

RECENT LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE  
PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION.\*BY CARL G. A. HARRING.<sup>1</sup>

It is now a good many years since the bothersome question of a prerequisite law began to make real headway in the councils of our state association and nearly every convention has seen this bone of contention exhumed and re-masticated, although each time it became more evident that the opponents were fighting against the inevitable.

The fact that Massachusetts was practically the only state to allow registration without a college degree was a weighty factor, for the unlimited competition that the druggist has to face was the potent argument against this law.

At the 1929 convention in June a motion was made and carried that our legislative committee be directed to bring in a draft of a prerequisite bill to this year's mid-winter meeting; this was done, the draft was accepted by the meeting, and the committee will present to next year's legislature a bill making a college degree a prerequisite to registration in pharmacy—this to take effect four years from its passage.

There remained, however, the chief argument of the opponents; namely, that it was unjust to add new burdens to the already overburdened druggist as long as he had to fight competition with all kinds of vendors who were allowed to sell, without let or hindrance, nearly every commodity usually sold in drug stores.

While our state has a pharmacy law that excludes the sale of drugs in any but registered drug stores, this law exempts from its provisions all proprietary preparations as well as an extremely generous list of drugs for "household use," thus making it of very little practical value. It was with the idea of rendering some protection to our profession and likewise to further safeguard the public health that I caused our counsel, some five years ago, to prepare a bill to be presented to our legislature—this bill to restrict the sale of proprietary remedies containing potent or poisonous drugs to registered drug stores.

This first bill we were obliged to withdraw before being heard in committee, owing to some technical faults; but four years ago we presented a similar bill.—I think I am justified in saying that our arguments were good, but evidently the committee on Public Health must have thought differently for we were speedily given "leave to withdraw."—We had, however, gotten a line on the arguments of the opposition, which consisted of the Grocers' Association, various supply houses and able counsel representing the patent medicine manufacturers' association. Two years ago we re-introduced the bill but were again given leave to withdraw, not, however, until the committee on Public Health had deliberated for several weeks over their decision.

But the propaganda of our arguments was beginning to bear fruit and this year we had prepared our case in the most careful manner. As one of the chief

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\* Section on Education and Legislation, A. Ph. A., Baltimore meeting, 1930.

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arguments in the past had been that this legislation would cause considerable inconvenience to a great many people living miles from any drug store, we had inserted a proviso that where a community had no drug store within a reasonable distance such medicines might be handled by a general store obtaining a permit from and being subject to an inspection by the Board of Pharmacy. Our legislative committee did yeoman work and when the bill was heard in committee over two hundred druggists from all parts of the state crowded the hearing room and impressed the legislators with the idea that they were united in their demand for this legislation.

Our arguments must have impressed the committee favorably, for the bill was reported out of committee without a dissenting vote and our hopes ran high but, alas, there was a fatal slip between the cup and the lip. Various interests got to work upon the legislators, something that too many of the druggists neglected to do, in spite of the efforts of our legislative committee and, on the presentation in the House, the bill was refused a third reading, although ably presented and argued.

And so we were defeated, but not discouraged. The way in which the druggists responded when called upon to attend the hearing before the committee was the most hopeful augury we have had for ultimate success, but much remains to be done before we reach our goal. My belief that conditions in our Commonwealth are very much the same as in other states is my excuse for presenting this paper at this time.

If the druggist is to obtain recognition of his just demands he must interest himself in local politics. He must make an effort to get in touch with his representatives and, better still, he should get in touch with prospective legislators before election and, if necessary, use his influence in his community for or against these prospectives.

Local organizations have here an opportunity to make their influence felt, for nothing impresses a politician like the argument of numbers, and do not forget that every member of your family is a voter nowadays. The story of legislative activity in our state would be incomplete without mention of what looks like a logical sequence of this year's legislative efforts; for the week following the defeat of our bill Governor Allen sent a message to the legislature asking for a recess commission to consider the abuse of habit-forming and dangerous coal tar preparations. There is every reason to believe that this commission will be appointed and in an interview with the Governor I received assurance that there will be at least one practical druggist appointed on this committee, which may turn out to be of considerable importance to pharmacy in our state.

