

Book Reviews

English pharmaceutical historians cannot but be jealous that German archives can produce a document dating back to 1437, the year in which Duke Adolf asked Apotheker Meister Johan Vos to settle in Cleves and there conduct a good pharmacy. Full details of the agreement between the two men are given, even to the point that Vos would wear the Duke's livery. Equally fascinating are the uses to which the land registers and mortgage books of the eighteenth century could be put. Maps have been drawn of the towns of Wesel, Cleves, and Duisburg, showing where each pharmacy was positioned and the changes that took place. One can even learn that Apotheker Georg Martin Wittfeld of Orsay took his citizen's oath on 24 October 1768, lived with his family in house No. 130, had a maid, and was joined by a partner in 1782.

Cornelia Sonntag qualified as a pharmacist in June 1979 from the university of Bonn and then proceeded to the Institute for the History of Pharmacy at Marburg University. It is doubtful if our own young pharmacists with leanings towards research in pharmaceutical history would receive an equal degree of encouragement.

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KURT HOFIUS, *Rezeptjournale der Ratsapotheke Lehrte von 1899 und 1930*, (Veröffentlichungen aus dem Pharmaziegeschichtlichen Seminar der Technischen Universität Braunschweig, vol. 24), Stuttgart, Deutscher Apotheker Verlag, 1982, 8vo, pp. x, 65, DM. 10.00 (paperback).

Having earlier studied the prescription records of the Minoritenkloster in Duisburg for the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Hofius has continued his research by carefully analysing the entries in the prescription books of the *Ratsapotheke* in Lehrte for 1899 and 1930. Commencing with a brief history of the *Ratsapotheke*, the author draws attention to the marked difference between the number of drugs and preparations mentioned in contemporary pharmacopoeias and those actually used in daily practice. Fortunately, as the physicians initially recorded their requirements for their patients in the daybook of the *Ratsapotheke* and, later, prescriptions were also so recorded, the daybook provides a true record of the daily practice of pharmacy.

In this account the drugs and preparations have, for convenience, been classified according to the system adopted by Schneider (1978), a system separating simple and compound drugs into two groups which are further sub-divided according to origin, e.g. plant, animal, pharmaceutical processing, chemical manufacture, etc. From the many resultant tables presented in the book, the author has drawn interesting conclusions concerning the changing patterns of drug usage, e.g. the decline in the employment of animal and, later, plant products, the rise in the importance of organic chemical pharmaceuticals, etc. In addition, the author discusses in some detail the preparations produced by the early pharmaceutical industry, e.g. antipyretics, antirheumatics, skin preparations, and tannin-containing preparations, as well as reference to the later importance of aspirin and phenacetin. Narcotic drug usage is also considered and mention made of drug misuse.

To anyone interested in the tremendous changes in medical/pharmaceutical practice in the past 250 years, this detailed study offers valuable scientific and statistical evidence and ideas for future work.

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IRIS RENNER, *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Pharmakognosie*, Stuttgart, Deutscher Apotheker Verlag, 1982, 8vo, pp. 377, [no price stated].

Pharmacognosy owes its origins to the study of medicinal plants as part of the medical curriculum and the need for specialists in the art of recognition and standardization of such plants. The Bavarian Ludwig-Maximilian University was rooted in Ingolstadt, transferring to Landshut in 1800 and to Munich in 1826. In the historical account presented by Iris Renner, the

Book Reviews

development of pharmacognosy is revealed as a struggle between disciplines and outstanding scholars.

Botany and materia medica appeared early as subjects in the syllabuses of the medical faculty. By 1810, Schultes had merged disciplines to produce medical-pharmaceutical botany and, after the move to Munich, von Martius promoted pharmacognosy, the studies moving increasingly from a medical to a pharmaceutical science, although still heavily dependent on botany. Von Goebel (c. 1896), instituting pharmacognosy with practical exercises, consolidated the discipline to the disadvantage of botany. Distinct chemical and botanical aspects emerged. The work of the Buchners (father and son), Hilger, and Bleyer laid the chemical foundations; although J. A. Buchner considered chemical pharmacognosy as a part of pharmaceutical chemistry. Nevertheless, it was by exploitation of such chemical foundations that Schlemmer and Hörhammer were later to build the school of pharmacognosy. Schlemmer expounded pharmacognosy as the scientific discipline embracing the cultivation, preparation, commerce, chemical and microscopical analysis, and standardization of medicinal plants and their products. The work, which Renner has summarized effectively, of Schlemmer on ergot, bloodroot, and peppermint, of Hörhammer on flavone glycosides and later with Wagner on citrus fruits and phosphatides, justified the establishment of the professorship of pharmacognosy in 1960 within the Institut für Pharmazeutische Arzneimittellehre (Pharmakognosie).

Renner's book presents a carefully compiled, well-annotated and capably presented account of the events, environments, and personalities involved in the evolution of the pharmacognosy school. Detailed appendices provide a mine of information on timetables, lecture subjects, typical examination questions, dissertations, biographical details of outstanding staff members, and staff publications.

To British pharmacists and others interested in medicinal plants, who are puzzled by developments in herbal medicine and in schools of pharmacy in Britain, this story of persistence and adaptability coupled with academic excellence makes heartwarming reading.

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JOACHIM TELLE (editor), *Pharmazie und der gemeine Mann. Hausarznei und Apotheke in deutschen Schriften der frühen Neuzeit*, (catalogue of an exhibition at the Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, August 1982 to March 1983), Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August, 1982, 4to, pp. 144, illus., DM. 20.00 (paperback).

The Herzog August Library was founded by Duke August, the Younger of Brunswick, who, from 1598 to 1666, collected manuscripts and books on theological and secular subjects, bibles, maps, and music. The volumes, bound in white vellum, their spines often lettered by himself, are assembled in the magnificent Augusta hall of the library. A large collection of "Nutzbücher" or practical textbooks, chiefly on medicine and related subjects, were added during the eighteenth century. Many of these were included in the recent exhibition. In the foreword to the catalogue, the present librarian, Professor Paul Raabe, records two conferences that were held during, and within the frame of reference of the exhibition.

Five articles instruct professional and lay readers on the essential aspects of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century pharmacy – the production of drugs in chemist's shop and domestic kitchen, the thought-system underlying the choice and application of plant, animal, and mineral substances, and, most important, the social and professional problems involving the relatively small number of medical authors who took the risk of writing in the vernacular, knowing that this controversial step was the only means by which medical advice and prescription could reach the understanding of the literate middle class (the "gemeine" or common, man and woman), most of whom were left outside the narrow circle of privileged members of town and country government and higher clergy who were actually paying for and enjoying treatment by trained doctors and surgeons. This meant that by far the largest mass of the population, the illiterate poor, were left without treatment or advice by professional medical men. One should, however,