

THE PROGRESS IN PHARMACY.

The subject of pharmacy is an inexhaustible subject.

I might go back to the time of the alchemist and trace the evolution of the profession from that point, but neither space nor time will permit me to do this. But to give you some idea as to the early conception of the manufacturing and dispensing of drugs, I might quote from Shakespeare in "Merchant of Venice." He says: "As I do remember

Here dwells a pothecarie whom oft I noted
As I past by, whose needle shop is stuff
With beggardly accounts of empty boxes.
And on the same an aligarta hangs,
Olde ends of packthread, and cakes of roses
Are thinly strowed to make up a show.
Here as I noted thus with myself I thought
Ah, if a man should need a poison now,
Whose present sale is death in Mantua,
Here he might buy it. This thought of mine
Did but forerun my need: and hereabout he dwells."

To give a clear idea as to the pharmacy profession in its evolution would necessitate the tracing of the medical profession, on whom it is dependent. As the medical profession advances, so should the pharmacy, but that has not been the case, as I shall show later.

Early in the history the list of drugs was limited to a number of herbs and a few chemicals, which were used along with some rite or ceremony, the combination producing the cure. However, now we know that some of these same drugs are effective and are used at the present time.

At this early date the druggist made his own pills, fluid extracts and other preparations, and needless to say had very poor devices for their manufacture. One prescription or preparation might be composed of twenty-five or even more different herbs, mixed in the form of a decoction or infusion without any regard for strength or active constituent of each particular drug. By chance or mainly by experimentation on animals the active constituent and dosage of these drugs have been accurately determined. Since this determination, now a certain drug is given to produce a certain physiological effect and upon some particular part of the body. As a result of this, it became necessary that all preparations, such as tinctures, fluid extracts and other preparations should be up to a certain strength or standard to insure a correct dosage.

So in 1820 the United States Pharmacopoea was edited, which contains the official drugs and preparations along with their dosage and method of preparation and assaying. These

official drugs must be of a certain strength, which is determined physiologically with animals or chemically by analysis. This pharmacopoea is revised every ten years to keep up with new ideas and methods and findings.

A few years ago any person who wished could run a drug store without even having any previous experience or education. Since the recent researches and establishing of the values of various drugs and their standardization it becomes necessary that the druggist must have at least some knowledge of the dangerous substances which he dispenses, and so the states have passed laws regulating the persons dispensing poisonous drugs as remedies. At present any person dispensing poisonous drugs must be registered with the state board of pharmacy. Examinations are given and a certain grade must be passed before the applicant is registered.

Another method of controlling the dispensing and sale of drugs is thru the pure food and drug act which was passed in 1906. This act regulates the selling or dispensing of poisonous drugs or medicines, stating that all goods shall be properly labeled and per cent of alcohol contained therein and also whether it contains any habit producing drug or other harmful substances.

The state board examinations is offered to any person who has had so many years of experience in the drug business. It is not necessary that he shall have had any previous pharmacy school education or training of any kind. However, some states require a diploma from some recognized school of pharmacy along with a certain number of years of practical experience before they are eligible to take the examination.

In this state a person holding a diploma from some recognized school of pharmacy is given credit for the actual number of months which he is in school as practical experience.

Various lengths of pharmacy courses are offered. There are given two, three and four year courses by most colleges.

The two year course gives a person a fair knowledge of pharmacy, but no other subjects are taught except those pertaining strictly to pharmacy, while the three year course gives him a little broader education in pharmacy and a few closely allied subjects. The four year course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy not only gives him a thorough knowledge of pharmacy, but with this knowledge he receives a general education. It is becoming more and more necessary that a pharmacist should be educated in more than his own line. The medical course has been increased to six years. Why should not the pharmacy course be made a four year course with a prerequisite high school

course. If the pharmacy profession is to keep in pace with the medical profession it must increase the educational requirements.

I think the time is rapidly approaching when the pharmacy profession, although commercialized, will be put on as high a plane as any profession.

This pharmacy school training aids a pharmacist in becoming more independent upon wholesale houses and other such institutions. Before the advent of these institutions the pharmacist was compelled to make his own pills and tinctures, and such preparations, but now he can get them already prepared, ready to dispense, from the wholesale houses. Of course some things can not be made in the store, but I would encourage the making of his own preparations wherever possible. In many cases a much better preparation can be made in small quantities than in such enormous quantities as are made by the large firms.

It is not necessary for a pharmacist to have an expensive outlay of equipment in order to do a great deal of his own manufacturing. Many pharmacists have a small laboratory where they make a few of their own preparations and also assay the matter made, thus insuring standard preparations for sale. There are other reasons why this should be done, but space will not permit.

In this short space I have merely given a survey of the advancement in pharmacy and what the profession may yet become. And in closing I would especially emphasize the advantages of an educated pharmacist over one who has not had the technical training.

EARLY PHARMACOPOEIAS.

The name "pharmacopoeia" appears first in 1561, but the name did not become popular until the seventeenth century.

Until 1617 such drugs as were in common were sold by grocers and pharmacists alike. In that year the pharmacists in Florence, Italy, obtained a decree that no grocer should dispense. At this period the compounds used were of such heterogeneous mixture that from 20 to 70 compounds entered into one prescription. Imagine the trouble of the pharmacist. Nor was that his only trouble. Many prescriptions called for crab's eyes, pearls, oyster shells, coral, human skulls with moss growing on them, blind puppies, earthworms, etc.

PHARMACY ANNUAL.

At a meeting of the junior class of the Nebraska School of Pharmacy, held on April 17, 1913, the class decided to publish an Annual, devoted to the interests of the School of Pharmacy. The Annual is known by the name of the U. of N. S. P. Snapshots of the students and pictures of the

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members of the faculty, with a short write-up about each one, a few historical articles, and a joke department comprised the book.

This year the following men have charge of the publishing of the Annual: Guy L. Thompson, editor-in-chief; H. McMurray, assistant editor; Potter P. Howard, business manager; G. A. Bostrom, assistant business manager. The Annual has been enlarged and besides the pictures of the faculty and students of the School of Pharmacy, it will include the picture of Chancellor Avery, the instructors in chemistry, and the deans connected with the school.

The cartooning will be done by Edo Anderson, who will be remembered as one of the promising men on the campus several years ago.

Dean Bessey, Dr. R. A. Lyman and Mr. H. L. Thompson have contributed some very interesting articles. One section of the book is devoted to the chronology of the school and the events of Pharmacy week. The "write-ups" are said to be excellent and the book will be of interest not only to the students, but to all those interested in the School of Pharmacy.

.. WHAT DOES THE R MEAN?

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