

**Circular.**

**Contributors**

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CIRCULAR, New York, 21 November

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CIRCULAR.

NEW-YORK, 21 November, 1818.

SIR,

On the 4th of March, 1818, we had the honour of addressing a circular to the Medical Institutions in the United States, respecting the formation of an American Pharmacopœia. The project has met the approbation of enlightened physicians in every section of the Union, obtained the co-operation of many of the Medical Associations of our country, and bids fair to be crowned with success.

The plan proposed was, 1. That the Pharmacopœia should be formed by and under the authority of "the several incorporated Medical Societies, the several incorporated Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, or Medical Schools, and such Medical Schools as constitute a faculty in any University or College in the United States; and in case there should be any state or territory in which there was no incorporated Medical Society, Medical College, or School, that voluntary associations of physicians and surgeons, in such state or territory, should be respectfully invited to unite in the undertaking." 2. That the formation of the Pharmacopœia was not to be undertaken unless it should receive the approbation of a majority of the aforesaid institutions in the United States. 3. That a convention should be held in each of the four grand divisions of the United States, to be composed of delegates from the Medical Societies, Schools, and Associations. 4. That each district convention should form a Pharmacopœia, or select one in general use, and make therein such alterations and additions as may adapt it to the present state of medical science, and elect delegates to meet in general convention in the city of Washington, on the first of January, 1820. 5. That the general convention should form the national work from the district convention Pharmacopœias. 6. That each district convention should be held at such time and place as may be agreed upon by a majority of the aforesaid institutions in the respective districts.



We have the pleasure of communicating to you, as well for your own information, as for that of all whom it may concern, that intelligence has been received from a majority of the aforementioned institutions, announcing that they have approved of the formation of an American Pharmacopœia. It is now in order, to designate the times and places for holding the district conventions; but as every institution is interested in the time and place of holding its district convention, and as several of the societies have not had meetings since the circulars were issued, and others have referred the subject to committees, which have not yet reported, we deem it improper to make the designation, until all the societies have had an opportunity of expressing their wishes.

Such institutions as have not yet transmitted the evidence of their approbation, with the names of their delegates, and have not mentioned the time and place which, in their opinion, would be most convenient for the meeting of the convention in their district, are respectfully requested to communicate that information without delay, that the times and places of the meeting of the district conventions may be made public as early as possible.

We beg leave, Sir, in completion of the design, to invite your personal attention, as well as that of every physician in the country, to the virtues of our native plants, and also to such American formulæ as are of approved credit; and we request that information on these subjects may be transmitted to a district convention, or to the secretary of this board, that the work may be in some degree original, and as characteristic as possible of the practice of medicine in the United States. There are many valuable formulæ in this country, some of which are not generally known, that deserve a place in the Pharmacopœia; it is much to be wished that all these could be obtained.

If we advert to the manner in which the first European Pharmacopœias were formed, we shall find it was by collecting and embodying the prescriptions and formulæ of the most eminent physicians of the time. These recipes have been pruned and polished by the hand of time and experience, until they have approached a state of perfection, as it regards the articles well known in the Eastern Continent, and their application to the particular forms of disease there prevalent. From our native forests and fields we may gather many remedies, and from our practising physicians, original receipts and prescriptions for the cure of the diseases of our country.

It has been intimated to this committee, that it would be a means of exalting the medical character of our country; that it would have a tendency to prevent the frequent misunderstandings among medical men; and, that it would promote harmonious and social intercourse among the faculty, if a system of medical Ethics, or a code of institutes and precepts for regulating and governing the professional intercourse and conduct of physicians and surgeons, should be established for the United States. We would therefore beg leave to suggest to the several institutions which may join in the formation of the national Pharmacopœia, the propriety of authorising their delegates to form, in district convention, a code of medical Ethics, and to submit the same to the general convention.

We have the honour to be your humble servants,

DAVID HOSACK, M. D.  
JOHN R. B. RODGERS, M. D.  
SAMUEL L. MITCHILL, M. D.  
JOHN STEARNS, M. D.  
JOHN WATTS, jun. M. D.  
T. ROMEYN BECK, M. D.  
LYMAN SPALDING, M. D. Sec.  
WRIGHT POST, M. D.  
ALEX. H. STEVENS, M. D.

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