

SCIENTIFIC EXHIBIT OF THE AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION
AT THE CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION.*BY GEORGE C. SCHICKS.¹

The dentist is expert in the use of instruments for the treatment of diseased conditions of the teeth and the oral cavity. The use of medication should also be looked upon by the dentist as a most valuable instrument in treating his patients. The dental patient should be just as much entitled to a prescription necessitated because of dental treatment as is the patient of the physician.

Comfort during treatment of diseased conditions is greatly desired by the dental patient, although in many cases dentists feel that discomfort is a necessary accompaniment to treatment. Perhaps one of the greatest advertising possibilities the dentist has at his command is through the word of his patients who tell others that his treatment is painless.

Dentists for many years have prescribed drugs, but it has been the rare exception where the drug has been ordered through the medium of the prescription. Instead, dentists have employed the use of proprietary medication or merely suggested that the patient purchase the regular size of a sample which the dentist distributes. Such practices do not build up the scientific prestige which professional men so cherish. Being adept at mechanical dentistry is one important field, but the intelligent use of scientifically sound medicaments to treat existing pathological conditions as well as the field of preventive dentistry is of equal importance.

Can professional prestige be built up by a verbal word to the patient to go to the corner drug store and buy a package of a product sponsored on the favorite radio program? If a patient is not willing to accept the empirical treatment urged through magazines, radio or newspapers, and comes to the dentist because he wants specific treatment for his particular condition, isn't it a professional necessity that the dentist be professional in the medication he prescribes? Is not the professional use of scientific, sound medication an essential if further professional prestige is sought for the practice of dentistry?

The prescription is the most professional, intelligent and adaptable manner in which to prescribe drugs. It is the most intelligent because the dentist knows every ingredient in prescribing. It is the most adaptable because varying quantities of individual drugs can be employed to meet the varying pathological conditions of individuals as well as the varying degrees of the same pathological condition. It is the most professional, because it is a signed order by the dentist to the pharmacist. The number of refills can be controlled, the length of time the patient uses the medicament can be controlled, and the patient has a double check on the medication prescribed—a check by the dentist and a check by the pharmacist.

Never before in the history of medication have medicaments been so pleasing to the eye, so palatable and so pleasant to take. The day of ugly looking preparations and nasty tasting medicines is past. The color, odor and taste can almost be completely controlled by the scientific knowledge of the pharmacist. Color, odor and taste should not only be taken into consideration when medication is prescribed for oral administration, but it should also be taken into consideration when the dentist applies medication to the oral cavity in his office practice. Many people abhor the taste of phenol, which is sometimes used for its germicidal properties. If liquefied phenol is colored, and even flavored, it creates an altogether different psychological effect on the patient, who is so carefully watching every move and manipulation of the dentist. If the abrasive used in cleaning teeth is colored pink those patients who object to the sight of blood will be greatly relieved to find that the color they expectorate is the color of the abrasive rather than blood.

Children as well as adults prefer pleasant tasting abrasives, for the sandy sensation is greatly lessened if the flavor is pleasant. To the busy dentist these things may not mean much. The patient who looks upon the whole dental treatment from a different point of view greatly appreciates and often demands these finer points in dental treatment.

Whatever prescription writing the dentist has been taught he has obtained during his college course. In most cases very little time has been given to the consideration of this important subject. The Council on Dental Therapeutics makes available a very helpful publication to the

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dentist in his prescription writing known as *Accepted Dental Remedies*. A copy of it should be in every dental office.

In addition to the service rendered by the dental colleges and the American Dental Association in making it easier for dentists to write prescriptions, colleges of pharmacy, through their specially trained staffs, are now coöperating with the dental profession by giving special lectures and demonstrations to the practicing dentists so that they may become more familiar with official drugs and preparations which are available for use in their practice.

Most medication which the dentist desires to prescribe can be found in either the United States Pharmacopœia or the National Formulary. These preparations are made of recognized therapeutic agents conforming to the highest standards. If the dentist is familiar with these official medicaments there will be no necessity to prescribe proprietary preparations.

The Scientific Exhibit of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION arranged by Rutgers University College of Pharmacy is designed to familiarize the dentist with the official drugs and preparations in the United States Pharmacopœia and National Formulary. This work supplements that of the Council on Dental Therapeutics, which is designed to familiarize the dentist with official medication entirely devoid of any proprietary application. Better medication means better satisfied patients and better satisfied patients mean a wider application of the national program of public health.



West Virginia Pharmaceutical Association U. S. P. and N. F. Display.

Prepare for the New York meeting of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION.
For reference to programs, see second cover page.