

HISTORY IN THE DRUG STORE.*

BY FRED B. KILMER.¹

Only in a limited way has history yet entered the drug store, and reached the man behind the counter. Eminent authorities from this ASSOCIATION have made highly important contributions to the history of pharmacy. For the most part, the pages upon which their records appear lie unopened and unread. The drug store man is not history-conscious.

Possibly, we have too much history. The progress of the world, the advance of science, of pharmacy and of the art of printing have evolved such a vast collection of historical material that the ordinary man finds life too short to even glance at them.

At times the druggist adopts Henry Ford's dictum that "history is bunk." He lets the past bury the past. With him events begin with the day he was graduated from college, got married or bought his first store. With many astute men nothing back of the World War, the depression or the NRA counts. This is a very human point of view for the man of to-day.

Few pharmacists have come to realize the uses and value of history. History is filled with lessons wherein we may learn to profit by the example and teaching of those who have gone before us in a world and a society not unlike the one in which we live. A knowledge and understanding of the realities of the history of pharmacy, and of the sale and dispensing of drugs, would help us to avoid many of the perplexities and catastrophes which now afflict us. The real lessons of history can be turned into dollars.

Rarely does the pharmacist reach to the delights of history. History helps us to know what our ancestors did—their troubles, their faults and their successes. It presents a story, a moving picture of life. History presents a marvelous play, with interludes, by-plays, changes of tone, changes of scene. One can find in history things that are romantic, picturesque, artistic and beautiful.

WRITTEN HISTORY.

There exists an abundance of written history. The shelves of our libraries are loaded with historical volumes. The pages of our magazines are crowded with historical essays.

Even with this array, the fact seems to be that history is not yet a popular subject. Historical volumes cannot be counted among the "best sellers." Pharmaceutical history has not yet penetrated behind the drug store counter.

In part, this condition may be due to the mode and manner of its presentation. Right here the historically minded reader may well say to the writer: "Who are you to tell us how we should write history?" Well, the author of this essay, with all humbleness, acknowledges that he is only a smatterer in history. He is not a historian. As a most humble student he, with due deference to the many eminent historians, offers the suggestions of a rather awkward beginner.

Much of our written history of pharmacy has been put together by able professional historians. Much of it has been written by the historical scholar. Facts,

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¹ Deceased.

dates, footnotes, references and proofs abound in the pages. Often the author seeks to fortify himself against the criticisms of other historians. Readability and attractiveness are sacrificed.

Facts and dates, while highly important, taken alone do not make history. When the historian of the pick and shovel, the paleontologist, finds a skull or the bones of a jaw of a man who lived centuries ago, he must make the dry bones live. From the rocks under which his "find" was buried he determines the era in which his man lived. Hypothetically, he supplies the missing parts with plaster and putty. He lays on tints, and lo! we have a man who lived two thousand score years ago.

To record the history of pharmacy in any age we must take note of political and social events, the advancement of science, changes of policy, changes in taste, dress, ways of living, comforts, books, plays, popular songs and many things which make up and control human life and activities. In the midst of these, pharmacy and the drug store have lived and moved. History cannot be divorced from life.

To fulfil its mission, written history must be read. The reader must "read, mark and inwardly digest," and finally apply its lessons to his life and work. We may well believe that the history of pharmacy can be presented in such a way that it will reach into the drug store, and that the man behind the counter will live and move in its elevating air. The craftsmanship may well be left to our most capable producers of pharmaceutical history.

The AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, through its museum and repository, will become a notable center for pharmaceutical history. Unfortunately, our pharmaceutical and trade associations have done but little along historical lines. A survey revealed that certain associations did not have on file complete copies of their own proceedings. Very meager were instances where there was an attempt to preserve historical data as to their organization. Associated effort in pharmacy contains an important record of the progress of the art. It is well worthy of preservation and use.

Pharmaceutical manufacturers, in a limited way, have found it wise to give attention to the history of their calling and their own organization. Some of them have installed a historical department or museum wherein are collected records, specimens of early productions, advertising and other data. Collections of this character have proved to be of service in the education of salesmen, detail men and others, as to the historical background of the institution. Notable have been the collections pertaining to general historical pharmacy acquired by certain manufacturers.

The retail druggist can, through history, draw patronage, gain reputation and increase his prestige. The use of historical elements will give a new and a different twist to drug store publicity. Above all other practitioners of the art of pharmacy, the retail druggist can turn history into cash. An economical method is through historical displays.

Drug store historical exhibits may consist of window displays, which may be moved to the interior of the store, and within the store moved from one point to another, forming a continuous show. A well-planned historical exhibit will hold attention from two weeks to a month. From one to twenty historical exhibits can

be given annually. Through changes, historical exhibits can be repeated from year to year.

