

You recall, some of you, that were at the meeting yesterday, that Col. Raymond, of the U. S. Army Medical Supply Bureau, gave us a very interesting talk on the pharmacists in the United States Army. While I am not endeavoring to repeat to you exactly what he said, I will say this much, that he said: "If you expect to gain recognition in the United States Army, I think you should be guided by the same methods that the dentists used. The dentists, eight years ago, were in the same condition that you are now, when I addressed their National Association as I am now addressing your National Association, and to whom I said, that if they made themselves indispensable to the Army their recognition would come, and if you make yourselves indispensable and show that your services are as important as many other services to the Army in more ways than one and in as many ways as possible, your recognition will come." It seems to me that this is one method by which we can show our services are indispensable, namely, that we are trying to conserve something that the Government needs.

CONCERNING THREE CARDINAL POINTS IN PHARMACY.*

BY B. E. PRITCHARD.

With half a century to my credit in the pursuit of Pharmacy, I trust that it may not be considered impertinent to mention a few points pertaining thereto that seems to be susceptible to improvement.

When I entered upon this long period of what has proved to be my calling in life, there was nothing of what is now most properly denominated "Prerequisite Attainments" to measure up to before one could cross the threshold of pharmacy. My only attainments consisted of several years' experience as a newsboy on the streets of Pittsburgh, and a very limited attendance at the public school in my home district. At that time the word "Drugs" over the door of a place of business did not produce any greater impression upon the public mind than did that of a grocery, hardware, dry goods, or any of the other myriad stores that lined the public thoroughfare of any town or city. The drug store was simply a store and to the passer-by did not differ from any other store except in the matter of odor, which in those days was much more pronounced than now. It was just about that period in the evolution of things when mystery was beginning to detach itself from the drug business. The globular containers of various colored liquids were still in evidence and their brilliant flashes of light illuminated an occasional corner of a street. I say "occasional" in this connection, for the reason that drug stores were not so thickly strewn as we find them in these days. The title of "Pharmacy" was but seldom given, "Apothecary Shop" being the popular synonym, then most largely in use.

But perhaps all these preliminary remarks may have no interest for you, however much they mean to me as I recall my first introduction into the practice of pharmacy. The purpose I have in mind, however, will become apparent as I proceed to show how unprepared my mind was, and how poorly equipped was my brain to assimilate the complexities and deep things that pertain to the study of pharmacy and the branches of knowledge that necessarily go hand in hand therewith. Through all the years that have gone since my first entrance upon the practice of pharmacy, my ignorance of fundamentals has constantly been "a thorn in the flesh" and has proved a serious handicap in the way of my advancement. Hence, with my own experience to guide me, I feel it my bounden duty

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upon every opportunity that presents itself to say to any young man who contemplates taking up pharmacy as his life work, "Be sure that you have had yourself properly prepared by sufficient preliminary education to be able to grasp intelligently the problems that will confront you every day after you have taken up the duties of your calling, and solve them yourself, guided by your own knowledge." What constitutes proper knowledge and how is it obtained? Time, patience, experience and a capacity for assimilation alone can bring one to a state of *almost* perfection, but no man ever fully gets there, although he is constantly adding to his attainments. Therefore I consider the most important and essential cardinal point, and the one most worthy of emphasis, is Sufficient Preliminary Education.

"What is it to be wise?

'Tis but to know how little can be known.

To see all others faults, and feel your own."

I am convinced that thorough knowledge of the theory of pharmacy and wide instruction in all the branches of education that come in the curriculum of a good college of pharmacy are essential—and no student should be given his diploma who has not shown himself capable of reaching the passing mark—yet, unless the student has been given the opportunity to familiarize himself with these teachings by coming into actual contact with them in the presence of the customer, all these will count for naught in the making of a competent pharmacist. Practical Experience is an absolutely necessary prerequisite in order to apply the knowledge which has been gained through lectures and the study of text-books. College training alone fails to make a person a success in business life; one must come into direct contact with the actual thing itself if he would feel himself thoroughly rounded out and ready to grapple with the problems that continually arise in his vocation. With what has already been said in mind, there can be but one answer to the query—"Who should be authorized to distribute medicines of any and all character?" Those only who by careful study and conscientious attention have properly qualified themselves for that duty. To knowledge must be added practical experience. To obtain such experience requires much time and long, patient, watchful waiting upon the methods and practices employed by those who have been our preceptors, who in turn have themselves been trained by others qualified to impart the necessary knowledge.

You ask how long it would be safe to leave one's assistant alone to grapple with the exigencies of every-day life in a pharmacy. Pretty hard question to answer, isn't it? Does two years' experience in the average drug store seem a satisfactory reply to this query? That is the standard that has been set by those men who have formulated most, if not all, of the pharmacy laws of the several states. Let me quote from one of these statutes which constitutes a fair sample. "Those applying for examination for certificates as qualified assistants therein must produce evidence of having not less than two years' experience in said business." What is meant by the words "said business?" The same statute will tell us that, it reads: "All persons who desire to become pharmacists must produce satisfactory evidence of having had not less than four years' practical experience in the business of retailing, compounding or dispensing of drugs, chemicals and poisons, and of compounding physicians' prescriptions;" and, furthermore, "of

being a graduate of some reputable and properly chartered college of pharmacy;" and still further, "must produce satisfactory evidence of having had not less than two years of high school training, or pass an examination equivalent thereto." And yet, after having successfully fulfilled all these preliminary requirements, and then successfully made the required 75 percent passing mark before the pharmaceutical examining board, the pharmacist can, under the pharmacy law, leave his business temporarily in care of one who has managed to emerge safely from a pharmaceutical board examination with such meagre knowledge as he may have been able to grasp while being employed, in any capacity, in a drug store for two years. Does the absurdity of the situation dawn upon you? Apart from his being a convenience to the pharmacist, has the assistant pharmacist a recognized position of value under our pharmacy laws? Is the public amply protected under the present requirements for registration of qualified assistants? Is he qualified? Is it worth while to continue provisions for his registration? Yes, but under more amplified prerequisite requirements than those that now obtain, which are but little removed from being farcical. Have I succeeded in making it apparent that a third cardinal point in pharmacy should by all means be Intelligent Service Always?

Sufficient Education, Practical Experience, Intelligent Service—given these three cardinal points, coupled with honesty, sobriety and a clean conscience, no man can fail to make his life a success.

MORE CONSISTENT PHARMACEUTICAL STANDARDS.*

BY FREDERICK J. WULLING.

Why camouflage any longer in pharmaceutical, educational and practical standards? Camouflage is a deception in favor of self-interest and is only justified as an expediency toward a right and righteous end. It is of two sorts: affirmative and negative. The affirmative is the justifiable kind. Nature indulges in this kind when it gives arctic animals white fur and the beasts of the tropic stripes and spots to make them one with the snowdrift and the jungle, respectively. The tree toad is of the color of the bark of the tree and green insects blend with the foliage. Nature's camouflage is intended to protect and preserve life and is therefore good. This idea has been applied to modern warfare. To deceive the camera and the telescope of the aviators and observers has become one of the chief aims of the firing line. Negative camouflage is the kind that is without affirmative results. It often produces the opposite.

In failing to adopt higher educational standards, except in spots, has not pharmacy camouflaged itself negatively? Hasn't the great body pharmaceutic deceived itself in believing its present standards high enough? Ought it not derive a lesson from the fact that medicine and dentistry, so akin to pharmacy, have prospered so significantly of late because of their accelerating educational standards? Does the fact that professional pharmacy has suffered dilution and attenua-

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