

Section on Education and Legislation

Papers Presented at the Sixty-First Annual Convention

A SUGGESTION OR TWO.*

JOHN M. LINDLY, PH. G.

The lines of education are not fixed, but are alterable. Changes, additions and improvements are made as the signs of the times may indicate. What may have been regarded as of minor importance in one generation, may be considered of prime importance in the next, or *vice versa*.

Educators may outline a course of study which they regard as ideal, as including all the essentials, as meeting the demands of the age,—but the finished product, the student, when he steps out into the world, may find that he does not fit into place in its affairs as easily as he had anticipated, and the public also discovers something lacking in him.

At the recent meeting of the Iowa Pharmaceutical Association, the list of queries contained the following question:— “Should not our Colleges of Pharmacy insist that their graduates be better prepared as business men, so that at least the ordinary operations of charging, crediting, posting and making-out a bill may be understood?”

Such an implied criticism was common enough ten years ago, and is asked with more insistence to-day and there must be some reason for asking the question, as the list of queries was prepared by a member of the State Board of Pharmacy.

If the student, on leaving school, goes into business for himself, a knowledge of bookkeeping is absolutely necessary. If he becomes a clerk, which most do at first, such a knowledge is almost equally important. If he does not possess knowledge of such matters his employer is displeased, criticises him as incompetent and condemns the institution that has conferred its degree upon him.

But the educator may say, that bookkeeping, or a knowledge of business, is not a part of a course in Pharmacy; that the student is supposed to have obtained such knowledge in the public school, or in some commercial college. However, if he has not obtained such knowledge in the public school, or been trained in a **business college**, our student in pharmacy enters into the exercise of his profession with but one hand trained, the other untrained and awkward. And, of course, his progress cannot be as smooth as he or his employer expected. The employer of a Graduate in Pharmacy expects to receive the assistance of a skilled man, an

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all-around, competent man. As Pharmacy, nowadays, is more of a commercial or business matter than formerly, as compounding has become a less prominent feature in it, the College of Pharmacy that desires to turn out its graduates fully prepared for the business of Pharmacy, must see to it that its graduates have some knowledge of the principles and rules of business. If the student has already secured such knowledge, well and good. But if he has not such knowledge, the College of Pharmacy should afford him the opportunity of acquiring it. A few lectures on the principles of business, and on the essentials of book-keeping, delivered during the closing weeks of the school year, to both juniors and seniors, will prepare them to meet the customer at the counter, fit them to do business with business-method and make them ready to turn their knowledge of pharmacy,—which has up to the present time only fitted them for the laboratory,—into coin, that alone buys bread and butter and keeps the body and soul together.

There comes to mind, as an illustration, the case of a preacher who was a good-looking young man, pleasant and agreeable, a graduate of a prominent theological seminary, but whose success was very indifferent, owing to his great disregard for the rules of elocution. This defect was noticeable in emphasis, and particularly in inflection. A fine sentence was often spoiled, by the use of inflections the very opposite of that which should have been used. His mistakes were like discords in music. His hearers were offended by his false rhetoric and did not endure it long. When asked if the theological seminary from which he graduated, did not instruct their students in elocution, he replied that it did not; that the student was supposed to have received such instruction in the preparatory college.

On being interrogated as to whether he had taken such instruction in college, he replied that the course was optional and, as he had not been interested in it, he had not taken it. Thus he had been allowed to pass through both the college **and the theological seminary**, without having studied or having received any instruction in the art of elocution, or public speaking. When he graduated from the seminary, he was supposed to be prepared for the career of a public speaker, but he was not. A public speaker, yet he had no knowledge of the art of public speaking! The art by which it was expected he would make use of the knowledge acquired during his many years of study *had been entirely neglected*. The ostensible preparation of young men for the career of public speaking, that does not include any instruction in the art of oratory and rhetoric is a glaring absurdity.

The College of Pharmacy that will most effectually serve the patrons and public, is that one which provides that its students, is not previously so instructed, shall receive proper instruction in the principles and rules of commercial transactions, in order that its students shall be prepared for the business of pharmacy as well as for the laboratory.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. Anderson thought this paper a very valuable one, and one eminently worthy of consideration. The subject touched upon, was one that had agitated the retail drug-trade for many years, where it was felt that the graduates of colleges should be better versed in the business side of pharmacy, and that it was the duty of the colleges of pharmacy to so prepare

their students. He believed that it was mainly through the agitation of the retail drug-trade, and the presentation of such papers as this, that the colleges had been stimulated to give more attention to the commercial side of pharmacy, that, to-day, there were very few colleges in the country that did not make some provision for this form of instruction. The Pharmaceutical Syllabus, which was in process of making, made a particular point of this, and outlined a certain number of hours that must be devoted to the teaching of commercial subjects, such as bookkeeping, making-out bills, banking, the value of notes, etc., all of which were in use in the every-day practice of pharmacy. This course, was, of course, supposed to embrace, also, everything that pertained to the conduct of a drug-store, such as the handling of customers, and of stocks, buying and selling, etc. He believed in the future the pharmacists of the country might not only expect, but also might rely upon the fact, that the graduates from the various colleges,—particularly those who took up the Syllabus in the serious manner they should, and abided by its regulations—would come to them better prepared in the duties of this important and essential part of pharmaceutical education.

THE TREND OF MODERN MEDICINE.*

RUFUS A. LYMAN, DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL OF PHARMACY, UNIVERSITY OF
NEBRASKA, LINCOLN.

In these days of rapid progress in both the fundamental and the special medical sciences, one hesitates to prophesy as to what the future may bring. Being in close touch with the drug men of my own state, Nebraska, I hear the complaints of the rank and file of the profession, and am forced upon every occasion to play the part of the optimist. The most common lament is, that pharmacy is a lost cause. Nebraskans are not alone in this belief for if I remember rightly, in the last five years, I have heard some half-dozen papers read by men of prominence in the National Association, urging druggists to take up urinalysis, bacteriology, and, even, first aid to the injured, as side lines, in order that they may have something of a professional nature to do. Of course, as usual, and as it must always be, the pharmaceutical manufacturer and the physician that prefers to prescribe the manufacturer's preparations rather than those made locally, come in for their share of the blame for the condition of things. But now, there is advanced another and a more serious cause, namely, that preventive medicine, serum therapy, and therapeutic measures, other than with the use of drugs, will make professional pharmacy superfluous. With this in mind, perhaps it is worth our while, for a moment, to glance over the field and note what physiological basis, if any, drug therapy has, and what we may expect of it in the future.

We are living in an age of medical fads. Like mushrooms, they appear in a night, mature in a day, and disappear as quickly and as silently as they came. Perhaps chief among the faddists, are those who have placed upon the nervous mechanism an undue importance,—maintaining that the various abnormal physiological conditions, that we find in disease, to be due to so-called nervous influences, and to be rectified thru some re-adjustment, mechanical or otherwise, of the nervous system, or of some structure in close relation to that system.

Such ideas are untenable, if we but stop to study the physiology of the cell

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