of the medical corps. The work of pharmacists in the branches of hygiene, disinfection, and biological analysis is recognized to have been invaluable. Further, in numerous countries they were entrusted with the supervision of the food supplies used in the Army, and with the upkeep of sanitary equipment.

¹ See *JOUR. A. PH. A.*, June 1930, page 653, and September *JOURNAL*, 1930, page 1026.