

QUERY: THE YEAR BOOK OR AN ABSTRACT JOURNAL, WHICH?
ANSWER: BOTH.*

BY J. W. ENGLAND.

Your Chairman has asked me to discuss the resolutions recently passed by the New York Branch, copy of which has been sent to the Philadelphia Branch, and I hesitate to do so because of my position as Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Council; but since the question at issue is being publicly discussed, the following personal opinion is presented.

The resolutions of the New York Branch are, in brief, as follows:

"That the Executive Committee and Council take speedy action to submit the proposition of issuing either the Year Book or a monthly Abstract Journal to a vote of the membership of the Association in the form of a special post-card referendum, and that the post-card ballot give to each member the opportunity of voting on one of several options, such as keeping the annual dues at \$5.00, or raising them to \$6.00, or to \$7.50, each under certain specified conditions regarding the issuance or non-issuance of the publications of the Association.

"The proposal of a referendum is not new. It was proposed at the New York meeting, both by the Association and by the Council. The Association first favored a referendum on an increase in dues. Later, the Council first decided for a referendum on an increase in dues with reference to the issuance or non-issuance of a monthly Pharmaceutical Abstract or the Year Book, and the next day it reconsidered its action and referred the question to the Executive Committee for consideration and report to the Council. The minutes of this meeting of the Council were read at the final session of the Association (August 30) and amended by the Association as follows:

"That the Association reconsider its action in the matter of a referendum on an increase in dues, and that the question *in all its bearings* be referred to the newly created Executive Committee of the Council for investigation and report to the Council for approval, and later, report its findings at the first general session of the Association next year."

"The minutes of the Council, as amended, were then approved." (JOUR. A. PH. A., Oct., p. 848, 1919.)

Obviously, the Association having decided against a referendum in the matter of increase in dues "in all its bearings," which includes the issuance of publications, it is hardly in order, now, for the Council or its Executive Committee to take a special post-card referendum on the subject, and the question must await decision until the next annual meeting of the Association in 1920. The Council cannot supersede the Association.

Hence, it is not necessary to discuss the question of taking a referendum vote, but it is entirely in order to discuss the future of the Year Book and the proposition to replace it with a monthly Abstract Journal.

Personally, I believe that Mr. Gathercoal's suggestion of a monthly Abstract Journal has much to commend it. The pharmaceutical research workers of the Association are entitled to the promptest possible information of all developments

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in pharmaceutical research, but is it necessary to abandon the Year Book to give this?

R. W. Terry has suggested that the JOURNAL give, each month, a bibliography or list of titles of articles of current pharmaceutical literature and H. V. Army has suggested that the JOURNAL give an "Index Pharmaceuticus" or index of articles of current pharmaceutical literature, but why not give in the JOURNAL, monthly, a list of the titles of original articles of the pharmaceutical periodicals, foreign and domestic, *together with the briefest possible description of their scope* analogous to the Chemical Abstracts of the American Chemical Society, but even briefer, and also, continue the publication of the present Year Book?

Such a procedure would be entirely practicable. The field of pharmaceutical research work in pharmacy is comparatively limited and it would not take many pages of the JOURNAL, each month, to cover the field. It would be less expensive, also, to utilize the JOURNAL as the medium of expression, than to publish a separate periodical, while to the practical worker the manner of publication would be immaterial so long as he got the gist of the matter and could refer to the original promptly. Such a department of the JOURNAL could be called "Pharmaceutical Abstracts" or "Current Pharmaceutical Literature."

The function of a Year Book is radically different from that of an Abstract Journal. The object of the Year Book is to give an annual, systematic review or digest of pharmaceutical progress in orderly, logical sequence, fully and completely.

It is unthinkable that the Year Book be abandoned. It fills a niche occupied by no other book in pharmacy as a work of reference. For sixty-seven years, the Association has published its "Report on the Progress of Pharmacy" as contained in its former Proceedings and its present Year Book, and these volumes constitute the history of the development of American Pharmacy and give to the American Pharmaceutical Association a prestige that is international as well as national.

The Association cannot afford to discontinue the publication of the Year Book which, under the able and brilliant editorship of H. V. Army, Reporter on the Progress of Pharmacy, is maintaining the highest traditions of the Association. Its continued publication is essential, not only for the sake of the pharmaceutical research workers of to-day, but also, as a duty the Association owes to posterity in furnishing a recorded history of the development of American Pharmacy.

The solution of the problem of the Year Book *vs.* an Abstract Journal would, therefore, seem to be to publish both—the former, as heretofore, and the latter as a department of the JOURNAL.

But the question arises: "Can the Association afford the increased expense?" And I am frank to say that I do not believe it can without increased revenue, but I do believe that increased revenue can be readily gotten by sufficiently increased membership, provided the present system of annual dues, which is the same to-day as it was in 1852 when the Association was founded, be properly modified.

As a matter of fact, the question of the finances of the Association is the crux of the whole situation. In the first place, it should be stated that the finances

of the Association are in excellent shape—they have never been better, but the expenses of the Association are constantly increasing.

