

Mr. William H. Wey, who married Dr. Crosswell's adopted daughter, succeeded to the business which he conducted until his death in 1856. Then Mr. Benjamin Wey conducted the business after his father's death for a number of years alone. Then he associated with him Mr. Edward Lavelle, but that partnership lasted only a little over a year, but during it the old store was remodeled in 1861, and at the time was considered one of the finest up-to-date stores on the Hudson River. In the spring of 1863 I became associated with Mr. Wey. The firm was "Wey & DuBois" for thirteen years, when Mr. Wey retired after a very pleasant business relation, in 1876. Since then the writer has conducted the business, but what a change! When I came to Catskill in 1863, we did an extensive business in paint, putty, and window glass, dye woods, potash, and Lorillard's snuff. Every farmer's wife in the fall would get in her supply of extract of logwood, cochineal, muriate of tin and indigo, and would send her wool to the little fulling mills, which were to be found on nearly every stream, to be carded, and she would do the spinning of the yarn and the dyeing during the winter. It was a very common thing to receive, about the last run of the boats, our extract of logwood, logwood chips, fustic, madder and red wood to carry us through the winter. Another great trade was potash. Every family at that time made their own soft soap and it did not take long to get rid of a seven-hundred-pound cask of potash. That is all done away with now, for the people are using the aniline dyes in place of making their own, and there are few now who make their own soft soap. In the old days we sold large quantities of Lorillard's Maccaboy snuff and Scotch and French rappe snuff, probably as much as a ton in the course of the year, that has gradually grown less until now we sell only about two hundred and fifty pounds in a year, quite a falling off as the younger generation have not followed in the footsteps of their grandparents in regard to that habit. We used to supply the country stores with essence of peppermint, wintergreen and castor oil and extract of lemon and vanilla. The railroads and the commercial travelers have changed all that now. The doctors carry their own medicines and put up their own prescriptions, except where there are ointments, liniments or suppositories to be made, we druggists get those. It is the manufacturing of tablets that has hurt the prescription business and made it easier for the doctors. One would scarcely recognize the business of to-day as compared to fifty years ago. My friend, Mr. Wey, remarked a few years ago, "If I was to come in the store now I would not know where I was at." Our trade is simply a local trade and to make ends meet we have to put in lines of trade we would not have thought of doing years ago. The changes since I came to Catskill fifty years ago are very great. All the old people have passed away, and I am the oldest man in business in the town now. I am very thankful for the good health that enables me to attend to business every day. I have had the pleasure of seeing my family grow up and am the proud father of nine children, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren, quite enough for one old man.

REMINISCENCES.*

BY THOMAS D. McELHENIE.

On August 7, 1865, I entered the drug business in Wooster, Ohio, my father

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having placed me with the wholesale and retail firm of Zimmerman & Company where he bought grocers' drugs, groceries, paints, glass, etc., for his village store in that county.

The firm did much the largest trade in the town in their day but not much in pharmacy. My job ranged from cub through porter, shipping clerk and entry clerk. When Abraham Boyd, a salesman for James R. Nichols & Co., of Boston, spent some days there in the early summer of 1870 I had been for some time the senior drug clerk. Mr. Boyd was an alumnus of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and put me in the notion of going there to study and "be somebody." In the five years I had not gained much headway in pharmacy, but I had learned to work and to use both hands, filling cans of *Carbon Oil*—now called kerosene—and barrels of sugar from the great boxes of Demerara and casks of New Orleans, which in that day came to us up the rivers, to Cincinnati or sometimes to Pittsburgh. Many and many a cold day I spent in the fireless warehouse crumbling these sugars by hand into salable form. My greatest acquisition in those five years was the love of a woman but I was not to know it till a few years later.

The firm and my father being agreeable, the matter of going to college was arranged, and in September, 1870, I traveled to Philadelphia. Starting out bright and early from the Bingham House, my first acquaintance was the jolly old Irish Quaker, Wellington Boyle, the head man in the retail part of the old establishment of Charles Ellis at Tenth and Market. As I was looking for a job he told me the best way was to just beat up the town, walk up one street and down the next trying every drug store, taking Tenth and Market as a base. I did just that, and when I landed a place in three or four days it was just across the street from the boarding house where I had already located and the nearest drug store to the College, namely, that of Lancaster & Bros. at Tenth and Arch. This is the old business of William Hodgson, dating from 1829.

Mr. Hodgson was not a graduate but had started this business, as above stated, about 1829. In Bullock's biography of Daniel B. Smith, who was, I think, the first president of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy—it is stated that Smith & Hodgson started at 6th and Arch about 1828 and were succeeded in 1849 by Bullock and Crenshaw. This would indicate that Mr. Hodgson was a partner in one shop and owner of another. Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Frederick Brown, the first, were contemporaries, both tried their hands at Essence of Ginger at about the same time. Hodgson's product never attained extensive sale.

