

EDITORIAL NOTES

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MAJOR D. A. COSSAR COMING TO THE UNITED STATES.

The Editor is in receipt of a communication from Mr. C. L. Butchers, Secretary of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australasia, which is of interest to pharmacists of this country. He writes:

"You will remember that I wrote you some three or four months ago relative to the proposed visit of Major Cossar to America. No doubt you have been wondering when Major Cossar will arrive in the United States. Up to the present time he has been in London and I ascertained to-day that he is likely to leave there for America about the end of March. I thought I would take the first opportunity of advising you so that you may have some idea of his arrival in your country.

"You will be pleased to hear that while Major Cossar was in London he succeeded in inducing the British War Office to grant twenty-one commissions to pharmacists in active service in France and Egypt. You will also be interested in the editorial in the February issue of the 'Australasian Journal of Pharmacy,' wherein reference is made to the satisfactory result of the investigation by a Royal Commission into the affairs of the Defence Department."

Pharmacists of the United States will be glad to welcome Major Cossar, and we may hope that he will have information to give us that will be helpful in our promotion of a Pharmaceutical Corps for the U. S. Army.

ORGANIZATION AND WORK OF PHARMACISTS IN FOREIGN ARMIES.

Caswell A. Mayo, speaking before the Committee on Military Affairs of the House on the subject assigned him, said in part, as follows:

"Pharmacists rank as commissioned officers in the armies of all the countries except those of the United States and a part of those of Great Britain, for by a singular anomaly, some

of the Canadian pharmacists have been given commissions and the Australian army has a regularly organized corps of commissioned pharmacists with a major at its head, while under the title of quartermaster England herself has commissioned some pharmacists.

"In the French army the head of the corps is the brigadier-general. He is, or before the war was, a colonel in the German, the Japanese, and the Spanish armies. He is a lieutenant-colonel in the armies of Italy, of Belgium, of Holland and of Austria; he is a major in the armies of Switzerland, of Norway, of Sweden, and of Australia, for, notwithstanding the fact that the Australian troops are part of the British army they maintain a separate organization, which, in this respect at least does not conform with that of the mother country.

"The history of the Medical Department of the United States Army, compiled by Assistant Surgeon Harvey E. Brown, under the direction of the Surgeon-General, shows that from the organization of the Continental Army in 1775 down to 1821, the United States Army was provided with an Apothecary General as well as with a Surgeon-General, and that the Apothecary General and his assistants were specifically charged with the provision, testing, and distribution of medical and surgical supplies. In the year 1821 all the regimental surgeons were done away with as well as the Apothecary General and his assistants under a régime of most searching economy, consequently the recognition of pharmacy in the United States Army by the introduction of such a corps as we propose would really be returning to first principles and not to a novelty as many think."

THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF AN ARMY OF FIVE MILLION MEN.

It has been stated by authorities on the subject that an army of five million men will be required of the United States; probably

no less than an army of half that number has been spoken of by anyone familiar with the needs of the situation. If this is the case, upwards of 30,000 medical men will be called for. The most conservative will admit that qualified pharmacists can relieve the doctors of some of their work, or that which they now must do. Dr. J. Madison Taylor, of the Medical Department of Temple University, in speaking before the Committee on Military Affairs of the House, prefaced his remarks by saying:

"We physicians who appear before your committee would count ourselves blame-worthy in advocating the establishment of a Pharmaceutical Corps in the military service, did we not believe on good authority we were rendering an important service to the Nation and the Nation's defenders."

Later in his able presentation, Dr. Taylor said:

"Among the particular services a specially educated pharmacist could render are these:

"He could supplement and contribute to the correlating data for the surgeon, in short in the 'paper work.'

"He could perform a large part of the clinical laboratory work. Urinalyses, blood examinations (morphologic or pathologic), in Cytology, Serology, Vaccine preparations, Bacteriology in the preparation of microscopic slides; in the examination of gastric contents, feces, exudates, transudates, and the like.

"He could apply tests such as Wassermann, Noguchi, Widal, etc., all chemical procedures; he could keep all the material for these tests up to date.

"He could supplement in X-ray work; keep the mechanism of Roentgenology in order, print plates, etc.

"Many chemical problems arise in connection with poison cases. He could prepare all special materials for such procedures as hypodermoclysis, blood transfusion, Carrell-Dakin solution, etc. He could examine water, water supplies, all articles of food and drink, milk, meats, and the like, which must be critically estimated.

"Those who desire to become candidates for military service are already seeking instruction and experience in meeting minor surgical and medical emergencies, in the dressing of wounds, in the adjustment of dressings, solutions.

"One surgeon and two pharmacists could

probably do as much good work as two or even three surgeons.

"The claim is made by the opponents of the Pharmaceutical Corps that the medicines or drugs used in the army are very simple and few, and served mostly in tablet form, readily handed out by any bright, alert enlisted man selected and trained for the purpose. How about the poisons? How many blunders are made by such an elementary form of dispensing? Full knowledge of the properties of death-dealing chemicals is an absolute essential for the man who handles them.

