

## EDITORIAL

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### THE HOLIDAYS.

**A** FLOOD of emotions consonant with a cheerful, happy time of charity and good fellowship is borne upon us by this joyful season.

While our thoughts are, naturally, with those who are near and dear to us, we cannot be forgetful of those who gave themselves as a sacrifice for the cause of our country, and of those who are sorrowful because of their loss and affliction. The present time is, therefore, most opportune for participating in the undertaking of the American Pharmaceutical Association in behalf of our soldier and sailor pharmacists, outlined on page 1005 of the November issue of the *JOURNAL*, and further explained in the pages of this number. We join in many worthy purposes during this season, but this resolution presents a special, unusual opportunity to evidence our fellowship and convey assurance to the Government and to the public that we are optimistic relative to the mission of pharmacy, and convinced of its importance to humanity. Pharmacy will be judged, more than ever before, by the estimate we put upon ourselves.

We extend our greetings—"A Merry Christmas for All," and arrange the words of our Christmas Wish in this way: That our impulses will be actuated by a desire to be of service to others, and to ourselves; that our strength may be equal to the greater duties that have come upon us—as citizens, as pharmacists and as members of this Association. May all of us be able to bring joy to others and thereby share the rich heritage of the giver!

The most eventful year of history is coming to a close, bringing us to a new year fraught with equally important, though very different problems. We share in the responsibilities as citizens, but the discoveries in medicine during the war bring the need of research work to pharmacists. The present high standards demanded by the medical profession point to the necessity of having a larger number of trained pharmacists who can and will collaborate in related pharmaceutical research. Pharmacy is part of the mosaic, medicine, and permanent results of the discoveries are dependent upon the intelligent coöperation of the several branches. We have before us a wide field for our activities and the possible benefits therefrom for humanity, and the advancement of pharmacy should spur us on to our very best efforts. It is only by good team work, genuine coöperation, sympathy and a measure of unselfish devotion that real success can be achieved in the field of medicine.

We should be masters of our profession and see that pharmacy does not lag, especially during this period when great progress must and will be made in all

the industries and professions. There is no incompatibility between a strict observance of professional ethics and good business management. In the drug business, with which pharmacy is associated, the latter is essential; in fact, the success of a business or profession, in this respect, in a degree, is a measure of its importance. While it is highly desirable that pharmacy be given more recognition in the drug store, and the separation of pharmacy from the multiplicity of stock that characterizes many of the modern drug stores a consummation to be hoped for, there is no reason why a properly conducted pharmacy should not be possible within a drug store. The truth is, the greater number of our foremost pharmacists, due to present environments, are also merchants, who are observant of business and professional ethics. Ethics is the doctrine of man's duty in respect to himself and the rights of others. The course of progress in pharmacy should be directed for the benefit of the greatest number. The business of the drug store should be conducted according to modern ideas and methods.

Our wish for a Happy New Year conveys the hopes for a liberal share of prosperity and the joy of good health. We bespeak your intensified interest for pharmacy and the Association. If the revenue of the JOURNAL is augmented the possibilities for other work of the Association are increased. The encouragement of new patrons for the advertising pages is one of the means to that end. These have been trying times for publications and the difficulties are not immediately overcome by the prospects of peace. A word from the members to possible advertisers is worth more than a letter of solicitation from the office, therefore your coöperation is asked for.

Work in the Association gives pharmacists the opportunity of expressing their thoughts concerning pharmacy and the drug business—of exerting their influence; a broader viewpoint is developed and a higher appreciation of their co-workers is inspired.

The substance of our message finds expression in the following: That pharmacy may progress during 1919 through a greater enthusiasm and better coöperation among the members of the Association; a willingness to make some personal sacrifices so that pharmacy and the Association may become more effective as an agency for good to the votaries, and of greater service to humanity. That there may come the realization that however much pharmacists may have done for pharmacy and the Association, they, themselves, have profited more, by giving. That pharmacists and druggists may develop a larger measure of professional and business efficiency, upon which the world is now putting so large a premium. That the year 1919 will be the biggest year in the world's history for pharmacy and the drug business, because the achievements, successes and progress of the past are added to its opportunities.

E. G. E.

## A PROPOSED RESEARCH INSTITUTE.

ON the evening of November eighth, the New York Section of the American Chemical Society held a highly interesting and important meeting at which the subject under discussion was the founding of a research institution with a capitalization of from one to five million, for the purpose of coöperative study of the chemistry and pharmacology of synthetic organic chemicals, designed for medical use.

The meeting was arranged by the chairman of the Section, Dr. Charles H. Herty, who, in one of the editorials in the September number of the *Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry*, had submitted the proposition in general terms to the ten thousand members of the American Chemical Society. Other addresses were made by representatives of the Bureau of Chemistry, of the Rockefeller Institute, of the Mellon Institute, of the drug manufacturers and of the tar products manufacturers. Curiously enough, the one group which has been attempting work along this line, the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry of the American Medical Association, was not represented unless Doctor Alsberg is considered in a dual rôle of head of the Bureau of Chemistry and member of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry.

It is a matter of interest to note that at least two of the speakers are members of the American Pharmaceutical Association and it is hoped that this presages that when the institute comes into being, American Pharmacy will be adequately represented.

The movement is one of vital importance to every member of the A. Ph. A. and furnishes the best argument for the federation idea which is now dominant in American Pharmacy. It also proves the need of aggressive work on the part of the Research Committee of our Association.

