

WILLIAM LEWIS.*

BY EDWARD KREMERS.

While editing the *Library of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy*, a catalog published in 1829, the writer had occasion to comment on an item: *Lewis's Chemistry (1746)*. The item does not reveal the exact title of the book, but fortunately the date admits of its identification with an item in Bolton's *A Select Bibliography of Chemistry, 1492-1892*.¹ The catalog also contains an item *Lewis's Materia Medica*, 2 vols. with which the writer has been acquainted these many years. However, he did not know whether the name Lewis represented one author or two authors. Bolton records in Section V of his *Bibliography*, an E. R. Lewis as author of two chemical treatises, the one published in 1876, the other in 1879. Hence this name could not come under consideration. He also records a treatise by Polydore Lewis published in London in 1790, as well as Wm. Lewis who published *A Course of Practical Chemistry* in London in 1746, as well as several other treatises. Inasmuch as the copy of Lewis's *Dispensatory* available in the University Library does not contain the author's name, hence initials, on the title page, the writer was at a loss to know whether the two Lewis were identical or two distinct persons.

Naturally, he first consulted Wootton's *Chronicles of Pharmacy* as the text of an Englishman, only to find that the name Lewis did not even occur in the index. Next he turned to LaWall's *Four Thousand Years* but again he did not find the name in the index. Thinking that a reference to him might be found under "*Dispensatory*," he looked once more but again was disappointed. So he turned to his old standby Schelenz, *Geschichte der Pharmazie* and there, as one of the numerous representatives of the 18th century, he found the following item:

"William Lewis ausser einem *Course of Practical Chemistry*, London, 1746, ein *New Dispensatory containing the Theory and Practice of Pharmacy*, London 1753, 1765, und ins Deutsche uebersetzt, Hamburg 1768."²

Under the "Education of Prospective Apothecaries," Schelenz enumerates among the textbooks Lewis' *Neuem Engl. Laborator*.³ If the first item points to the identity of the author of Lewis' *Chemistry* of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy with that of the author of Lewis' *Materia Medica*, here we have another item that rouses our curiosity as to the author. Unfortunately, Bolton throws no light on this aspect of our subject.

Frederking does not list the name Lewis in the index although this author's *Grundzuege der Geschichte der Pharmacie* is little more than a catalog of names of men associated with our calling.

Phillippe-Ludwig⁴ record a Mariwether Lewis and a Will. Lewis in the index. On page 280 we find a reference to the French translation of 1803 of the latter's *Neues Dispensatorium*. On page 346 they list the name of W. Lewis among the representatives of the 18th century. On page 588 they record the information copied by

* Section on Historical Pharmacy, A. P. H. A., Miami meeting, 1931.

¹ *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections*, No. 850, Washington, 1893.

² Schelenz, *Geschichte der Pharmazie*, page 566.

³ *Ibid.*, page 592.

⁴ *Geschichte der Apotheker*, 1855.

Schelenz with the omission of the preposition "of." On page 693 Lewis is mentioned with others as contributing some of the secrets of metallurgy. Mariwether Lewis, we learn (page 859) was a botanist who collected in this country in 1804.

C. J. S. Thompson¹ refers to Lewis' *New Dispensatory* containing commentaries on the London and Edinburgh Pharmacopœias.

As a last resort, the writer turned to Bell and Redwood.² The index has an item "Lewis, Rev. Dr., *Dispensatory*, 30." Looking up the reference, we find: "The first Edinburgh Pharmacopœia was published in 1699.... Four years afterward, Dr. Lewis published an English translation, under the title of *The New Dispensatory*. This work contained much additional information and was attended with great success...."

The writer has frequently been asked to write a History of Pharmacy. He has endeavored these many years to make contributions toward a history of pharmacy, but how a history of our calling can be written satisfactorily when we have no foundation upon which to build has always perplexed him. Biography may be considered as constituting the A, B, C of history, but when we do not know our alphabet, it is difficult to see how we should spell our words, construct phrases and sentences, let alone paragraphs. To write about historical subjects in pharmacy has tempted many a person and some have written with considerable success, but a history of pharmacy deserving the name has not yet been written by any one, though attempts in this direction have been made.