Let me say in conclusion that my experience in legislative activities during the past six years has convinced me that we may aspire to anything that is just and reasonable, provided we will organize and work. It would seem that since pharmacists are compelled to assume ever-increasing burdens in the way of taxation, regulations, educational demands, *et cetera*, they should also benefit by, if not a corresponding, at least a small amount of compensatory legislation. I have faith to believe that organized pharmacy might bring about legislation that will restrict the sale of drugs to drug stores. If this cannot be done it were far better that the commercial side of pharmacy be thrown wide open, and that phar-

macy as a science or profession be left to those who can afford to adopt it as an interesting pastime.

#### ABSTRACT OF DISCUSSION.

**Charles T. Heller** said that the time to start work on proposed legislation is to go to the candidates before they are elected and let them know of contemplated legislation, or of opposition to proposed legislation.

**Robert P. Fischelis** said that in New Jersey they had sent out letters prior to election, but not all of the candidates for the Legislature, supported by the pharmacists, were elected.

**A. L. I. Winne** said that in Virginia the Secretary spends most of his time at the capitol during legislative sessions. That he had worked with legislators so long that they have confidence in him and, as a result, there is a better chance for securing the desired results. He also stated that when important legislation is up, pharmacists are asked to share in the work by seeing their representatives on the subject under consideration.

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### FLUECKIGERIANA.\*†

BY EDWARD KREMERS.

#### V. FLUECKIGER LETTERS TO POWER 1882-1890.

Under this caption the writer, in 1924, published several letters written by Professor F. A. Flueckiger to Dr. Frederick Hoffmann between the years of 1891 and 1894. The immediate object had been to glean additional information about the friendship existing between Professor Flueckiger and Dr. E. R. Squibb as a contribution to the life and work of the latter. Unfortunately, Flueckiger's letters to Squibb have been destroyed by fire and, whereas Squibb's letters to Flueckiger are said to have been deposited in the archives of the Pharmaceutical Institute at Strassburg, all efforts to locate them have failed thus far.<sup>1</sup>

The letters to Hoffmann referred to culminate in information concerning Flueckiger's visit to this country as the guest of Squibb in 1894. Having retired from the Strassburg faculty, Flueckiger had returned to Bern to devote the remaining years of his life to the writing of a History of Drugs. No sooner had he settled down to this task when he realized the importance of additional knowledge about American medicinal plants. So, when Dr. Squibb renewed his invitation, Prof. Flueckiger accepted it. Recently, we were supplied with a bird's eye view of this trip by extracts from the diary of Miss Augusta Flueckiger, now the wife of Dr. Oesterle, who, in 1894, had accompanied her father to this country.<sup>2</sup> This sketchy account has been supplemented by letters written by Flueckiger himself, while in this country, to his friend and associate, Tschirch,<sup>3</sup> in Bern; also by an

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† Previous contributions under this general caption have appeared in the following order:

I. Briefe Flueckigers and Hoffmann, *N. Y. Apt. Ztg.*, 45 (1924), 110 and 122.

II. Aus dem Tagebuch Augusta Flueckigers, *Ibid.*, 49 (1928), 57.

III. Flueckigers Amerika Briefe an Tschirch, *do.*, 142 and 155; 50 (1929), 1 and 15.

IV. Lloyd's conference with Flueckiger in New York, *Jour. A. Ph. A.*, 19 (1930), 151.

<sup>1</sup> See correspondence in Flueckiger folder with Dr. Paul Dorveaux, Dr. Henri Werner, Prof. Fernand Jadin, Prof. Wolfram, Frau Dr. Oesterle.

<sup>2</sup> See "Flueckigeriana," II.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, III.