Critics of the A. Ph. A. say that while we talk, others act. There is a very present danger if we do not bestir ourselves and act right now the sneer will become a fact. For twenty years we have talked of an institution somewhat resembling the one that Doctor Herty has in mind: notably in 1901, when the Procter memorial was under discussion and in 1912, when an A. Ph. A. Home was discussed on the pages of this JOURNAL. The Procter Memorial resolved itself into a statue without a site or a pedestal; the A. Ph. A. Home is in a somnolent condition; and now, while we are talking about federation, an organization but remotely interested in medicine and pharmacy takes up a proposition that all branches of American Pharmacy could and should have brought about years ago.

The foregoing paragraph is not intended as pessimism. It bluntly states unpleasant facts in an endeavor to stir American Pharmacy into action. The American Pharmaceutical Association, during its sixty-six years of existence, has ever held aloft the beacon light and urged American Pharmacy to "follow the

gleam," and it is not always the Association's fault that what it has proposed has not been carried out.

Such is strikingly the case in the present situation. If the proposed research institute does come into being without proper pharmaceutical representation, the blame will rest on the entire personnel of American Pharmacy and not merely on the pathfinder—the American Pharmaceutical Association. H. V. A.

#### DISCONTINUANCE OF THE STUDENTS' ARMY TRAINING CORPS.

**I**N the November issue of the JOURNAL considerable space was devoted to the Students' Army Training Corps and an approved Pharmacy War Course. A number of schools made preparations for giving these military students a training and education in pharmacy, and quite a number of enlisted men were enrolled. Now, before the first term of instruction has been completed, comes the order for immediate demobilization. We have no direct information, at this writing, that the order applies, immediately, to pharmacy schools, but presume this is the case; whether this is the effect of the order or not, the comment will apply in a general way.

The S. A. T. C. proposition was a new one; the thought uppermost in the minds of the people was preparation for war, so it would have been surprising if the devised plan for educating young men while training them for military service had proven entirely satisfactory to all concerned. The military training was of prime importance in the scheme, hence, the various institutions, engaging in the work, were lost in the process of military standardization.

It would seem that, financially, the Government is responsible to the schools or colleges for the terms of its contract with them or, if not, obligated to an adjustment of the expenses incurred by these institutions in preparing to meet the requirements of the Government. Most educational institutions, including those of pharmacy, were seriously handicapped by the war and, while the S. A. T. C. was looked upon as an opportunity for carrying on the work of the schools, their acceptance of the plan was, in a measure, prompted by a desire to cooperate with the Government. Taking these facts into consideration, the opportunity for experimentation might have been improved by studying the adaptability of the courses for universal military training. If the latter is adopted then education of the youth must also be provided. True, our military schools have solved the problem, but pharmacy should also be taught, and here was an opportunity which might have been tested out. The same thought applies to other branches. It would have been necessary to rearrange the courses by reintroducing the flexibility and individuality of the institutions wherein these courses had been installed, but this would have enabled them to continue their work, even though the number of students had been materially reduced.

While most of the medical schools entered into the S. A. T. C. plan, because it was a war measure, they were ready to discontinue the program when hostilities ceased. It is probable that pharmacy and technical schools would have preferred to continue the course under a rearrangement of the teaching schedule. And, if a system of universal training, applying to the young men under twenty years, is to be established, this might have afforded an opportunity for studying applicable educational methods.

Evidently, retrenchment is the chief reason for the order, though there has been an expressed disappointment at the working plan; experience would certainly have developed improved and more satisfactory methods. If the order is put into effect schools will sustain a financial loss which the Government should adjust.

E. G. E.

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#### OFFICIAL STANDARD FOR CAFFEINE SODIO-BENZOATE.

BY A. B. LYONS.

According to the U. S. P. IX caffeine sodio-benzoate when dried to constant weight at 80° C. contains not less than 46 percent nor more than 50 percent of anhydrous caffeine, the remainder being sodium benzoate ( $\text{NaC}_7\text{H}_5\text{O}_2$ ). It is not easy to account for so wide a margin of variation as this in a product which calls for so little skill in its manufacture. It is understood that originally it was prepared by combining caffeine and sodium benzoate in equal proportions. Official caffeine is a crystallized product, not liable to contain impurities, but variable in the amount of water of crystallization it carries. The crystals contain nearly 8.5 percent of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  to begin with, but by exposure to dry air they lose a considerable proportion of this, so that under ordinary conditions they retain less than half the original quantity. By exposure to a moist atmosphere they recover the water they have lost unless they have been rendered quite anhydrous, in which condition they apparently refuse to take up more than about 3 percent of moisture, practically one-third of one molecule of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ .

Grant that caffeine may contain as much as 9 percent of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , and that it may possibly be quite anhydrous, a mixture of this with an equal weight of pure dry sodium benzoate would contain after drying completely at 80° C. at least 47.69 percent, at most 50 percent, of anhydrous caffeine. An allowance of 0.5 percent for inaccuracies in weighing would make these figures, respectively, 47.45 and 50.25 percent.

The assumption that the remainder of the product is pure  $\text{NaO}_7\text{H}_5\text{O}_2$  is not consistent with the "rubric" for official sodium benzoate, which is allowed to contain 1 percent of impurity as shown by alkalinity of the ash. Whether or not this impurity is non-volatile the test does not show, so that it is not possible to say exactly how the figures arrived at above will be affected, but it would appear that a range of 47 to 50 percent ought to cover the practical possibilities, making no assumption of expert knowledge on the part of the manufacturer.

But it is the manufacturer who is most competent to decide the question what standard is most just to all parties concerned. Money values of course come