The druggist may properly use his exhibits as an advertising medium. Physicians, nurses, professional men, prominent citizens and college and high school classes are worthy of special invitations. The local papers will be glad to give special write-ups of the show.

Subjects with which to form an historical display in the drug store are abundant. The history of the art of pharmacy may be shown by pictures clipped from magazines and books, through old-time implements and apparatus, side by side with modern types. The map issued by the National Wholesale Druggists' Association, showing pictures of colleges of pharmacy, may form a background, giving the present-day status of pharmaceutical education. College diplomas, certificates of registration and association memberships of the store owner and clerks will show that the personnel of the store stands high professionally. One druggist excited curiosity by having his clerks, during his exhibits, wear the time-honored green baize apron.

The drug store historical exhibit may well begin with a history of the druggist's own store, and his own town. Dependent upon the age of the store and the town, abundant material may be found. Pictures of the town as it was and as it is. Methods of transportation from the day of the ox-cart on to the auto and the aeroplane. Old churches, old schools, hospitals, streets and dwelling houses contrasted with the new, including the druggist's own store as it was and as it is. To these may be added pictures of old-time citizens, old doctors and their prescriptions, and notable events of the past.

Included in a series of exhibits pictures pertaining to the history of medicine might be utilized. Here an abundance of material is available.

The subjects for an historical display are extensive. A few examples may be noted: Old-time animal remedies in contrast to modern animal serums. Ancient bolus and uncoated pills as against modern pills, capsules and tablets. Crude drugs of the past by the side of present-day alkaloids, concentrations and synthetic compounds. Charms formerly used as cures in conjunction with to-day's rational remedies.

A most creditable display was shown in the *Druggists Circular*, for March 1934, which by means of cards and objects exhibited four thousand years of pharmacy and medicine, beginning with the time of the Egyptians, and concluding with the twentieth century.

Another recent exhibit was along the lines of the history of surgery. The art of surgery has been completely revolutionized within fifty years. While the use of ether is of the nineteenth century, local anesthetics have come into vogue.

A show in the history of surgery, which made everybody stop, consisted of the showing of a frock coat, used up to the late nineties as a surgeon's operating uniform, side by side with the outfit of the modern operator's cap, face mask, white gown and rubber gloves.

For history to reach into the drug store, it would seem that the beginning should be made in the college of pharmacy. A knowledge of the history of the arts to which he is to devote his life should be an inspiration and incentive to the stu-

dent to move forward. Once imbued with this knowledge, he would no doubt carry it to those with whom he may be associated.

In the preparation of this paper, correspondence was had with the deans of some of our colleges of pharmacy as to the place of the history of pharmacy in their colleges. Briefly stated, the situation would be somewhat as follows:

A moderate percentage of the colleges of pharmacy possesses a historical museum; likewise, a collection of data, documents, etc., pertaining to their own institution. A number of the colleges have in their libraries volumes relating to the history of medicine, pharmacy and allied arts. Courses covering the history of pharmacy are given in a goodly number of the colleges. In some of them it is short, covering only two hours in the three or four years' course. However, in some colleges the course is quite extended and complete. Encouragingly, there is reported a moderate interest by students in history as it pertains to pharmacy.

Many of the deans kindly made suggestions as to methods whereby the interest of students and graduates in pharmaceutical history could be increased. These suggestions will be made the subject of a separate paper.

This paper is primarily suggestive. An attempt is made to show that history, especially the history of pharmacy, has not yet reached into the drug store;

That for the great majority of druggists and their clerks, the subject of history has little or no interest;

That while able historical writers have produced much valuable historical data, it has not yet created an historical atmosphere for the rank and file of pharmacists;

That here is an opportunity for our associations to further stimulate interest in historical subjects;

That the practicing pharmacist—the druggist—can, through historical displays, promote an interest in the history of medicine and pharmacy to his own advantage.

HISTORY OF THE CALCIUM LACTOPHOSPHATE PREPARATIONS.¹

BY WILLIAM J. HUSA² AND A. P. MCLEAN.

Calcium lactophosphate came into use as the result of the suggestion of an European physician, Dr. L. Dusart, who, in 1869, recommended the use of calcium phosphate dissolved in lactic acid (1). In 1871, William Neergaard (2), a pharmacist of New York City, upon the request of Dr. B. W. McCready, prepared a syrup of calcium lactophosphate by dissolving freshly precipitated calcium phosphate in a diluted lactic acid, and adding water, orange flower water and sugar. This is the oldest record we have found of the use of calcium lactophosphate in this country. It was the spark which was followed by a blaze of tremendous popularity.

Because of the demands of physicians for numerous combinations of calcium lactophosphate, preparations other than the syrup came into use. Some of these, such as the elixir, the syrup with iron, and the salt, received official recognition, and there were a number of others, not so recognized, including the solution, the wine, and the emulsion with cod liver oil.

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