In common with individuals everywhere, the Association has felt the pinch of the high cost of living, and its activities have been restricted, instead of being expanded, as they should be. As President LaWall has well said, "There is no question as to the value of our organization to the majority of the members who belong to it. There is no doubt either, as to the great increase in the overhead costs to the Association, and if things continue in the same proportion, we shall soon have a deficit in the treasury."

It may be of interest to state that, during 1918, the receipts of the Association, excluding those belonging to the A. Ph. A. Research Fund (which were covered into the Fund on January 1, 1919) and the interest on investments, were but slightly in excess of the disbursements; there was no deficit.

Of these receipts about 60 percent came from the annual dues of members, about 25 percent from Journal advertisements and about 10 percent from the National Formulary, and the balance from other sources.

If the receipts from interest and other sources be taken into consideration the Association may be said to be in excellent financial condition; but the point is that *there is a positive need for more revenue if the Association is to do the kind and volume of work it must do to progress.*

A largely increased membership is most desirable, not only because it will mean increased revenue and relatively less "overhead expenses," but also because it will make the Association more fully representative of American Pharmacy, give it greater influence and prestige and enable it to better promote the objects for which it stands. Hence, the necessity for "a nation-wide, intensive drive for increased membership, utilizing every agency at the command of the Association, but all working under one head," as suggested by E. L. Newcomb. Such a drive should be, of course, "modern, strongly organized, efficiently managed and adequately financed" and along broad, comprehensive lines and in close coöperation with the State Associations (on the 51 percent basis plan recently adopted) and with the War Veterans' Section.

But something more than this is needed. What the Association needs to-day most of all, it seems to me, is an entire revision of its system of membership, *so that the dues shall be graded by the cost of the service rendered to each member.*

For example, I do not believe that the 3000 members of the Association want or use the Year Book; hence, every book printed and distributed in excess of those needed is just so much money needlessly spent. Why print 3000 books and waste say, 2000? Why not require the 1000 who want the book to pay, say, \$2.50 each for it? By so doing, the book would cost the Association nothing, and the Association would save several thousands a year.

It may be claimed that the membership can be increased to a point where the present dues of \$5.00 would pay for all that is now given for that amount, because with increased membership the relative overhead expense would be "cut" and more net revenue obtained; but the difficulty is that the present *fixed* cost of each member (and this is constantly rising) is so high, that an exceedingly large number of new members would have to be gotten to yield the revenue desired, and this is improbable. On the other hand, if the annual dues are in-

creased to \$7.50 for *all* members for *all* publications, as proposed, many will resign and fewer new members will be gotten than could be otherwise.

The logic of the situation, therefore, suggests that the Association establish several classes of members, as follows:

(1) Members or Active Members who will pay \$5.00 dues and receive the JOURNAL only.

(2) Contributing Members who will pay \$7.50 dues and receive both the JOURNAL and the Year Book.

(3) Corporation Members who will pay \$25.00 dues and receive special services in the way of information, reprints, etc. (similar to that offered by the American Chemical Society).

(4) Associate Members who will pay \$3.00 dues and receive no publications; this could include drug clerks, soldier and sailor pharmacists, etc., who wish affiliation for prestige only.

Some such plan as this would be modern and business-like. It would mean a square deal both for the membership and the Association. Each member would get only what he wants and is willing to pay for and the Association would get what it pays for the service it renders to its members; and it would have a reasonable sum of money for "overhead expense" that would permit an expansion of its activities limited only by the size of its membership.

But, as you know, the whole question of annual dues, finances, membership, etc., is now in the hands of the Executive Committee for consideration and report to the Council and later to the Association, and I feel that I am but expressing the wishes of the Committee when I say that the latter will gladly welcome any and all suggestions reflecting the wishes of the membership to the end that the fullest light may be had on the subject and a satisfactory decision reached.

THE ASSAY OF CALABAR BEANS AND PREPARATIONS OF CALABAR BEANS.

BY GEORGE E. ÉWE.

The U. S. P. 7th did not prescribe the assay of calabar beans and its official preparations. Many manufacturers, however, standardized their output of these preparations.

Probably the most popular method of assay at that time was the ordinary gravimetric "shake out" method; using sodium bicarbonate and ether to extract the alkaloids from the drug or its preparations; extracting the alkaloids from the ether solution by means of dilute sulphuric acid; liberating the alkaloids again by means of sodium bicarbonate; extracting the liberated alkaloids with ether; evaporating the ether in a tared flask; drying the alkaloidal residue to constant weight and correcting this weight by dissolving the alkaloidal residue in dilute sulphuric acid, collecting and weighing the acid-insoluble matter and subtracting its weight from the original weight of the alkaloidal residue.

This method being applied to both the drug and the preparations made from the drug established uniformity in the alkaloidal content of the preparations.

It is a rule of drug assay laboratories to give preference to volumetric methods.