

EDITORIAL

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DISPENSING OF NARCOTICS.

THE dispensing of narcotics by pharmacists is an obligation and while every safeguard should be thrown around misuse, whenever legislation is discussed, careful consideration should be given to the wording of the enactment. *Cannabis sativa* has brought the possibility of including items for which a place may have to be made in the law or a means provided for making the product harmless; for example, hemp seed and the fixed oil of hemp; hemp seed is fed to birds and oil of hemp is used in paints. To have prohibited the use of hemp seed would have made tons of the products useless but method of treatment has prevented the loss and, probably, also safeguarded those who have unintentionally violated the law.

There are other plants that lend beauty by their flowers which may be brought into laws, as, for example, the California poppy, *Eschscholtzia californica*. Bardet and Adrain reported (1888) that they have obtained a glucoside, an alkaloid and morphine in the proportion of from five to six grams in two pounds of the dried product. Richard Fischer presented several papers in 1901, published in the PROCEEDINGS, A. PH. A. for that year on the "Alkaloids of *Eschscholtzia californica*." To the pharmacist and researcher such investigations are valuable sources of information; to those who seek the information as a means of gain it is quite a different matter and may be productive of another means of addiction. All of this signifies that there should be continued observance and research. An experienced vendor may use the commercial idea essential to a sale, but unless he has the professional understanding a most important qualification is lacking. To the one it is making a sale and gaining a profit, to the other this is secondary to protecting the one who may be injured, become afflicted or morally diseased. Greater stress should be laid on the why and wherefore of restriction in legislation. Even some court decisions show the lack of understanding of the higher principle involved. There should be not only more education, a better understanding, but a higher appreciation of professional practice. The thought has developed because of the recent acts in the misuse of narcotics and efforts in making other plants available for related purposes. Knowledge is necessary but professional thoughts and values are essential. It may well be questioned whether some articles sold in drug stores should be permitted and whether medicines should be sold in other stores only because, seemingly, these vendors possess as much knowledge regarding them as druggists. The problem is a greater one than that and concerns everybody.

Repeating, there is comparatively little need for *cannabis*, but it should be made available in the hands of those who realize the accompanying responsibility; there is no need for "marihuana" when its dangers are considered; the marihuana cigarette is one of the most insidious of all forms of "dope," largely because of the failure of the public to understand its dangers and because of those who are unmindful of the results and blinded by gain. The large increase in the use of this drug emphasizes the need of Federal legislation to wipe out the evil before the potentialities for national degeneracy become more apparent. A bill introduced by Congressman Doughton should and will be given the support of pharmacists in order to shape it into effective legislation.

Many foods and drugs hold dangers but the greatest source of danger is the individual who will imperil the health and life of his fellow man because of greed. Temptation will always endanger health and life; danger signals can be placed, but there will always be some who are indifferent to them.

THE NEW HOME OF THE MELLON INSTITUTE.

THE DEDICATION ceremonies for the new home of the Mellon Institute were held May 5th-9th, in Pittsburgh; participating in these functions were many who are internationally known in fields of research; our president, George D. Beal, is an assistant director of the Institute. Among the speakers were a number of Nobel laureates: Dr. Irving Langmuir, Dr. H. C. Urey, Dr. W. P. Murphy, Sir Frederick Banting; also Dr. W. W. G. Maclachlan.

The Mellon Institute, founded in 1913, is a guild of scientists provided with facilities for productive effort and for mutual aid, coöperation and protection in thoroughly investigating problems of importance.

Director Edward R. Weidlein in the Foreword of the illustrated booklet of the outstanding events states that "several parts of the new home of Mellon Institute have been invested with symbolic meaning, to render the art therein emblematic of the purpose of the institution, the beneficence of science, the qualities of scientific research; this symbolism is described and interpreted by Dr. William A. Hamor."

Pharmacy and the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION have been honored among the medallions, and the pharmaceutical or drug industry is also emblemized in the plants represented on the carved panels. By these coöperative efforts greater progress in medicine and pharmacy will be made; as the great pharmacist Scheele said: "It is the truth alone that we desire to know, and what joy there is in discovering it."

RESEARCH GRANTS.

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* for May 1st, publishes a long list of grants for research. Many of them are of pharmaceutical interest. A few only are noted in the following:

"Rat Test for Drug Addiction," by Eugene J. Stanton, in the proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, April 1936, page 340.

"A Note on the Guinea Pig Method of Assay of Liver Extract," Bernard M. Jacobson, *British Journal of Experimental Pathology*, August 1936.

"A Summary of Studies on the Effect of Ferric Chloride on Tuberculous Rabbits," by Valy Menkin, proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, March 1936.

Dr. Bernard Fantus to investigate the titration of the antitoxic value of serum patients who have received tetanus antitoxin.

Dr. C. W. Edmunds to investigate the action of the drugs in the digitalis group in animals injected with diphtheria antitoxin.

Robert P. Walton of Tulane University to investigate the absorption of drugs through the oral mucosa.

Dr. Marston T. Bogert to investigate the chemistry and pharmacology of the quinazoline group.

Roberta Hafkesbring of the Women's Medical College, Pennsylvania, to investigate the effects of sodium barbital and other hypnotics.

Eugene J. Stanton to investigate the addiction tolerance and abstinence to various narcotics in animals, especially rats.

Grant to Katherine Henderson, Western Reserve University, to investigate the secretion of bismuth.

Hospital pharmacists are invited to participate in the program of the subsection established for them. The chairman is Louis C. Zopf, University Hospital, Iowa City, Ia.