

### *News, Notes and Queries*

all the library's potentialities for study and research, a well-known botanist, Professor George H. M. Lawrence, formerly Director of the L. H. Bailey Hortorium at Cornell University, has been appointed its first Director.

A sumptuous catalogue of the collection is already in course of publication, but it is privately printed and distributed and is not for sale. The first volume describing books from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries and compiled by Jane Quinby, was published in 1958. Some idea of its quality may be gathered from the fact that it is prefaced by the following important articles:

'Botany from A.D. 840 to 1700', by Harold W. Rickett.

'Medical aspects of early botanical books', by John F. Fulton.

'The dawn-time of modern husbandry', by Paul Bigelow Sears.

'The illustration of early botanical books', by Wilfrid Blunt.

Although the work is called a 'catalogue' it goes far beyond the scope of such a work, the descriptions of books being completely bibliographical and illustrated by twenty-five plates. The second volume covers the period 1701-1800 and was compiled by Allan Stevenson, being issued in two parts in 1961. Once again the introductory articles, occupying Part I, are of a high calibre; they are:

'Eighteenth-century botanical prints in colour', by Gordon Dunthorne.

'Gardening books of the eighteenth century', by John S. L. Gilmour.

'Botanical gardens and botanical literature in the eighteenth century', by William T. Stearn.

'A bibliographical method for the description of botanical books', by Allan Stevenson.

The substantial monograph on botanical gardens by Dr. Stearn (of our own Natural History Museum at South Kensington) will become an important reference work for those investigating medicine or pharmacy in the period.

The catalogue will probably be completed in six volumes and will, as soon as its riches are appreciated, be welcomed everywhere as one of the great contributions of our time towards the history of botany, medicine, and the natural sciences. A copy has been presented to the Wellcome Historical Medical Library, where it may be consulted and studied.

F. N. L. POYNTER

### THE HUNTERIAN MUSEUM

Letter to the Editor from Sir Charles Dodds, M.V.O., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.,  
Harveian Librarian, Royal College of Physicians.\*

12 April 1962

Dear Sir,

During the past few years and more particularly during the past few months, it has been stated on more than one occasion that the Hunterian Museum was first offered to the Royal College of Physicians who declined it. This statement was made in a review of Sir Reginald Watson-Jones's Hunterian Oration which appeared in the last issue of *Medical History*. Sir Reginald traces the story back to Palmer's edition of the works of Hunter, vol. 1, pp. 142-3.

\* Since this letter was received Sir Charles Dodds has been elected President of the Royal College of Physicians.

## *Society Report*

Since the *Annals* of the College contain no record of an approach having been made to the College for this purpose, and since Palmer may have been relying on hearsay, I am wondering what foundation there is in fact for this story.

I should be interested to hear from any of your readers if they have any other evidence to produce in its support.

Yours faithfully,  
E. C. DODDS

### DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON'S ACCOUNT OF A SCHIZOPHRENIC ILLNESS IN *RASSELAS*: A POSTSCRIPT

As further proof of Samuel Johnson's influence on nineteenth-century psychiatry (*Med. Hist.*, 1962, 6, 162–8) chapter thirteen of Oliver Wendell Holmes's *A Mortal Antipathy* (1885) deserves attention. The physician Dr. Butts, who is interested equally in the mind and the body, reads a paper for the improvement of all young people who are thinking of pursuing the study of medicine. In this paper he recommends *Rasselas* to his audience and cites a lengthy passage from the astronomer episode. The subject is introduced thus:

But if you ask me what reading I would commend to the medical student of a philosophical habit of mind, you may be surprised to hear me say it would be certain passages in *Rasselas*. They are the ones where the astronomer gives an account to Imlac of his management of the elements. . . . Let me read you a few sentences from this story. . . .

Begin your medical studies, then, by reading the fortieth and the following four chapters of *Rasselas*. Your first lesson will teach you modesty and caution in the pursuit of the most deceptive of all practical branches of knowledge. Faith will come later. . . .

KATHLEEN M. GRANGE

## *Society Report*

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### FACULTY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE AND PHARMACY

THE Faculty's Third Annual Report was presented to the Annual General Meeting held at Apothecaries' Hall on Wednesday, 18 April 1962. Dr. W. S. C. Copeman, the Chairman, said that it was a record of gratifying progress, with increasing membership, a number of successful meetings, and an extension of the Faculty's influence in the medical schools. Enrolments for the Second British Congress on the History of Medicine and Pharmacy held in September 1961 showed a fifty per cent increase on those for the first congress. The congress theme—Chemistry in the Service of Medicine—had stimulated a number of thoughtful and informative papers from the distinguished contributors and these would shortly be available in volume form. The Congress Dinner given at Apothecaries' Hall had been graced by the presence of the President of The Royal Society, Sir Howard Florey, as guest of honour, and Sir Alexander Todd (now Lord Todd), the President of The Chemical Society (which