"I have been credibly informed that the official Army Drug Table authorized by the Secretary of War comprises nearly 600 drugs and drug products of all kinds, *including poisons of the deadliest character*. Also that this drug table or list is admitted to be only the 'minimum number of articles essential to the Nation's Medical activities.'

"Obviously the preparation, compounding, and especially the dispensing of such dangerous products demands trained pharmacists. Note the gravity of this problem, the hideous peril run by our home defenders by such haphazard distribution.

"How many fatal blunders have occurred? How can the surgeon keep control of the leaks in the chain of procedures from bottle to patient? How many curious inexplicable cause of deaths?

"Should an error be suspected by the enlisted man who dispenses poisons, there is every temptation to keep quiet and thus escape blame. Clearly our home defenders deserve fully as much special skill in the distribution of drugs as do our home makers."

MILITARY MORALS.

One of the uses of the proceeds of the Liberty Loan that will appeal strongly to the great mass of American people is the care and attention given to the moral welfare and protection of the American soldiers.

It is to the glory of American arms and American national character that of the men who wear the United States uniform a high standard of conduct is expected and demanded, and provided for. Kipling's "Single men in barracks" are not to find their prototypes in the American Army.

Gen. Pershing says there is no cleaner-living body of men in the world than the American Army in France.

THE COMMON FROG'S HEART UNSUITABLE FOR DIGITALIS STANDARDIZATION.

The isolated heart of the common frog, *Rana temporaria*, should not be used for accurately standardizing digitalis, since it absorbs part of the active principles, and therefore behaves differently from the heart of the edible frog, *R. esculenta*, which alone should be employed for the purpose. The common frog's heart may prove useful as a control; and rough determinations within ten percent of accuracy may be made with it with digitalis and strophanthus.—M. Krough (*Ugeskrift for Laeger, J. Amer. Med. Assoc.*, 1917, 68, 1672).

SACCHARIN AS A SUGAR SUBSTITUTE.

Speaking at a conference at the Food Saving Exhibition, in London, January 31, Sir Charles Bathurst, M. P., announced that the output of saccharin would be more than trebled during the next three months. Its price would be reduced, and supplies made available for people who took tea and coffee in restaurants and teashops where, under the new order, no sugar would be supplied for such beverages.—*Pharmaceutical Journal and Pharmacist*.

Prof. Charles H. LaWall, president-elect of the American Pharmaceutical Association, was given a dinner by the Philadelphia Branch of the American Pharmaceutical Association, March 5, at the City Club of Philadelphia. Besides members of this Branch, President A. R. L. Dohme, Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, a large delegation from New York and members of the Chemical Society and Medical fraternity were present. Dr. H. V. Army, of New York, presided as toastmaster. A delightful part of the speaking program was the tribute paid to the mother of Professor LaWall and to Mrs. LaWall, both by speakers and in the response of the guest of honor. The large attendance from New York was a splendid evidence of the esteem in which the latter is held, and also of the cordiality of the Association members.

Dr. Frederick B. Power, who is engaged in the Bureau of Chemistry and also on the Chemistry Committee of the National Research Council, has been elected president of the Washington Chemical Society and vice-president of the Washington Academy of Sciences. Dr. Power has been a member of the American Pharmaceutical Association since 1872.

F. A. Upsher Smith has received fine responses to his efforts in behalf of conserving sugar, glycerin and alcohol. Most of the departments of the Government interested in these products expressed their appreciation of the efforts.

Lieutenant Commander C. B. Mayo, who is on duty in the Bureau of Navigation, in Washington, has received cabled notice of the safe arrival in France of his brother, Ensign Thomas F. Mayo, an intelligence officer in the Naval Aviation Corps. These officers are the sons of Col. John P. Mayo. U. S. Immigration Commissioner at New Orleans, who was formerly head of the Mayo Drug Company, of Columbus, Miss., and nephew of Caswell A. Mayo, editor, *American Druggist*.

Thomas Tyrer, F.C.S., F.I.C., died in London, February 21, aged 74 years. His scientific education was definitely entered upon in 1861 under the celebrated German chemist, Hoffmann; he studied biology under Huxley and physics under Tyndall. While most of the work of the deceased was in chemical lines, he was president of the British Pharmaceutical Conference in 1907. The subject of his presidential address was "Research," and had particular application to pharmaceutical science in all its aspects. The closing words sounded a note of appeal for increased and effective attention to the cultivation and development of research principles and methods. He was a leader in his particular field of activity, highly honored and respected in his own country and favorably known in the United States.

Hugh Craig, for a number of years editor of the *N. A. R. D. Journal*, has accepted a position with Frederick Stearns & Co., of Detroit. A farewell dinner was given him by the Chicago Branch, A. Ph. A. Wishes for success in his new activity were tendered to him by the members, and expressions of regret were general because of his leaving Chicago.

The Weinstein Prize has been founded by the New York Retail Druggists' Association in memory of the late Dr. Joseph Weinstein, who for many years was active in the A. Ph. A. The prize consists of a microscope to be awarded for proficiency in analytical chemistry to a student of the graduating class of the New York College of Pharmacy.