

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

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Hereafter this Department will be edited by the Editor of the *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, under the direction of the Publication Board of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Only such articles will be published which are believed to be of general interest to the pharmaceutically reading public.

SOME OF THE CURRENT PROBLEMS OF PHARMACY.

ERNEST LITTLE.

Pharmacy, like every business or profession, has its points of unusual strength as well as its elements of weakness. I believe that a poll of our members might reveal a surprising agreement that one of the weakest links in our pharmacy chain is its organization, or more accurately, its lack of organization.

Three years ago THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHARMACY was dedicated in Washington, D. C. The objectives of the movement for a headquarters building in our nation's capitol can be briefly stated as follows: (1) To provide a permanent and adequate home for American Pharmacy, (2) To, so far as possible and feasible, bring together in this home those organizations and associations that are interested in promoting pharmacy as a public health profession, (3) To develop additional activities and services, such as a reference library, an historical museum, a research laboratory, and such other services as might be necessary for the continued advancement and promotion of pharmacy.

The first objective has, of course, been splendidly realized. Our headquarters building is a beautiful and useful structure of which we have every reason to be proud.

The second objective, not yet attained, is well expressed in the following statement which was printed in a little booklet issued at the time the building was dedicated: "Pharmacy must keep pace with other professions and maintain its special position in the public health field. To do this it must build up its reputation and prestige and must constantly improve its service. These objectives, so necessary to every branch of pharmacy, can only be obtained through a compact, well-equipped and well-manned organization of all those forces and influences which contribute to its advancement."

The additional services outlined in objective number 3, and many others, have been instituted or accomplished in spite of this handicap; a fact which reflects great credit on the national officers of various pharmaceutical groups who have carried on under very adverse circumstances.

The resolution by Congress which authorized the erection of the building limited its occupancy to those organizations "serving American pharmacy on a non-profit basis." This restriction played a vital part in securing tax exemption. The plan to consolidate in this structure, professional organizations such as the American

Association of Colleges of Pharmacy and National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, which could not afford heavy operating expenses, was stressed as one of the vital reasons for tax exemption. It is important for many reasons that we should strive uninterruptedly for the realization of objective number 2. It will prove helpful if our members will give thought to this proposal, so far as American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy welfare and the contribution which we, as Association workers, may make to the general welfare of pharmacy are concerned.

To many of us it seems quite obvious that the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy will never realize its greatest usefulness until it has a central location, closely associated with other pharmaceutical activities, and at least one representative giving full-time consideration to its problems and activities. The voluntary system under which our association has operated has proved as satisfactory as it has, due very largely to the sacrificial service of such individuals as Dean Jordan, Professor Cooper, Dean Lyman, and others and due also to the fact that our problems until now were relatively simple, certainly less involved.

The situation which we now face is quite different. We must organize more effectively if we are to adequately meet the problems of the days ahead. When we are strategically located, and organized to carry on a well-planned program, such as the other health professions have already developed, we will experience more outside interest and assistance than we have ever before enjoyed.

Our headquarters' library and museum are already established and are being developed as rapidly as possible. A research laboratory will be established in Washington, probably early in 1938, and can be operated on funds now available. The committee on maintenance is securing additional funds for the library, museum and other activities. A fund, sufficient for three years, has recently been made available to establish the popular journal which will provide wide contact with the pharmacists of the country. It seems highly essential that the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy should participate in many if not all of these various enterprises. The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy has already voted to move its offices to our headquarters building. It is hoped the change may be made not later than the early part of 1938.

The advantage to the general profession of pharmacy of such a consolidation of forces is readily apparent. It would allow for the careful scrutiny by each group of every proposal for general advancement. Not only would this be a great safeguard but for mutual problems, the final decision would have behind it the combined forces of all groups. This does not mean that all associations would become indiscriminately blended. By preserving the identity of each group, each organization could deal directly with its own particular problems and at the same time be kept acquainted with the activities of the associated groups.

It might be visualized that such an arrangement would provide something in the nature of a cabinet for the general advancement of pharmacy. Such a solid coöperative front could not fail to impress those with whom we work as well as those whom we wish to influence. It would also prove effective in preventing needless overlapping, reduce effort and expense and enable government officials and other interested individuals to easily contact every division of pharmacy.

