

EDITORIAL

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PROGRESS OF PHARMACY.

THE SHAPING of all professions is dependent largely on how well the foundations are laid and on the relative number who take an earnest part in the promotion. The development and the changes follow the direction given by the leaders and the influences brought about by enactments.

These facts can be compared with the ideas that are put into practice in government; differing decidedly from those that were factors and have been displaced by other control. These have their influence in nearly all, if not all activities. In general, many fundamental thoughts remain, but there are changes that bring about professional or business conduct which shape the course.

President S. R. Atkins of the British Pharmaceutical Conference fifty years ago gave a forecast relative to British pharmaceutical practice and the following quotation is from the *Chemist and Druggist* of September 4, 1937.

"We may see again in Great Britain the days of commercial, industrial and agricultural prosperity we so long enjoyed, but we shall never return to the easy-going times of the past. We have entered on a new, if not a better, order of things; the competition of the age must be reckoned with as a permanent factor; let us hope that the survival of the fittest will be the result. The future condition of pharmacy in this country (Great Britain) in all probability will be developed on the scientific and semi-professional side. Pharmacists are trained to the manipulation of a large number of minute transactions involving much care and no small anxiety, but each one financially of small moment. Such operations have no tendency to develop the business man in the ordinary acceptance of the term. The conditions of the average pharmacy are opposed to the habit of broad generalization, so essential to success in other callings. I am not despondent as to the future, but I feel that our hope lies in cultivating the scientific rather than the merely trading side of pharmacy, for in this direction, from the nature of things, competition will be less acute, and remuneration for service rendered on a higher scale."

Quoting the last two paragraphs of the Introduction of the report of Chairman Ray Lyman Wilbur for the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care:

"*The quality of medical care is an index of a civilization.*¹ When in earlier centuries the entire time and energy of a people were consumed in providing food, clothing and shelter there was little left for the care of the sick and disabled. As the margin between production and the needs of mere subsistence expanded, the preservation of health was one of the first needs to receive attention. To-day in American civilization, health occupies a high place among accepted social values. As we emerge from the present depression and build up a surplus of income not necessary for mere subsistence, we shall do well to realize that we can invest this surplus in no better way than in the preservation of health.

"*Our physical and mental health is perhaps the nation's greatest asset.* It behooves each community, therefore, to consider what plan will most effectively promote the health of its citizens. To each and every community in the United States

¹ Italics ours.

which desires to provide better medical care and increased health for all its people, the Committee offers these recommendations. The report affords for the first time a scientific basis on which the people of every locality can attack the perplexing problem of providing adequate medical care for all persons at costs within their means. It is hoped that the report may thus aid materially in bringing greater health, efficiency and happiness to all the people."

Resolutions of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION were published in the August JOURNAL, page 772; Nos. 4, 5 and 7 deal with plans for the coördination of pharmaceutical interests; distribution of medicaments through retail pharmacists; approval of efforts by U. S. Public Health Service. These actions and the parts from President Atkins' address and other quotations have a bearing on the activities of pharmacy and may mark its practice.

Quoting James H. Beal:¹ "Is it not possible that we have devoted too little attention to the adjustment of pharmacists to the rapidly changing condition of modern civilization?"

The continued progress of pharmacy is dependent on the measure of its professional practice—the adaptation of new ways and modern methods of service.

The problems of pharmacy, as of other activities, must be solved more by research and less by tradition. The recent health program shows that the growth in both demand and frequency of human coöperation has increased in proportion to the progress of civilization, and as a participant in the undertaking pharmacy should not be weakened in its possibilities but strengthened, so that it may continue in its service. For that purpose the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION adopted the resolution bearing on the subject.

The schools of pharmacy and the bodies concerned with supervision of its practice are looking ahead with plans for higher education and training with the thought uppermost that those who engage in the practice must be qualified for solving the future problems of pharmacy, realizing that pharmacy is in close relation with other professions engaged in public health service and those in contributory sciences.

What the future of pharmacy will be, depends to no small extent upon an understanding of its history and a thoughtful program which directs to progress. The problems of the future will, no doubt, be as important as those of the past and, probably, present as many difficulties.

PHARMACY IN CHINA.

Professor E. N. Meuser, head of the Pharmacy School of West China Union, was a registrant at the meeting of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION and a visitor at the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHARMACY.

The venture is well worth while and Professor Meuser is hopeful that he may receive contributions from the United States, Canada and England for a pharmacy building that will encourage the proposition and will enable the faculty and university to improve their teaching facilities. There are opportunities in commerce which would be strengthened by such coöperation.

¹ March JOURNAL, A. PH. A., page 279.