

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

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DEPARTMENT.

Editor's Note: Recently a state board member complained to me because as he said "No matter how simple a question I may ask about products of the National Formulary, I find that graduates have difficulty in answering it." We must recognize the fact brought out so well by Dr. W. J. Husa in the paper which follows, that the National Formulary is coming into use more and more and therefore we must see to it that our students are familiar with it and appreciate its value in the conduct of their drug stores. Dr. Husa's paper is timely and practical.—C. B. JORDAN, *Editor*.

THE NECESSITY FOR INCREASING EMPHASIS ON THE N. F. IN PHARMACY COURSES.

BY WILLIAM J. HUSA.*

In pharmaceutical education, the United States Pharmacopœia has traditionally received greater emphasis than has been accorded to the National Formulary. Forty years ago, the U. S. P., with its prestige based on seven decades of useful service, must have towered above the embryonic N. F. in the minds of pharmacists. However, with the passing of the years, the N. F. increasingly justified its existence, and in 1906 the Federal Food and Drugs Act made it a legal standard, thus placing it on a par with the U. S. P. in legal standing.

In any comparison of the U. S. P. and N. F. it is necessary to consider the fundamental distinction between the two books, which is that the U. S. P. admits drugs on the basis of therapeutic usefulness, and aims to keep at a minimum the pharmaceutical preparations of these drugs, while the N. F. is essentially a book of pharmaceutical formulas, selected on the basis of their use by physicians but with no indorsement of their therapeutic worth, this being left to the judgment of the individual physician.

As pharmaceutical educators, it is worth our while to consider where the difference in scope between the U. S. P. and N. F. is leading us, and to give thought to other developments which seem to call for a revision of the content of our pharmacy courses.

The changes which have been taking place with successive revisions of the U. S. P. are reflected in the statement of a prominent retail pharmacist, who said that in his earlier experience, four or five copies of each revision of the U. S. P. were worn out by use in his store, while more recently one copy has lasted more than ten years. On the other hand, in recent years, many pharmacists have been saying that they use the N. F. a great deal more than the U. S. P. We see here a definite trend which merits the thoughtful attention of every teacher of pharmacy.

The reasons for the fact that many retail pharmacists are using the N. F. more than the U. S. P. are not far to seek. In the first place, by steadily pursuing the declared policy of keeping pharmaceutical preparations at a minimum, the U. S. P. is becoming more and more a book of standards for individual drugs, and is thus

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