A considerable number of important activities have been successfully consummated through our Headquarters Building in Washington during recent years. A

few of the more important and basic activities in which pharmaceutical education and registration are directly concerned are listed below.

The transfer of pharmacists from the sub-professional to the professional and scientific classification by the Personnel Classification Board and the Civil Service Commission: The recognition by the Office of Education in Washington, D. C., of the member schools and colleges of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy as institutions of higher learning: The commissioning of pharmacists in the Public Health Service: The commissioning of pharmacists in the Army and the improvement of their service in the Navy: The enactment of prerequisite legislation in the various states, an accomplishment which at the end of the present legislative sessions may be nearly 100% complete: The issuance of Leaflet Number 14 by the Office of Education.

The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy have of course rendered considerable assistance in carrying out the above-enumerated activities in recent years. However, distance and the prohibitive time necessary for travel or, even for exchange of correspondence, have prevented their full participation. In other words our present organization is decidedly faulty.

While such progress is encouraging, it represents only a beginning toward securing the recognition and opportunity for service that pharmacy should be accorded. For example, the Civil Service Commission plans to improve its classification and to extend them to the field services and desires the coöperation of the various branches of science and the professions in bringing this about. The office of Education has indicated that the guidance leaflets should be revised. If this is done Leaflet Number 14 should be brought up-to-date and greatly improved. These are but some of the pending activities which should be given our immediate attention.

Secretary Kelly's office is constantly besieged with many requests which could be much more effectively handled by a representative of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy with an office in the headquarters building.

During the existence of the codes, which we may again have with us in some form (good friend Lyman to the contrary), the Secretary's office received almost daily inquiries about pharmaceutical education and registration as well. His office also receives many requests from pharmacists who desire to transfer either to or from the United States, or who wish to know about certain requirements, most of which involve educational questions.

Last fall the Medical Department of the United States Army asked for the dates on which the various schools and colleges of pharmacy went to the four-year course in pharmacy. This request was naturally referred to the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy by Secretary Kelly. Literally, weeks were required to collect this data and send it to Dr. Kelly who in turn relayed it to the Medical Department of the Army. Information of this sort should be ready on fifteen minutes' notice. A government official, or anyone else, should be able to get official information on any branch of pharmacy without delay. He should be able to consult in Washington an official representative of every branch of pharmacy, collectively if desired, on thirty minutes' notice. What a united front of that sort would do for pharmacy! What it

would do for pharmaceutical education and for the colleges which you and I represent! Real vision is essential for worth-while, sustained progress. A pennywise policy is always unproductive and usually extravagant and costly to all involved.

Inquiries have been received in Washington, through the International Pharmaceutical Federation or the Pan-American Union, asking about the status and progress of pharmaceutical education. A couple of months ago Secretary Kelly corresponded with the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy about a statement from the Pan-American Union to the effect that they would like to undertake a study of the interchange of professional certificates between the American Republics. No one has found time to follow up this proposal as yet, the reason being that twenty-four hours constitute too short a day for the imperfect and decidedly undermanned organization of pharmacy which now exists.

There are, of course, many completely neglected contacts which should be made by us with other educational organizations and groups. We should keep in close contact with the work of the American Council on Education, the Office of Education, the Civil Service Commission and other agencies which have an important relation to pharmaceutical education. These contacts have been almost entirely neglected so far as any initiative on our part is concerned.

Many inquiries are received from persons interested in pharmacy as a career. Usually Leaflet Number 14, with corrections, is sent them. Many of these inquiries should have much more detailed attention than it is now possible to give them. Here is a most important contact, one which could be made to mean much to every college. Can we afford to invest a few additional dollars to insure our own future, as well as to accomplish less selfish achievements in behalf of Pharmacy? Can we afford not to do it? It seems very certain that the American Council on Education will soon need a Washington office. Perhaps it would be possible for this Council and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy to occupy the same office and cooperate as to office help. Possibly the same office staff might be able to serve both of these groups, thereby cutting down on expense to both organizations.