Thomas A. Lancaster graduated in the class of 1859. The date of his succession to the business of Mr. Hodgson I have not ascertained. It has passed through several hands since, the present owner dating 1893. The property still belongs to the Hodgson estate. I remember, during my time, an old gentleman, in Quaker garb, coming in for his rent about the first of every month.

I secured the place as clerk on the strength of a reference to Mr. Haffelfinger of Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, publishers and booksellers, an offshoot



THOMAS D. McELHENIE

of the Lippincott house. The Wooster firm had given me a letter to Mr. Haffelinger, and Lancaster & Bros. were occasional buyers of stationery there. This old drug store was and still is an awfully crowded place. It had a gallery of iron rods and heavy wire, reached by a short iron ladder, something like a fire escape and rather shaky. One use of that gallery was to lay up there for drying box lids of charcoal biscuits, lumps of a mass of charcoal, flour, etc., about the size of horse chestnuts. The store was headquarters for several specialties running back to Mr. Hodgson's time, one being Diamond Cement; another was "Solution of Morphia Meconat," which the jobbers would send for, paying \$4.00 a pint. We made a great deal of Syrup of *Stillingia* Compound, most of it dispensed on prescriptions of a certain Dr. Buchanan down about Ninth and Arch. These prescriptions were always for a pint, chiefly the syrup and frequently potassium iodide was added; for dispensing they used the old style Congress Water bottles, dark green, heavily lettered. We made five gallons at a time and distilled off the alcohol from the percolate; for this purpose there was in the cellar a copper still built up in brick work. I suppose Professor Lloyd's process was used; he has assured me lately, that the old process was absolutely unworkable. By the way, speaking of Lloyd reminds me, if these notes seem trivial and tiresome, take it out of Lloyd; he put me up to it.

A few years before my time at Lancaster & Bros., the store had a large trade in the scientific but dangerous chemical toy called *Eggs of Pharaoh's Serpens*.

The store of Isaac H. Kay where our genial friend Tom Potts was clerk for several years, was located at Eleventh and Arch Streets. Mr. Harry Rittenhouse was a great friend of the firm and often dropped in; the licorice business was young then. Years afterwards when I was chairman of the Library Committee of Kings Co. Pharmaceutical Society, Mr. Rittenhouse, at the suggestion of Professor Maisch, donated to us his annual volumes of the Proceedings A. Ph. A. A steady and notable customer of that old store was old Dr. Geo. B. Wood, who lived a little way up Arch Street. We put up for him often a dozen or more four-ounce bottles of a carbonated draught, about the same as Rhubarb and Soda Mixture, plus a little Lavender Compound, and charged the preparation at the fountain and tied the cork down. The junior partner, Billy Lancaster always did this job.

Professor Parrish's store was located at Eighth and Arch. In my time, Elliott Paxson and Carl Fruh were clerks there and Clemmons Parrish also, who afterward came to Brooklyn. His son Dr. Edward Parrish is practicing medicine there. Both the dental colleges were on opposite corners from our store and we made a variety of tooth powders. Among the friendly medical patrons I recall Dr. John M. Adler, Dr. Edward Schoefield, Dr. Harrison Allen, and one of the earliest women physicians, Dr. Hannah Longshore. Dr. Harrison Allen wrote the handsomest prescriptions I ever saw.

Early in 1871, the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy celebrated its fiftieth anniversary; a feature was an exhibit of implements, books, etc. I recall carrying up as part of our share a copy of the Pharmacopoeia of 1820. One of our class of 1872, was Horatio N. Fraser, who practically created the tablet business. Another was B. T. Fairchild, whom I have for many years regarded as the leading authority on digestive ferments for the English-speaking world. Both of these men are still busy at their appointed tasks. During the academic year 1870-71,

the professors were Robert Bridges (Dean), Edward Parrish and John M. Maisch. All of these men I soon learned to esteem very much, but I soon realized that for the student, who was in earnest, Professor Maisch was his best friend. The summer of 1871 I spent at home, helping in the village store and pegging away at the problems in Roscoe's chemistry and working on my thesis, "The Acids of Tomatoes." The opening of the term 1871-2, if my memory serves me, brought the entry of Professor Remington as assistant to Professor Parrish. During that winter there was installed a beautiful little distillatory and evaporating outfit of polished copper and in the course of several evening lectures, Professor Remington carried on the manufacture of a lot of extract of gentian. I have often wondered what became of that extract.

During the previous winter I had gotten a chum and have him yet. Some of you will remember him, Mr. Joseph Cave. He's English you know. He and I were the pair sometimes called Damon and Pythias by the other boys. Another comrade of the same class and in the same boarding house was John H. Dawson, of Brooklyn, but for many years past in San Francisco and Local Secretary for the A. Ph. A. meeting last year. Like Cave he was red-headed.

