

Editorial

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THE PHARMACIST AND THE LAW.

“CALL you that backing of your friends? a plague on such a backing,” was the protest of bluff Jack Falstaff to Prince Hal, and one is tempted to sympathize with him and cry out in protest, “God save me from my friends,” as he reads the further suggested effort to curb and restrict the already overburdened drug-trade, as embodied in the model law proposed to supplement the Harrison Bill by Messrs. Beal, Freericks and Craig.

Have we not enough law in the Harrison Bill to satisfy any reasonable person? Is it necessary to pile Pelion on Ossa; to add law after law in further effort to declare the members of our profession, enemies to all that is good; panderers to all that is vicious, and willing instruments in the destruction of society, to protect which from their attack, wall after wall of law must be built up?

Out upon such an effort. We have enough to bear, in the Harrison Law, which every good citizen earnestly desires may accomplish much good,—the good results that are postulated, without adding more and more to our burden at the suggestion of the lawyer members of our craft.

Of all the professions in this unhappy world, there is none which brings more trouble to it than that of the law, and the less our profession has to do with drug-gist-lawyers the better for it.

From the days of Jonadab, “a very subtle man,” who gave such foul advice to Amnon, mankind has been cursed by lawyers. Lord Chief Justice Brougham, being asked to define “a lawyer,” said “a lawyer is a learned gentleman who rescues your estate from your enemies and keeps it himself.” Those who have been charmed with the inimitable sea-tales of Marryat may remember that the most troublesome man on a ship was “a sea-lawyer,” and we are tempted to cry out, “Oh, Lord, Lord, save us from our pharmacist-lawyers,” for there is a limit to patience and the limit seems to have been reached. The tendency of lawyers is to look solely to laws as a bulwark of defence against all ills. They have no faith or trust in the inherent goodness of mankind, and by this lack of trust they do injury to all, the state and the individual citizen. Chief Justice Marshall is said by many to have done incalculable harm to this country by his construction of the Constitution, and the wrongs wrought by pettifogging attorneys have been prolific subjects for the author and dramatist, and few of us but know of some instance of their baneful deeds. It may be said, without much fear of question, that no class of men have been so dangerous, so pernicious to organized society, so subversive of all that is good in life as the legal fraternity.

Let us have done with law and lawyers for the present. Let us see what good there is, if any there exist, in the Harrison Law. Let us strive earnestly to eradicate the danger to our civilization which its exponents declared imminent. But

for Heaven's sake, let us not attempt to add more and still more law to that, until we observe its operation and effects.

“We must not make a scarecrow of the law,
Setting it up to fright the birds of prey;
But let it keep one shape, 'till custom make it
Our ward and not our terror.”

E. C. M.



WASHINGTON PHARMACY LAW.

THE law proposed in the State of Washington (H. B. No. 135) to regulate the practice of pharmacy seems to be one most excellent, and it contains one feature which might well be copied by all states which suffer from the evils of itinerant vending.

Some of the plans proposed to control or regulate this evil might be well-termed bills to legalize itinerant vending instead of bills to control it, for they are so worded as to legitimize the practice even though they impose some financial restrictions. But in the case of the Washington law the framers of the bill have attacked the evil directly. Sect. 14 of the proposed bill is as follows:—

“It shall be unlawful for any itinerant vender, peddler or any person unless he be a registered pharmacist or registered assistant pharmacist in the State of Washington to sell or offer for sale any medicine, drug, nostrum, ointment, preparation and appliance for the treatment of disease, injury or deformity.”

The salutary effect of this section is somewhat, if not entirely nullified however by Section 29 of the bill which allows unrestricted selling of “proprietary medicines or medicines in sealed packages” by any one without restriction as to place or qualification. While a man who has a store is required to obtain a license from the State Board of Pharmacy, any person can sell the same goods from a basket or wagon without such license. Thus, under this law, it would appear that while a person having a real or fancied ground for action against the seller of such medicines, could reach a man with an establishment which was properly licensed, he might, and probably would, find it impossible to reach a person without such establishment.

Some means should be devised by which the public could be protected in such cases.

To allow persons who may be entirely unqualified and who may never be seen again after selling the medicine, to sell drugs for the cure of disease without restriction, while those with permanent establishments are only allowed to sell the same goods when licensed, seems inconsistent.

E. C. M.

GEORGE FREDERIC HOLMES MARKOE.

Professor Markoe was born in Valparaiso, Chili, in 1840. He was a posthumous child and spent the first ten years of his life in Chili with his mother's family. In 1850, his grandfather Markoe of Salem, Massachusetts, desired him brought to that city and the child of ten found many changes, most of them hard to bear, in the transition from the southern to the northern hemisphere. He made for himself, however, a good record at the Phillips Grammar School of Salem, and after his graduation was apprenticed in 1857 to Mr. James Emerton, a Salem pharmacist. Here he followed a course of study outlined by Prof. William Proctor, and upon the Salem Fells began the study of botany, which in later years brought him into close friendship with Prof. Asa Gray of Harvard University.

In 1861 he came to Boston and entered the employ of Mr. Charles T. Carney, whom, ever afterwards, he regarded as "My Master," and for whose ability and integrity he always retained the highest admiration.

In 1863 he entered the store of Joseph T. Brown, one of the principal pharmacists of Boston, and for eleven years was associated with that firm, the last three years as a partner. In 1873 he became proprietor of the store established by them in Roxbury, a part of Boston, in which suburb he resided for seventeen years, during which time he did much active work along chemical lines. He was a pioneer in manufacturing pharmacy, doing much in the making of chemicals and chemical solutions. Here his famous process for the manufacture of phosphoric acid by the action of bromine and nitric acid on phosphorus was evolved. He also did much analytical work and was consulted by many for counsel in practical methods for improvements in chemical processes. He possessed great mechanical ingenuity which served him well when in need of apparatus, of which for years his stock was small.

In 1890 he retired from the retail drug business and devoted himself to work in the Burnett laboratories and to teaching.

His early difficulties in the line of study, led him to sympathize with the apprentice of few opportunities and opened the way to what was undoubtedly the best effort of his life; the establishment of instruction by the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy, which before 1866 was an incorporated body, but not a teaching institution. In 1867 he delivered in a little room on Boylston Street, a series of free lectures on Pharmacy and Chemistry, and from that time, for nearly thirty years, he served as a Professor of his beloved College of Pharmacy, which he was proud and happy to see grow into a strong and influential institution from his small beginning. In 1870 he founded the Alumni Association, and served as its first President. No student ever came under his care who could not at any time command his help and sympathy and in the latter part of his life the recognition of his kindly and helpful assistance by many of these, was to him a source of endless happiness.

From 1873 to 1879, he was Instructor of Materia Medica in the Harvard Medical School. For nearly three decades he served on the Revision Committee of the U. S. Pharmacopœia. He was affiliated in many circles allied to pharmacy; was President of the American Pharmaceutical Association in 1875-76, and was an active member of the Boston Scientific Society, the Horticultural Society, Society of Arts, Massachusetts Pharmaceutical Association, Boston Druggists' Association, a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, an honorary member of the British Pharmaceutical Conference and of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Brussels. In 1891 Dartmouth College conferred upon him the honorary degree of Master of Arts.

He was twice married. By his first wife, Ellen G. Jenness, he reared one son, George Berger; and by his second wife Louise, granddaughter of Sir Emanuel Moore, he was blessed with one daughter, Llannd Ellis, the secretary of the large department store of E. A. Filene & Sons, of Boston, Mass.

He passed into the "Great Unknown" in September, 1896, leaving behind him the love and regard of all who knew him best, and who cherished his kindly and genial nature.