

## LOOKING BACKWARD—THINKING FORWARD.

LET him who today in pharmacy feels that pharmacy offers no pronounced opportunity for achievement, consider the problems that confronted his American predecessors, and then contemplate the prodigious outcome accomplished in many directions, in the face of resistance and discouragements unspeakable. Possibly an attempt to balance the opportunities of the future can be no better accomplished than by means of a preliminary synopsis of the records of a few of our pioneer pharmaceutical establishments.<sup>1</sup> Though in the face of so many who must for want of space remain unmentioned, it may be risky to include the names of persons yet living, the writer may be privileged, as recollection moves his pen, to include the names of one or two yet with us, closely connected with those who have passed away.

First among these pioneers in pharmacy may be mentioned Dr. Edward R. Squibb, the talented pharmacist-physician, who in his attempt to reconcile discordant conditions in the ethics of pharmacy and medicine, as applied to business, in the early annals of American pharmaceutical evolution, met with disappointments and disasters innumerable, but established a reputation for service unquestionable. His introduction to the pharmaceutical world was as Assistant Director of the Government Laboratory, New York City, 1855. When, after opening a business for himself, came the fire that destroyed his modest pharmaceutical establishment, scattered his moderate fortune and burned him so badly as nearly to destroy his life, he remained undiscouraged, and on his recovery turned his face to the future. With the encouragement of his admiring professional friends he built for himself a new establishment, in the conduct of which he endeavored to unite and affiliate the scientific, professional and commercial, in medicine and pharmacy. He established himself in the confidence of a host of pharmacist friends, and wrote his name, imperishably, in the annals of American pharmacy. For three-quarters of a century has the house of Edward R. Squibb and Company enjoyed the unqualified confidence of American physicians and apothecaries; to-day that establishment is immeasurably greater than its founder could ever have anticipated.

As a co-laborer in America's early records, especially as connected with American materia medica, rises to view the founder of the William S. Merrell Chemical Company, Cincinnati. Well does this writer remember him. Modest

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<sup>1</sup> The incentive to pass beyond this list is almost irresistible, especially in connection with the great successes of the last quarter of a century. Every city, every section of the country, every phase of connected activity, bids for recognition. Indeed, these claims are, in some directions, more forcible than many of those to whom this text restricts the writer. To this it may be added that these pages are written "off hand," from memory only; no attempt has been made by anyone at verification or review. Faults, both of omission and commission, must be apparent, and for these the author is wholly to blame.

and unassuming to a degree, cordial to everyone, earnest in his efforts, the beginnings of which were in a circumscribed retail pharmacy that occupied a small corner-room in the building where these lines are now being written. The business, much expanded, was continued by his son, the late George S. Merrell, whose son, Charles G. Merrell is, with enlarged opportunities, fully maintaining the reputation of the family founder. Closely associated with the founder in companionship was Dr. T. L. A. Greve, his able clerk assistant, whom no incentive could lure from prescription life. To these two pioneers, both concerned in American plant pharmacy, we owe a debt of gratitude,—William S. Merrell, the genial, charming manufacturer, and Dr. Greve, the exceptionally gifted scientist-apothecary.

Co-laboring pioneers in the field of American plant pharmacy were the Tildens of New Lebanon, N. Y. (H. A. Tilden, founder), who conducted the first great Eastern laboratory devoted mainly to medicinal plant preparations. In connection with this was established perhaps the most extensive of all American medicinal plant gardens, past or present, and in the Tilden laboratory was first established and applied, vacuum apparatus, devoted to medicinal plant manipulations on a large scale. With the Tildens were associated the Shakers, of Lebanon, N. Y. Hand in hand did they work, their efforts uniting to the upbuilding and progress of the great Tilden establishment, described editorially by Professor Wm. Procter in the *American Journal of Pharmacy*, 1855, as an industry exhibiting wonderful pharmaceutical activity.

Contemporary with the Tildens was Frederick Stearns, of Detroit, one of the most enthusiastic contributors to botanical medicinal literature connected with early American pharmacy. His treatise on the Medicinal Plants of Michigan stands to-day as authority in the record of the American Pharmaceutical Association, to which his early contributions were voluminous, and of exceptional value. The establishment of Frederick Stearns and Company, founded by him, covers one of the choice squares of Detroit, and stands as a tribute alike to the foresight of the founder and the energy of his son and successors.

Well does this writer recall when, at the close of the Civil War, Col. Eli Lilly came from Lexington, Kentucky, to the young and growing city of Indianapolis, where, with Johnson, he engaged in the pharmaceutical efforts from which (after separation from the partner) grew the world-renowned house of Eli Lilly and Company. The founder of this exemplary establishment was not in lucrative circumstances. With his own hands he made the preparations bearing his label, which he bottled and packed himself, marking and shipping them personally, content and happy in the opportunity of so doing. We believe that all will now agree that the name of Lilly stands second to none other, past or present, connected with pharmaceutical activity. To this writer, the companionship of this family, dating

back to the pharmacist founder and extending to his successors, children and grandchildren, appeals as among his most cherished recollections.