If the dearth of information in our so-called histories of pharmacy is provoking, the title "Rev." in the index of Bell and Redwood naturally is provocative of curiosity. Since Lewis made no experimental contributions to chemistry, we are not surprised that his name is not mentioned in the histories of chemistry, though, naturally, Bolton lists his books in the *Select Bibliography of Chemistry*. Fortunately, however, Lewis, as a writer, was a man of sufficient importance to receive consideration in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Lewis, William (1714-1781), chemist, son of John Lewis of London, was born in 1714. He matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford, on 17 March 1730-1, graduated B.A. in 1734, and proceeded M.A. 1737, M.B. 1741, M.D. 1745. At the opening of the Radcliffe Library in 1749 Lewis delivered the oration. He practiced as a physician, and in 1745 was living in Dover Street, London, but shortly afterward removed to Kingston-upon-Thames. On 31 Oct. 1745 he was admitted F. R. S.; he died on 21 Jan., 1781. Lewis was eminent for his writings on the Pharmacopœia. His chief works were: (1) *A Course of Practical Chemistry*, London, 1746, 8 vo. (2) *Pharmacopœia Edinburgensis*, London, 1748, 8 vo. (3) *The New Dispensatory*, London, 1753, 8 vo., Edinburgh, 1781, 1791. (4) *Experimental History of the Materia Medica*, London, 1761, 4 vo.; 2nd edit. 1768; 3rd edit. by J. Aiken, 1784; German translation, 1771. (5) *Commercium Philosophico-Technicum*, London, 1736, to 46. He also published translations of Caspar Neuman's chemical works in 1759, and (posthumously) of Hoffman's *System of the Practice of Medicine*, 1783. Two papers by him on platinum appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1754 and 1757, respectively. In 1767 the Society for the Improvement of Arts, Manufactures, etc., of which he was one of the founders, awarded him a gold medal for an essay upon *Potashes*.

(Nichols' *Lit. Anecd.* IX, 764; Foster's *Alumni Oxon.* 1715-1886; *Georgian Era*, iii, 484; Thomson's *Hist. Royal Soc.*; Watt's *Bibl. Brit.*)

¹ *The Mystery and Art of the Apothecary*, page 150.

² Jacob Bell and Theophilus Redwood, *Historical Sketch of the Progress of Pharmacy in Great Britain*.

From the bibliographic account which follows, it will become apparent that Lewis was not only a prolific writer but that his literary productions met with favor among the scientific reading public, several of his treatises having been translated into foreign languages. He himself was the translator of several books by German scientists written originally one in Latin and the other in German. Even his Radcliffe oration, delivered and published in Latin, was printed a second time.

The arrangement is chronological in accordance with the dates of the first editions.

A Course of Practical Chemistry. In which are contained all the operations described in Wilson's "Complete Course of Chemistry," with many new and several uncommon processes. To each article is given the chemical history, and to most, an account of the quantities of oils, salts, spirits yielded in distillation, etc., from Lemery, Hoffman, the French Memoirs, Philosophical Transactions and from the Author's own experience. London, 1746, pp. (xliii)—432, 8 vo. Plates.

Bolton, *Select Bibliography*, Part V.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.: 10 p.l., 432, pp., 21 l., 7 pl., 8° London, J. Nourse, 1746.

Br. Mus. Cat.

A copy of this book was contained in the Library of the Mass. Coll. Pharm. at the time the catalog thereof was printed in 1829.

Medical essays and observations, published by a society in Edinburgh, in six volumes, abridged and disposed under general heads in two volumes. 2 v. 508, 512 pp., 14 l. 8°. London, C. Hitch & T. Astley, 1746.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.

The Pharmacopœia of the Royal College of Physicians at Edinburgh. Faithfully translated from the Fourth Edition. With useful Notes on the Materia Medica and Practical Observations on the Preparations, both Simple and Compound. To which are added The Prescriptions, as well Extemporaneous as Official, in Use at the Royal Hospital. By W. Lewis, M.B., F.R.S., London: Printed for John Nourse, at the Lamb, opposite Katherine-street in the Strand. MDCCXLVIII. 8 vo., pp. XIV, 336. Appendix. The Dispensatory for the Use of the Poor, in the Royal Hospital at Edinburgh, pp. 337 to 362. Index, pp. 37.

Libr. Univ. Wisc. The title page reveals the signature of Ralph Assheton, 1758, also that of Col. Daniel Udree. On the inside of cover the book plate of Ralph Assheton, M.D., of Philadelphia. On the last page an advertisement of Lewis' *A Course of Practical Chemistry*.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr. under Royal: 7 p.l., 362 pp., 19 l., 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

4th ed. by John Rotheram 1794 in Libr. Univ. of Wisc.

