

EDITORIAL

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DOING ONE'S BIT.

RARELY in the sixty-four years of the life of our Association has there been more discussion of the problems related to its welfare than during the past few months. Such discussion is either good for the Association, or bad for it, according to the spirit in which it is conducted. If it is constructive criticism, it will be of great service; if it is captious fault-finding, unaccompanied by a genuine effort to aid in making our Association what it should be, it is a waste of both time and energy.

This is not the time to discuss criticism that is mere nagging. Honest differences of opinion concerning the momentous problems that are now before those responsible to the membership at large for the welfare of the Association is in itself a healthy sign. That these differences are being solved is the best guarantee of the future of our well-beloved organization. But it is equally true that the problems will not be solved by the Council unless each individual member considers it his duty to "do his bit" in helping the officers and the members of the Council.

There is no getting away from the fact that each of us gets for his annual subscription a larger return for his investment than on any similar sum spent elsewhere. Some feel we are getting too much but this point we will pass over in order to emphasize the important fact that the ability of the Association to continue giving the splendid return now afforded each member depends entirely on how fully each member realizes his responsibility in promoting the welfare of our Association.

The two greatest needs of the Association at this time are: first, an increased membership; second, a more liberal patronage of the advertising pages of our JOURNAL. These two needs will not down and were the first solved; the second would almost reach the vanishing point. There is no reason why our Association should not eventually have fifteen thousand members.

During the past year one local Branch of our Association, thanks to the energy of the chairman of the Membership Committee, backed by his enthusiastic colleagues, was able in a single year, to increase the A. Ph. A. membership of its district by fifty percent. If every Branch and every unattached member of our Association did likewise we would have 4,000 members by 1918.

As to the advertising side of our JOURNAL, each increase in our membership (subscriber) list means an increased value of our JOURNAL as a publicity medium. When we consider the type of pharmacy represented in our membership; when we realize that the censorship rules of the JOURNAL bar any advertisement except those of the highest grade, we will appreciate that in its field the JOURNAL's ad-

vertising pages are as desirable a means of publicity as are the pages of *Harper's Magazine* or of the *Independent*. There are a lot of magazines that have a wider circulation than the two publications just mentioned and yet there is little doubt as to the decision of the discriminating advertising man if he were asked which was the best publicity medium, one of those mentioned or one that reaches an indifferent or unproductive class of readers, even though the latter publication might have the circulation of one million.

It behooves each of us who is a member of the American Pharmaceutical Association to point out to friends who are advertisers but who have not yet decided to patronize the pages of the JOURNAL, the unusual merits of our publication as an advertising medium. We have members in every part of this great country of ours. If each of us would consider himself an advertising agent to the extent of bringing one acceptable contract for the JOURNAL, there would be no question as to the financial ability of our Association to furnish its members with the splendid *quid pro quod* that now obtains.

In this editorial, the word "we" is not used in the customary journalistic sense. It is not used as the device originated by modest representatives of the Fourth Estate to conceal the personality of the shy individual occupying an editorial chair. On this page of the JOURNAL of this our much loved Association, "we" should mean each one of our 2,700 members working in harmonious coöperation not merely to keep our organization up to the glorious traditions of its past, but, if that is possible, to even broaden the scope of its influence and of its service.

H. V. ARNY.

OUR PATENT LAWS SHOULD BE AMENDED.

IN this issue of the JOURNAL will be found two papers dealing with American patent laws and relating to patent-protection of chemical compounds. Comment on the subject would be a mere attempt to repeat the excellent presentations by Messrs. F. E. Stewart and J. W. England, so the only purpose of this writing is to emphasize a point or two that has been developed. American citizens are entitled to the same consideration given by foreign manufacturers to those of other countries. Unless the United States exacts contributions that create a larger expense for these manufacturers than obtains in other countries, then it should be possible for the dealers of the United States to procure these chemicals at practically the same prices paid by those of other countries. It is admitted that manufacturers have the right to exact whatever price purchasers will pay for their products, but by the same or better reasoning the latter may use every means at their command, and not in violation of right and law, to buy at the lowest possible prices.