In the Spring of '72, soon after graduating, I secured the post of chemist with Benton, Myers and Canfield, of Cleveland, and there William McIntyre found me when he came on for the annual meeting of the American Pharmaceutical Association and put me down as one of the delegates from the Alumni Association to fill a vacancy. At that meeting I learned to know Bedford and Ebert and to improve my fellowship with Remington. During that meeting telegrams arrived announcing the death of Prof. Edward Parrish at Fort Sill, I. T., and of Dr. Henry T. Kiersted, of New York. Prof. Parrish who was one of a Commission named by President Grant to treat with certain Indian tribes was on his way to the place of meeting.

A turn at typhoid fever sent me home from Cleveland and vacated my position. One of our class, Albert C. Curtis, my fellow boarder in Cleveland took me home. He was shot about three years after on a ranch in Wyoming. In June, 1873, I started on the road for French, Richards & Co., of Philadelphia. The next move was to New York on an introduction by Professor Bedford to his successor, Mr. Geo. G. Sands, just opposite the present Hippodrome. It was my privilege one day that summer in response to a line from Prof. Maisch to join him at Frederick Hoffman's store down Sixth Ave. for a chat. During that year, 1874, Henry S. Wellcome came to New York and located at Caswell, Hazard & Co. Later he went on the road for McKesson and Robbins; Wellcome's chief work on the road was to introduce their gelatine coated pills, just then born. Then after a tour of South America, Wellcome and his friend Burroughs, a Wyeth traveler, went to London, and Wellcome's great work in pharmacy since is a proud possession of this Association. He was lately in New York for a day or two, leaving *via* Montreal for Alaska.

In the spring of 1876, I purchased a drug store and in the following September, I captured that Wooster girl I spoke of. I still have both the drug store and the girl. She says if I make any fuss about our fortieth wedding anniversary I will be making her out an old woman.

In that forty years I have had a hand in the "borning" of the King's County

Pharmaceutical Society, the New York State Pharmaceutical Association, the New York Branch of A. Ph. A., and had the great privilege as a representative of King's County Pharmaceutical Association to take part in the making of the National Formulary, first edition, under the guidance of Dr. Charles Rice. Many members of that committee now rest from their labors.

I have done nothing notable but have tried to keep the faith in good pharmacy.

GLYCERIN.

Glycerin was discovered by Scheele in 1789, who called it "the sweet principle of oils." Its value was not recognized for many years, but to-day it is in universal use, not only pharmaceutically as a solvent and preservative, but also for the production of nitroglycerin and explosive compounds. When absorbed by infusorial earth, saw-dust, mica powder or other inert material, nitroglycerin forms the different varieties of dynamite and when combined with gun cotton, it constitutes the explosive known as "blasting gelatin."

The commercial production of glycerin was initiated in this country by Robert Shoemaker, of Robt. Shoemaker and Co., of Philadelphia, in 1846, who obtained it as a by-product in the manufacture of lead plaster; this glycerin, states Dr. S. P. Sadtler (*Jour. Ind. and Eng. Chem.*, December 1916) was exhibited by Prof. William Procter to his class at the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy at the time. Mr. Shoemaker manufactured and marketed glycerin for some years.

As first obtained, glycerin was quite odorous and the late Henry Bower, of Philadelphia (later the Henry Bower Chemical Manufacturing Company), worked out, in 1858-60, a successful method of manufacturing odorless glycerin by purifying the waste liquors obtained in the manufacture of stearin candles, and he marketed it in large quantities.

At the present time, glycerin is made in enormous quantities in a number of American cities, and while its use pharmaceutically is large, its use in the arts is far larger.

Perhaps the largest use of glycerin is for the making of explosive products, such as nitroglycerin, dynamite, etc. The E. I. DuPont de Nemours & Co., of Wilmington, Del., recently state in their catalogue:

"The railroads that span the continent and the Panama Canal that cleaves it were all the products of explosives. The coal that cooks our food, warms our homes and provides power for our factories, railroads, steamships and electric lines is all mined with explosives. This is also true of iron, copper, lead, zinc, silver, gold and other metals. Your modern office building is the child of explosives—dynamite blasted the rock for its deep-seated piers. Dynamite mined the iron ore from which the steel was made. Dynamite quarried the rock of which concrete is formed.

"The farmers of America use almost 25,000,000 pounds of dynamite a year for clearing land, draining swamps, planting trees and breaking impervious sub-soils."

And it is inspiring to pharmacists to know that all this was made possible by the work of a Swedish apothecary and the commercial acumen of a Philadelphia apothecary.

J. W. E.