Lewis, (William) M.D. Oratio in Theatro Sheldoniano habita Idibus Aprilis, MDCC.XLIX. die dedicationis Bibliothecae Radclivianæ. Oxonii, 1749.4°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Editio secunda. Oxonia, 1749.4°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

The New Dispensatory containing:

- I. The Theory and Practice of Pharmacy.
- II. A Distribution of Medicinal Simples, According to Their Virtues and Sensible Qualities; the Description, Use and Dose of Each Article.
- III. A full Translation of the London and Edinburgh Pharmacopœias; with the Use, Dose, etc., of the several Medicines.
- IV. Directions for Extemporaneous Prescription; with a select number of elegant Forms.
- V. A collection of Cheap Remedies for the Use of the Poor.
The Whole interspersed with Practical Cautions and Observations.

Intended as a Correction, and Improvement of Quincy.

London, Printed for J. Nourse, opposite Catherine Street in the Strand.
MDCCLIII. 8 vo. pp. XII, 664.

Libr. Univ. Wisc. The copy bears the signature of Cap: Archd: Grant, 1756; also a partly destroyed book plate with the motto "Iehova Jireh." This book plate is apparently identical with that in the fourth edition of *The Edinburgh New Dispensatory* edited by John Rotheram and published in 1794, viz., that of S.r Archibald Grant of Monymoske Bart.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr., 2nd ser., 4, p. 429; 9, p. 507. "VI(31.)XXXII, 664 pp. 8°. London, J. Nourse, 1753."

The Lloyd Library has a copy of this edition.

Br. Mus. Cat.

(2) Schelenz (*Geschichte*, p. 566) mentions an edition published in 1760. Apparently, this is the second edition which, according to the same historian, was translated into German and published in Hamburg in 1768.

(3) "The same, 3rd ed., VIII (2 l.), 692 pp., 8°, London, J. Nourse, 1770."

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr. 2nd ser. 4, p. 429; 9, p. 507.

The Lloyd Library has a copy of this edition also.

(4) "The same 4 ed., corrected, with large additions, VIII (2 l.).

The Chemical Works of C. Neumann, abridged and methodized. With large additions, containing the later discoveries and improvements made in chemistry and the arts depending thereon, by William Lewis, London, 1759, pp. [xvi]-586-[xxxviii], 4°.

With a critical list of Neumann's works.

Bolton, Select Bibliography, Part V.

Second edition, London, 1773. 2 vols. 8°.

Bolton, Select Bibl., Part V.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.

An Experimental History of the Materia Medica, or of the Natural and Artificial Substances made use of in Medicine: Containing a Compendious View of their Natural History, an Account of Their Pharmaceutic Properties, and an Estimate of Their Medicinal Powers, so Far as They Can Be Ascertained by Experience, or by Rational Induction from Their Sensible Qualities. By William Lewis, M.B., F.R.S. *Rationalem quidem puto Medicinam esse debere: instrui vero ab evidentibus. Celsus.* London, Printed by H. Baldwin, for the Author; and sold by R. Willock, at Sir Isaac Newton's Head in Cornhill. MDCCLXI. 4 to pp. XXIV, 591. Index, pp. 331.

Libr. Univ. Wisc.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr. XXII, 1 l., 591 pp., 16 l., 4°, London, H. Baldwin (1761).

(2) The same. 2nd ed., XXIV, 622 pp., 16 l., 4°, London, R. Baldwin, 1768.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.

Br. Mus. Cat.

(3) The same. With numerous additions and corrections by John Aikin, 3rd ed. XXIII, 691 pp., 16 l., 4°, London, J. Johnson, 1784.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.

(4) The same. 2 v., 4 ed., with numerous additions and corrections by John Aikin, XXXV, 504, 495 pp., 17 l., 8°, London, J. Johnson, 1791.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Herrn Wilhelm Lewis, M.B. und der Koeniglichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in London Mitglieds Materia Medica, oder Beschreibung der einfachen Arzneymittel. Nach der zwoten vermehrt- und verbesserten Ausgabe aus dem Englischen uebersetzt von Joh. Heinrich Ziegler, M.D. der Gesellschaft fuer die Aufnahme der Kuenste, Wissenschaften und Handlung in London, der Physicalisch-Medicinischen in Basel, und der Naturforschenden Gesellschaft in Zuerich Mitglied. Zuerich, bey Orell, Gessner, Fuesslin und Compagnie, 1771, 4 to, XXVIII, 635.

Libr. Univ. Wisc.

692 pp., 8°, Dublin, J. Potts, 1778.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr. 2nd ser.

New (The) Dispensatory, containing: I. The elements of pharmacy. II. The materia medica, or an account of the substances employed in medicine; with the virtues and uses of each article, so far as they are warranted by experience and observation. 4th ed., corrected, with large additions, by William Lewis. 8°. Dublin, 1778.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.: "Lewis."

The *Br. Mus. Cat.* gives the date of the fourth edition as 1781.

