

EDITORIAL

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PHARMACY AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

THE completion of the U. S. Pharmacopœia and of the National Formulary draws attention to the importance of pharmacy in the work of revision and in improving the *Materia Medica* required by physicians and others who use these agents in their practice. Surgeon General Hugh S. Cumming closed an address at the Portland, Maine, meeting of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION in 1928, by saying that "in the field of public health education and the support of and coöperation with the official health agencies, the pharmacists of this country have their opportunity and responsibility in contributing toward the efficacy of applied public health science."

Coming down the years are outstanding contributions by pharmacists that have aided the physicians in conquering disease, giving relief, and supplying the means for the prevention of disease. Every epidemic and the afflictions that handicap those who have recovered from acute attacks of disease awaken research workers to their duties and opportunities among whom are many pharmacists.

The approach of the President's birthday celebration brings to attention the disease which has baffled search for a cure without physical handicap. Infantile paralysis attacks not only the young but those more advanced in years and presents a problem yet unsolved; while this is true, more are giving study and more are hopeful that some one will find the means of relief. There is a source of satisfaction in the responses for help affording the means of treatment. This outstanding effort is growing and there are other institutions, notably the Crippled Childrens' Hospitals, which have brought relief to thousands of unfortunates.

During the past year meningitis has appeared as an epidemic and also other ailments that more frequently afflict; in all of these the pharmacist has a part, but usually as a citizen; however, whenever the call comes for service, he responds.

The service rendered by laboratories, as an example, "the Banting Foundation, quoting the *New York Times*, has been able to aid ninety-two projects in Canadian universities and to finance the work done at the University of Toronto on silicosis and vitamins." The *Times* comments: "If this (acceptance of endowments) is wicked the universities should be consistent and reject all endowments for medical research. For endowments come from profits—sometimes profits from the sale of patented drugs and medical apparatus."

Discovery of a new compound of insulin, protamine insulinate, has been heralded as most important in the treatment of diabetes—a disease claiming millions of victims.

The reports made in the press of the Association for the Advancement of Science meeting and of the studies presented before the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION at the Portland meeting, some of which have been published in the JOURNAL, speak of the importance of pharmacy in public health. Writing somewhat along the same lines as these (June 1928) it was stated: The aim of the professions is to serve and pharmacy will adapt itself to the changing conditions, and "to serve well" marks the character of pharmacy; in that service a coöperation of all the activities is most essential. Pharmacy must change with therapeutic and, to some extent,

with surgical practice; the faculties of the pharmacy schools, therefore must, as never before, keep in touch with the advances and changes going on. Pharmacy has always supplied the knowledge concerning drugs and preparations required in medical and related practices and it will move on with the new orientation of therapeutics but mindful that desire and over-enthusiasm are sometimes a hindrance to progress. Correspondingly, in the education of the young pharmacist the older curriculum cannot be set aside; it is an essential part of the new, associated with the curriculum entailing knowledge and training which develop an understanding of the lines of evolution in the production of materia medica and of methods by which "their therapeutic value is detected and investigated, before they reach the stage of clinical application."*

CONFIDENCE, COÖRDINATION AND COÖPERATION ARE ESSENTIALS FOR SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATION.

INSTEAD of means for economic welfare there is too often a practice of economic warfare, resulting in lack of success and progress. Pharmacy is well organized, but groups and individuals are not always earnestly and sincerely intent on joining their efforts with others; as a result there is a division instead of coördinated co-operative efforts. There is a willingness to let others improve conditions, if they can or will, while others seek what they believe for their own interests. Realization seems to be developing, and should—that success depends on unison in action as far as this is reasonably possible and that confidence within the groups is essential, strengthened by a right understanding within related activities.

Legislation is necessary, but is not the sole essential—a proper understanding and due regard for the rights of all is quite as necessary; it is a stimulus and a corrective, promoting friendship and better service.

Laws should be the expressed demands of the people as a result of interest and study of existing conditions, which should be corrected for the general good; it is not promoted by the outstanding financial success of a few, especially if selfish motives predominate; it is necessary to look beyond the present and the limitations that obtain toward common interests. Citing an example with the latter thought—the proposed "Tydings Enabling Act" provides that nothing in the anti-trust laws "shall render illegal, contracts or agreements prescribing minimum prices for the resale at retail of a commodity which bears, or the label or container of which bears, the trade-mark, brand or the name of the producer or of the owner of such commodity and which is in fair and open competition with commodities of the same general class produced by others, when contracts or agreements of that description but not related to trade or commerce among the several States or with foreign nations are lawful under any statute now or hereafter in effect in any State, territory or the District of Columbia in which such resale at retail is to be made, and the making of such contracts or agreement shall not be an unfair method of competition under Section 5, as amended and supplemented."¹

It is hoped that this measure, if enacted, will prove helpful in bettering business conduct and an advancement to a broader and more hopeful situation while laboring for the welfare of the people.

* Dr. H. H. Dale, before the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, March 13, 1928.

¹ See August JOURNAL, page 731 and Editorials, pages 832-833.