Will you please give these suggestions your very serious consideration and be prepared to discuss them in the pages of THIS JOURNAL?

It is quite impossible for us to satisfactorily handle the problems which lie ahead of us with our present lack of organization. Let us effectively organize and not fumble the splendid opportunities which lie before us.

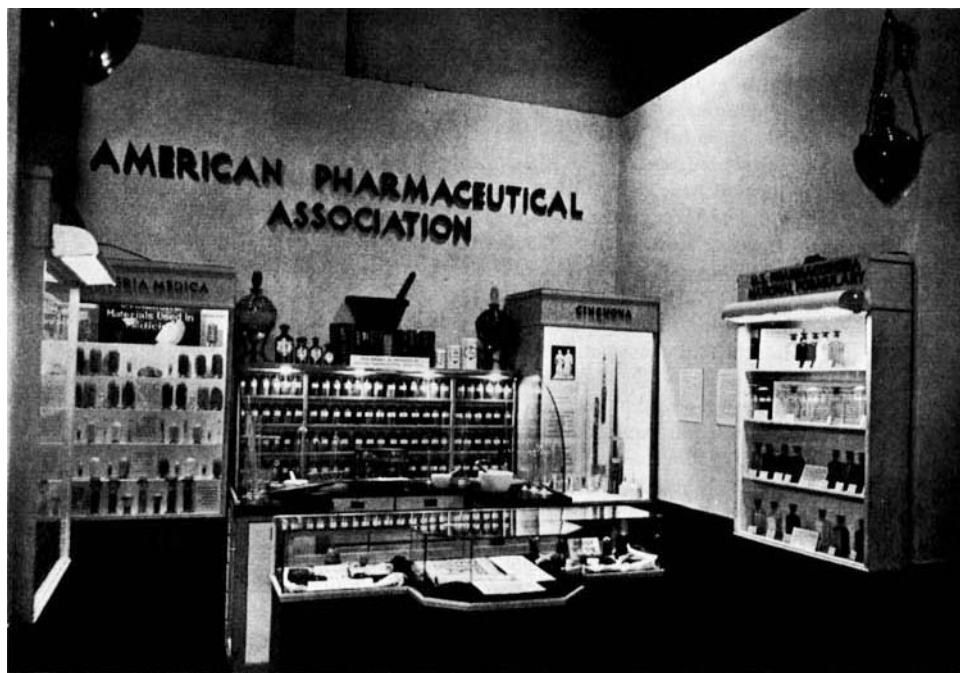
THIS article by Dean Little discusses some problems of vital interest to the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. While he touches upon a number of points worthy of study, the trend of thought is directed toward closer cooperation with other pharmaceutical bodies and finally the establishment of a central office in the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHARMACY at Washington with some official in residence who could speak with authority for the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

The Editor is not opposing this movement, but he does feel it his obligation to state that there are two sides to this problem and it was for the purpose of provoking discussion in the July issue of THIS JOURNAL that this editorial was written.

Some of the annoyances Dean Little refers to were due to the lack of knowledge as to where information is obtainable. For example, if Dr. Kelly had inquired of Secretary Cooper for the information he wanted instead of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, he could have had it in less than two hours. Iowa City, in these days of time annihilation, is as close to Washington as is Newark. So far as a central laboratory for research is concerned, I question whether this Association could ever contribute to its support. What we need to do is to develop research in our teaching institutions where it belongs and which are also the source of those trained to do research. One of the most thoughtful men in American pharmacy has recently said—"I am not at all certain that it would be a good thing for us to have an office in Washington. If we are to have a representative in Washington, he must be a high class representative, one to whom we would have to pay a good salary. Unless we employ such a person, we will merely be adding another clerk to the office force of the Headquarters Building." One thing the Editor is sure of and that is, until American pharmacy is organized along more democratic lines than it is now, we must do nothing that will hinder us in any way of speaking our minds as to what is right and wrong in all the problems that confront pharmaceutical education and legislation.

It is hoped Dean Little's article will provoke a large amount of wholesome discussion before the New York meeting of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

RUFUS A. LYMAN, *Editor*.



The Pharmaceutical Display at Dallas Pan-American Exhibition.