(5) Fifth edition, London, 1785, 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

The Lloyd Library has a copy of this edition.

(6) Sixth edition, pp. VII, 606. Fittingrave: London, 1799, 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

This edition also may be consulted in the Lloyd Library.

Phillipe-Ludwig (*Gesch. d. Apotheke*, p. 280) make mention of a French translation published in 1803, but do not state on which edition of the English original it was based.

— The same. *Conhecimento pratico dos medicamentos, ou nova pharmacopéa, que comprehende:*

I. A chymica pharmaceutica.

II. Os nomes, descripção, qualidades, propriedades, virtudes, doses e usos dos medicamentos simplices.

III. As preparações e composições das pharmacopéas de Londres, Edinburgo, etc.

IV. As formulas ou reccitas escolhidas dos hospitaes ingleses, as dos medicos mas acreditados, etc.

Traduzida, correcta e augmentada de notas por Cactano José de Carvalho.

3 v., 8°. Lisboa, Imp. regia, 1815.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr. 2nd series.

Just as Lewis' first edition was intended as an "improvement of Quincy," so a number of editions from 1786 on were "improvements" by Duncan. From the bibliographic account here recorded, it would appear that these "improved" editions of Lewis' Dispensatory were published contemporaneously with the later editions published by Lewis himself. Unfortunately the writer has not had an opportunity to compare these parallel editions as they might be termed.

The New Dispensatory. . . . being an attempt to collect and apply the later discoveries to the Dispensatory published by W. L. . . . With new tables of Elective Attractions. . . . by a Gentleman of the Faculty at Edinburgh (A. Duncan). Edinburgh, 1786. 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

The Edinburgh Dispensatory; being an improvement upon the New Dispensatory of Lewis. . . . Second edition, with. . . . alterations. . . . and additions (by A. Duncan). Edinburgh, 1789. 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Third edition, with. . . . additions, etc. (Edited by A. Duncan.) Edinburgh, 1791. 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Fifth edition, with. . . . additions and. . . . account of the new chemical doctrines published by Mr. Lavoisier, pp. XXXI, 622. W. Creech: Edinburgh, 1797. 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Commercium philosophico-technicum; or the philosophical commerce of arts. London, 1763[-65]. 4°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Herrn W. L. . . . Historie der Farben. Aus dem Englischen uebersetzt von Johann Heinrich Ziegler. [A translation of pt. 6 of W. L.'s *Commercium philosophico-technicum.*] Zuerich, 1766. 8 vo.

Bolton, *Select. Bibl. of Chem.*, Part III.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Expériences physiques et chimiques sur plusieurs matières relatives au commerce et aux arts; ouvrage traduit de l'Anglais. . . . par M. de Puisieux. 3 tom. Paris, 1768. 12°.

Br. Mus. Cat.

Historie des Goldes und der Gewerbe so davon abhängen. Zuerich, 1764.

A second edition bears the title:

Geschichte des Goldes und verschiedene damit sich beschaeftigende Kuenste und Arbeiten. Graetz, *n.d.* (1780), pp. (VI)-325. 4 folding plates.

The title is misleading as the work is not a history but a treatise on the metallurgy and technology of gold. Lewis was F.R.S.

Bolton, Select Bibliography, Part V.

Experiments and Observations on American Potashes. With an Easy Method of Determining Their Respective Qualities. By W. Lewis, M.B., F.R.S. Made at the request of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, in consequence of an application from the House of Representatives of Massachusetts Bay. London: Printed by Order of the Society. MDCCLXVII. Brochure, 8 vo., pp. 34.

Libr. Univ. Wisc.

Cat. Surg. Gen. Libr.: 34 pp. 8°. London, 1767. (P., v. 749.)

Br. Mus. Cat.

Hoffmann (Friedrich) of Halle, the Younger.

A system of the Practice of Medicine; from the Latin ("Medicina rationalis systematica") of Dr. Hoffmann. . . . By W. Lewis. . . . Revised and completed by A. Duncan. 2 vol. J. Murray: London, 1783, 8°.

Br. Mus. Cat.



Front, interior view of Lascoff Pharmacy.

WELLCOME MEDAL TO COLONEL SKINNER.

The Henry S. Wellcome medal and a prize of \$500 have this year been awarded to Col. George A. Skinner, Medical Corps, U. S. Army, Chief Surgeon, Seventh Corps Area, Omaha, Neb., for his essay, "The Influence of Epidemic Disease on Military Operations in the Western Hemisphere." The presentation will be made during the meeting of the Association of Military Surgeons of the U. S., at New Orleans, in November.