American pharmacists may conclude that it matters not what an article costs them, they figure profits on cost. As a matter of fact if the products referred to

could be obtained at prices charged for them in other countries, there would be the possibility of larger relative profit. But the fact remains that there is no plausible reason, as far as we can see, why citizens of the United States should pay relatively more than Canadians for the very same articles. It, therefore, devolves upon dealers to protect their patrons against excessive charges, if this is possible. In other words, even if it matters not whether the price is one dollar or twenty cents to the pharmacists, that the consumers pay the profit, there still obtains the duty of protecting the latter, if it is possible so to do. So then, the first reason for a correction of our patent laws in this respect is in the interest of the consumers.

The second consideration is for the American manufacturers and development of our chemical industries. Our first duty should be a consideration of our own manufacturers. According to our views the product-protection of chemical compounds hinders the development of the American chemical industries. We should have reciprocity along these lines and make the same or like demands upon foreign manufacturers that their respective countries require of American manufacturers. In the final analysis this may be found somewhat impracticable, for trade between countries must be continued on a satisfactory basis, but it is beginning to dawn on everyone concerned that the relation has not been the proper one, and that an adjustment is mandatory. There may also be certain agreements between the United States and foreign countries that will require adjudication, but certainly the condition now existing can not be a permanent one, and is subject to arrangement.

The chemical industries of this country have received an impetus and their development should be encouraged in every possible way. Congress should, in furthering these interests, give serious attention to amending the patent laws and provide means for constant, proper supervision so that the citizens will be protected against discrimination, and the American manufacturers further encouraged in the development of the chemical industries.

Pharmacists have in the furtherance of this legislation an opportunity to serve their patrons with profit to themselves, promoting American chemical industries and benefiting pharmacy. Read the contributed articles carefully and then correspond or confer with your senators and congressmen. E. G. E.

THE NATIONAL DRUG TRADE CONFERENCE.

FOR a fund of useful information anent national legislation, the readers are referred to the report of the National Drug Trade Conference held in Washington, January 16th, reported by Secretary Charles M. Woodruff and printed in this issue of the JOURNAL.

The Conference has unanimously endorsed the Kern-Doremus poison-mailing bill, which provides for carrying drugs of all kinds through the mails, with proper safeguards written into the law. The Post-office Department is endeavoring to pass a measure which seeks to restrict the traffic by mail to responsible parties.

The former provides restrictions in accord with the character and strength of the drug, and the other places the responsibilities on the senders and recipients.

The only amendment recommended for the Harrison Law is that of Section 8, which would make it unlawful for a person, not registered under the law, to have in his possession the proscribed drugs and making possession under such conditions *prima facie* evidence of violation.

The Conference, while recognizing the importance of Compulsory Health Insurance, recommends that legislatures be importuned not to be hasty in passing measures of this kind, until the subject can be carefully studied from every angle by commissions specially appointed for thoroughly investigating the question.

The usefulness of the Drug Trade Conference is becoming more and more apparent, composed as it is of representative members of the various drug trade organizations. Its influence for good is a factor not only in properly shaping legislation, but for bringing about desired coöperation between these interests.

E. G. E.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF PHARMACY AND PHARMACY LEGISLATION.

UNDER Pharmacist and the Law we are presenting some of the recommendations of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy in the promotion of uniformity in pharmacy laws. The sentiment is growing that boards of pharmacy should act in harmony in the matter of college graduation prerequisite, not only as a necessary progressive step, but because it will bring about a more uniform standard in board examinations.

The public is entitled to know who the owner of a pharmacy is; it is equally as important information, as knowing the name of a physician into whose care patients give themselves; the same thought applies in a relative degree to registered pharmacists.

The provision, requiring the display of certificates of registration and also of the names of the registered pharmacist in charge of drug stores is advocated by the Association, and the requirement should be made part of every pharmacy law.

Another point brought out by Secretary H. C. Christensen is that the United States Pharmacopoeia and National Formulary being essential to the proper conduct of a pharmacy, the law should make it mandatory that copies of the latest revisions be in every drug store. This may seem a superfluous inclusion, but the fact remains that some druggists do not use these standards as their guide in pharmaceutical manufacturing and dispensing. Even medical laws should require that the U. S. Pharmacopoeia and National Formulary be in the offices of practicing physicians. These standards are certainly necessary for intelligent and careful prescribing.

E. G. E.