Next uprises the face of Mr. Parke, of Detroit, who established what was destined to become the world renowned house of Parke, Davis and Company. To one of the first Cincinnati "Expositions," Mr. Parke brought personally, from Detroit, a modest assortment of pharmaceutical preparations, and himself attended to setting up and caring for the display. Came into the business soon thereafter, as a partner, George S. Davis, who united with the efforts of Mr. Parke, his personal magnetism and most remarkable business management. Most conspicuous and aggressive was he of all men to that date concerned in the manufacture of American pharmaceutical preparations. Indeed, in this writer's opinion, the systematic processes of George S. Davis instituted a new phase in the then developing pharmaceutical business processes of all American manufacturers. A phenomenal man was he, whose innovations in manufacturing pharmacy marked an epoch that this writer believes should be, and will be, conceded by everyone. The scholarly Professor Ryan and his corps of able co-laborers, on whose shoulders has fallen the responsibility of the great Parke, Davis establishment, will surely recognize that this tribute is not overdrawn.

Come now to view the faces of "Charlie and Louis" Dohme, of Baltimore. No fairer business men ever lived, no more charming companions, than the "Dohmes," and this applies also to their successor, A. R. L. Dohme, son of Charles, who now conducts the establishment, and is so fortunate in his exceptionally systematic, scientific education. No one could have foreseen, when this writer first visited the retail "apothecary shop" of "Sharp and Dohme," that within a very moderate time, as history counts time, preparations bearing their label, and valued by physicians throughout the length and breadth of the land, would be in every pharmacy in America.

In this connection one cannot neglect to mention the name of Professor Charles Caspari, Jr., the talented co-laborer with and adviser of the Dohmes, to whom the side of professional pharmacy, inherited from his no less talented father, appealed, rather than did manufacturing expansion. Scientific was he to the extreme. His son, Charles E. Caspari, a scientific chemist, now devotes his efforts to the interests of the best known chemical establishment of the Middle West, Mallinckrodt and Company, of St. Louis, where he maintains to a high degree the reputation of his forbears.

Possibly no manufacturing pharmacist of the early days in the Middle West was more endeared to his wide circle of admiring friends than was Harlow M. Merrell, nephew of William S. Merrell, with whom he was first associated, and whose successor he was in the Cincinnati business location. Indifferent to the business phases that appealed to many others, Harlow M. Merrell did well his

work as an apothecary, expanding therefrom into a specialty business, embracing the manufacture of preparations derived chiefly from America's medicinal plants. No man concerned in pharmacy had a more delightful personality than the affable, cultured and unconventional Harlow M. Merrell, the early partner of the writer of these lines. Their establishment, much expanded, still stands on the old corner, which since 1845 has been occupied as a pharmacy.

Phenomenal was the record of the brothers, W. J. M. and O. P. F. Gordon, in Cincinnati. Coming from Philadelphia in the early part of the last century, they opened a small apothecary shop on the corner of "Western Row" (now Central Avenue) and Eighth Street. Expanding into a "Physicians' Supply House," but yet retaining an increasing prescription business, they ultimately became "Wholesale Druggists" as well. Situated near the Eclectic Medical Institute, they naturally made a specialty of American botanicals. Neighbors to the soap and candle factory of Procter and Gamble, who ran their "sweet water" into the canal as a waste product, Gordon (W. J. M.) saw his opportunity, caught the "sweet water" daily in a box wagon, and began the manufacture of glycerin, then just coming into prominence as a commercial substance. A large factory became necessary for this industry, but it was not until many years afterward that Procter and Gamble, or other Cincinnati soap manufacturers, comprehended their opportunities in this direction. The Gordon brothers were not only active business men, but were excellent citizens, of decidedly attractive personality, as this writer, who was to them apprenticed (1863), can attest.

No article concerning early American pharmaceutical activities on a large scale would be complete without the name of George J. Seabury, veteran maker of medicinal plasters, of the firm of "Seabury and Johnson." Of all the members of the American Pharmaceutical Association, Seabury was the most cosmopolitan "mixer." No meeting of the Association was considered a success without the presence of the versatile George Seabury, who always came, accompanied by his two daughters, whom every one admired, from their very childhood. Very like George S. Davis in many respects, Seabury possessed one decided advantage over Davis, in that the latter seldom, if ever, took any personal part in pharmacists' gatherings, while Seabury was "always in evidence," making many friends, as well as a few antagonists. He took an active part in New York City politics, and was also an expert fisherman, writing a series of verses on the Black Bass, which, illustrated, he printed privately, presenting copies to his circle of friends. Finally came the rearrangement of the firm of Seabury and Johnson, the brothers Johnson retiring from the business to found the firm of "Johnson and Johnson," while the time-honored name of the old firm was retained by Mr. Seabury.

