

# The Advancement of Medicine and Pharmacy\* ~ ~ ~

1853-1953

This century was, by all odds, the most momentous in the history of mankind. It had a profoundly beneficial impact upon every phase of human activity. It surpassed every other century in the application of the social, economic and political principles essential to the progressive improvement of national and world affairs.

During this period the Strother Drug Company has grown from the tiny acorn to the mighty oak, and today, rightfully ranks among the outstanding wholesale drug houses of the country. If there is any validity in looking to the past as the best assurance of what the future has in store, the second century of the company's career bids fair to be one of superlative achievement.

When viewed in the light of the vast changes which have come about in the field of medical care, and in the practice of pharmacy, one is impressed with the fact that this century has been one of epochal progress.

Indeed, 1853 seems like a period of remote antiquity when seen against the background of 1953. Note the landmarks in the progress of medical science since that early period. 1857, Lister introduces antiseptic surgery; 1859, cocaine isolated; 1881, carbolic acid disinfection was first used in obstetrics; 1882, Koch isolates tuberculosis bacillus; 1890, Behring treated diphtheria with antitoxins; 1895, Roentgen discovered x-rays; 1898, epinephrine isolated; 1905, novocain made available; 1910, salvarsan (606) was announced; 1915, Dakin's Solution used in surgery.

This progress is eloquently reflected in the vast changes which have come about in medical care and public health through the use of sulfa drugs, the antibiotics, and the scientific chemotherapeutic agents which today form the foundation of modern medical practice.

Infant mortality, as is generally known, has declined so low as to be approaching the vanishing point. The scourge of typhoid, scarlet fever, diphtheria, meningitis, pneumonia, to mention only these, no longer ravage our people, and the span of life has advanced by about 25 years since the advent of the 20th century.

One is not unduly optimistic in his conviction that cancer, tuberculosis, cardiac disorders, and mental ills, may soon be brought within the control of modern science.

\*Prepared especially for Strother's Anniversary Book by Doctor Robert L. Swain, Editor of *Drug Topics*, and President for 1953 of the American Foundation for Pharmaceutical Education.

In the field of pharmacy, the progress has been equally significant. In 1853, the American Pharmaceutical Association was only one year old. There were only four colleges of pharmacy, and these were of a very superficial character when compared with current standards in pharmaceutical education.

A drug store, with an annual volume of \$2,500, was regarded as unusually good. There were no adequate pharmacy laws, and the pharmacists of the country were using the third revision of the United States Pharmacopoeia. Little of the pharmacy of that distant time has survived the impact of scientific medication. Today, the pharmaceutical profession is fully matured and superbly developed.

Our system of pharmaceutical education conforms to high technical and professional standards. Pharmacy is recognized as a respected member of the medical care team. The drug store has progressed from a yearly volume of \$2,500 in 1853 to more than \$80,000 in 1953. Indeed, retail pharmacy has become big business, as it has reached a total sales volume of more than four billion dollars annually.

Professionally, the drug store has made great strides. More than 500 million prescriptions are compounded and dispensed annually in retail drug stores. Pharmacy and the drug store stand forth as rendering an utterly essential professional service to our people.

Pharmacy today is identified with scientific medication and with the compounding and dispensing of prescriptions which actually cure people. The old polyglot prescription has disappeared. Now, pharmacy is concerned with "the wonder drugs." Prescriptions call for scientific medication evolved in the research laboratories of the universities and the drug industry. In every respect, the retail drug store has become a treasured neighborhood institution. The modern drug store serves a wide variety of community needs. So true is this statement that the drug store is universally regarded as firmly implemented into the affections and esteem of the public.

The years ahead will see medicine and pharmacy surpassing their glorious achievements of the past, so profoundly beneficial will be their contributions to the betterment of medical care.



1853 A CENTURY OF PROGRESS 1953