

CORRESPONDENCE

INTERESTING STUDIES AND FACTS OF DRUG MARKET CONDITIONS.*

The writer of the article evidently has submitted opportunities of informing himself as to the conditions of drugs and chemicals throughout the world, and his article is both accurate and informing.

We find that the Crude Drugs that are being offered by Germany are mostly Crude Drugs that were probably gathered before or in the early stages of the War, and many of them are of foreign production, chiefly from South America, showing quite clearly that the offers are from stocks on hand at the breaking out of the war. It is a rather interesting circumstance that we have been able to send orders for several thousand dollars' worth of goods recently to Hamburg for South American Crude Drugs that we cannot at present obtain by direct shipment. We also sent an order to Hamburg recently for Gum Asafetida, a product of Persia. The further fact that a large number of the Crude Drug Products grown in Germany have been forbidden export is another proof that nearly all their offerings of Crude Drugs are of old stocks. The supplies that may be in Austria-Hungary are not definitely known as the communication between Trieste and the Hinterland is still very bad. Some Chamomile Flowers, however, are being shipped from the Adriatic Ports or through Italian Ports and also a very considerable quantity of Insect Flowers. Communication between the ports of shipment and the Hinterland seems to be not entirely interrupted, but spasmodic, and therefore no calculations can be based on production.

As the writer of the other article rightly observes, the conditions in the Orient are perhaps more largely due to transportation and economic disturbances than to lack of production. The writer was told some time ago that there are no circulating mediums at all in Persia and therefore it was most difficult to arrange for transportation by the usual method of camel trains in that country. The scarcity of its products would seem to confirm the truth of this statement.

The writer differs from the statement made in the other article to the effect that the regulations of the Government make the sale of Ethyl Alcohol nearly prohibitory. This statement is apt to create a wrong impression. It is a very easy thing and there is no difficulty whatever for the retail druggist to purchase Alcohol for strictly legitimate purposes. Furthermore, the method that the Government has adopted for controlling the use of Alcohol is so wisely devised, that while in the opinion of the writer, it is efficient, it causes the least possible trouble. It is true that at the moment of writing Alcohol is a very scarce article due to various causes, but that is an entirely different matter from a difficulty in buying Alcohol for legitimate purposes.

High prices have always a tendency to increase production. The restoration of peace and order will have a very important effect in stabilizing exchange and in improving transportation conditions throughout the world. It is the writer's opinion that many goods from the Orient, especially such as are produced in Beloochistan, Afghanistan and Persia will be obtainable at greatly reduced prices after the declaration of peace and the restoration of order, but this may not be either to-morrow or next day.

It is almost certain that unless there is a financial collapse in Europe, the demands made upon America will be so persistent that there will be for a year or two at least a continued pressure to obtain labor, even at the present high rates. In considering the financial condition of Europe it must be borne in mind that concessions have been made, especially to England and France, of territorial supremacy that more than compensate those countries for the financial cost of the War, although, of course, nothing can compensate for their terrible suffering and

* In order to present viewpoints on the significance of prevailing market conditions, Mr. Harry B. French, President of Smith, Kline & French Company was asked for his opinion, and the *substance* of the editorial, "The Significance of Present Drug Market Conditions," submitted to him for comment. A few changes were made in the editorial and these may account for the slight difference in viewpoint on the alcohol situation. The readers will value these interesting contributions by leading authorities.—THE EDITOR.

loss of life. Therefore, for the two great countries of Europe it is rather a question of tiding over immediate difficulties.

It looks now as if the danger in the world and certainly in this country of radical control of labor was over. The conservative element in labor will certainly carefully guard the interests of the laboring classes, and their broad outlook and conservative action can be relied upon to pursue measures that will tend to the public good.

PHILADELPHIA, January 6, 1920.

[Signed] HARRY B. FRENCH.

EDITOR:

Mr. England's editorial on coöperation contains elements of hope, for it may be possible in this way to secure reforms beneficial to professional pharmacy and to the sick without entering into entangling alliances.

Lest I may be regarded as a pessimist, I have confidence in the desire of the average man to give the best that is in him; when the contrary obtains, it is due to the glimmer of a super-mercenary goal obstructing a proper course.

In what direction is coöperation to be centered? Unless it results in a benefit to the ultimate consumer it may be regarded as a conspiracy. So, let us begin along fair lines, by asking the Association of Manufacturing Chemists to coöperate with us in serving the public well, by the discontinuance of marketing "reduced iron, black, 60 percent" also "reduced iron, containing sulphides in excess U. S. P. requirements."

We should seek coöperation from the Association of Pharmaceutical Chemists to discontinue leading unsuspecting pharmacists astray by offering them "elixir iron, quinine and strychnine," containing only 2 grains of quinine per fluidounce. I doubt if any pharmacist ever has a demand on prescription for such an elixir.

The coöperation of the Wholesale Druggists Association should be sought by requesting its members to furnish drugs to druggists, on orders for drugs under U. S. P. or N. F. titles, and not to assume that druggists are technicians who require material for technical purposes only.

I feel that you editors do not often come in touch with commercial affairs that, not infrequently, have a potent effect on the professional status of the pharmacist. A commercial representative can, in a few moments, undo much of the good a pharmacist has learned in college, and, he may do it without intending to do so.

Signed, LOUIS EMANUEL.

PITTSBURGH, PA.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SECTION ON EDUCATION AND LEGISLATION AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION.*

Judging from past reports the objects of this Section seem to be very largely based on the study of conditions and legislation affecting the educational standards and advances and the practice of pharmacy in general, the ultimate object of the study being to bring order out of the varied conditions existing and to eventually standardize educational requirements and methods and to obtain greater uniformity in our laws. It is obvious, therefore, that, aside from the papers presented and the discussions resulting therefrom, a survey of the progress in education and legislation must be made in order that we may determine the advances made from year to year. To obtain this information statistics must be gathered from various sources and tabulated so that we may see in a concrete form just what advances have been made. It has been the duty of your Secretary to obtain this information and as a result this report will be largely statistical.

For information relative to the progress made, we have two sources from which to collect the data, namely the colleges and the State boards of pharmacy. Accordingly questionnaires

* Presented and referred to the Publication Committee, New York meeting A. Ph. A.,