Half a century ago, B. F. Kilmer was an apothecary-apprentice, who passed successively from errand boy and clerk in a small "pharmacy" to the management

of one of the greatest of America's manufacturing pharmaceutical establishments, Johnson & Johnson, probably the most prodigious makers of sanitary products, such as absorbent cotton and medicated plasters, that the world has ever known. Like all others mentioned in this article, "Kilmer" is affable, generous, a delightful companion, and self-sacrificing to a degree. He keeps in touch with all the details of the huge establishment that is his charge, and is at home in its every department, from the chemical laboratory to the distribution of the products. His personal friendship is much cherished by the writer of these lines.

Before sugar-coated pills were made in America, at least before they were offered to the trade (so far as this writer is informed), came from France a line of cumbersome sugar-coated products labelled *Drages*. These were oval, and nearly as large as the first joint of the little finger, reminding one of the well known confections, "sugared almonds." They helped to make an opportunity for pharmacists, in which Wm. R. Warner, an apothecary of Philadelphia, took the initiative. Within a short time "Warner's Pills" were a standard, and were soon found in every drug store in America. His monopoly, however, did not long continue. Candy makers everywhere were expert sugar coaters. Little other apparatus was required for the product. But Mr. Warner, by his energy at the very start, founded a business that became national, and that has since expanded beyond anything its originator could possibly have anticipated. The writer remembers with pleasure many visits between Mr. Warner and himself, which occurred frequently at the meetings of the American Pharmaceutical Association.

Almost simultaneously with the sugar-coated pills, came the American "Elixir" crusade, the pioneer specimen having been introduced, 1839, under the label, "Sims' Cordial Elixir of Calisaya." This was an aromatized cordial, conspicuous for its lack of the bitterness of calisaya. It opened the "Elixir" door, and special advantage of the opportunity was taken by the apothecary firm, John Wyeth & Co., Philadelphia. The energetic manner in which their preparations were advertised and distributed made "Wyeth's Elixirs" as well known as were the "Fluid Extracts" of Burrough Brothers and Thayer, the pharmaceutical preparations and chemical apparatus of Bullock and Crenshaw, Philadelphia, the pressed herbs of B. O and G. C. Wilson, of Boston, or the "Resinoids" and "Concentrations" of Keith.

Among the wisest of manufacturing pharmacists, in our opinion, was Mr. C. B. Allaire, of Peoria, Illinois; wisest, because when came the opportunity, before he was either confronted with the cares of old age or weighted with an overgrown business, Mr. Allaire sold out his interest in the thriving business of Allaire, Woodward & Company, and retired to a life of serviceable ease in San Antonio, where mental activity was stimulated by helpful literature and intelligently applied efforts in economic research and its practical application. The establish-

ment he founded in Peoria, and which he so ably guided on the way to success, made a specialty at an early date of American botanic drugs, both pressed and powdered, and in this line, as well as in general pharmaceutical directions, it has maintained its leadership to the present day. Much pleasure would Mr. Allaire give to the membership of the American Pharmaceutical Association were he to attend another meeting.

Comes now to mind the name of another man, living to-day, founder and conductor of an exceptionally prosperous pharmaceutical establishment, Professor Edgar L. Patch, of Boston. A "professional" pharmacist was he, teacher in the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. A partner in the firm of prescription apothecaries, Canning and Patch, he disproved the often made assertion, "A professional man is not a business man." (The same may also be said of Professor Frank Ryan, Business Manager of Parke, Davis & Company.) The preparations of the expanding Patch establishment stand second to none others, and the confidence of all who know him is extended to its exceptionally qualified founder, Professor Edgar L. Patch.

But, I despair. This fragmentary record cannot be made complete; the subject expands, hopelessly, as the words are being penned under recollection's touch. The aim, however, is not to make a complete record, either in number or as regards detail activities, but only to present the names of a sufficient number of American pharmaceutical manufacturing establishments, with reference to beginnings, to serve as an object lesson in connection with the title of this article. Many essential features, indeed very vital ones, must be neglected, in directions that would appeal to others than the writer. Enough has been said to answer the purpose of this paper.

If *success in business* be accepted as a feature of first importance, one must be indeed a pessimist or a pronounced cynic, to assert that pharmacy of the recent American past, as well as of the active present, offers no recognition to its devotees. Yet, one may say, "All this is true, but what of the thousands unmentioned?"

J. U. L.

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