

THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY BY STUDENTS OF
PHARMACY AT AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING.*

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1. The object of the course which has been given in alternate academic years for a number of years past is indicated in the following Prefatory Note to the Bibliographic Guide to the history of pharmacy which has been prepared first of all for his own students by the writer.

“As the title indicates, this brochure makes no pretense at being a complete bibliography to the history of pharmacy, much less does it presume to be a history of pharmacy. The sad fact is that we have no real history of pharmacy, indeed never have had one. However, we have a number of excellent historical treatises on pharmacy, a literature that has made excellent progress during the past two decades. Unfortunately, most of these treatises are not available to the average American pharmacist or student of pharmacy because of the foreign languages in which they have been written.

“Appreciating the broadening effect which even a cursory study of the history of pharmacy by the pharmacy student must have on his necessarily technical course of education, the writer has always sought to interest his students in the evolution of their calling. Some years ago this endeavor took on the form of weekly lectures which, so far as possible were illustrated by lantern slides. In order that the impression thus produced might be more lasting, these lectures have been supplemented by topics, some of which enabled the student to acquaint himself with important details that were, of necessity, omitted from the general survey of the lecture. This topic work also necessitated some acquaintance, on the part of the student, with the books available in the university library. Synoptical bibliographic sheets resulted as a practical expediency, and from these the present bibliographic guide. It is the hope of the writer, that in their present form these notes may prove of use not only to his own students, but also to some of his colleagues who appreciate the importance of historical study of the natural sciences by professional students.”

Scope of the Course:—Our pharmacy courses being already overcrowded on the side of technical information, but little time is left for such a course as this. One meeting a week, though for both semesters, necessarily implies great restriction. Such a course must of necessity be very general and avoid all detail that is not essential to illustrate the general principles that should be emphasized.

For reasons that become apparent by reference to the brief chapter on Classification of the Guide, the history of pharmacy is taught as an aspect of the history of civilization. Hence the course of following the periods of general history is followed. In each period only such countries are selected as teach a special lesson. Thus, for the period of antiquity, Egypt, Greece and Rome must suffice; for the middle ages, the Arabians. Of the modern period, Italy and France are selected as typical Romance countries; Germany and England as typical Germanic countries.

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The first semester having been given to the study of the development of pharmacy in the old world, the second semester is devoted to the study of pharmaceutical history in the United States. The earlier developments of pharmacy in this country are traced back to the institutions of France and England, the later developments to those of Germany introduced during the second half of the nineteenth century.

In addition to these general considerations, special subjects such as pharmaceutical economics, organizations, education, etc., are studied in connection with these special chapters of the history of the United States, but in each case the beginnings are traced back to their European origin. This affords an opportunity to review some of the general aspects in their application to those special topics. Pedagogically, this is important, particularly since the line of thought involved is rather foreign to students pursuing courses that are almost exclusively scientific and technical.

Methods of Instruction.—In a course such as the one outlined, which of necessity belongs to the inspirational rather than the informational type, the lecture naturally is the dominant feature. Its object is not so much to impart fragments of information about this or that which may be directly useful to the future pharmaceutical practitioner. Its principal object is to cause the student to forget, for the moment, his chemistry and botany and to think of himself as a member of a calling, which, in one form or another, has served mankind since the beginning of civilization, and which, no doubt, will survive the storm and stress of the present and continue to serve mankind in the future. If history in general, is or should be the lamp by which our feet are guided, the history of pharmacy as a calling, rather than the history of a certain galenic with its quaint synonymy, ought to teach the prospective pharmacy student more of real value than the imperfect appreciation of chemical laws or the memorizing of doses, however, important both may be.

A lecture course of this sort, no matter how perfect the lecture or how inspiring the lecturer, is apt to induce superficiality unless supplemented by more substantial mental exercise. The topic is as essential as the lecture and when properly conducted will teach even the average American student that his fear of all that is foreign is rather foolish. There is no reason why the student should not learn directly from Scribonius Largus what constituted the *materia medica* of the ancients. From the British Encyclopedia he may get a general notion of the closed corporation, the Guild, and later the college. From similar general sources he may learn about the system of concessions, both real and personal. With the aid of an outline map of Italy, he may be taught to acquire a better understanding of local pharmacopœias, invariably the precursors of the recent modern pharmacopœias, and the close relationship between this class of pharmaceutical literature and the political divisions of humanity into states and nations. In like manner, outline maps of the United States will enable him to trace for himself the development of state associations and state legislation in this country. Moreover, weekly topics may be so assigned in the course of the two semesters, that the student is compelled to acquaint himself personally with at least those sources of historical information written in the English language.

With the modern facilities for supplementing the spoken word by visual instruction, a course of this kind would not be complete without lantern slides or similar means. Much of that which the teacher imparts in his lectures, is largely foreign to the mode of thinking of the average student concerned. The eye must come to the aid of the ear, not only to arouse the interest but to cause the spoken word to be truly understood and appreciated. The material available for this purpose is as considerable as some of it is choice, but it is not readily available even in our larger pharmaceutical libraries. While the money factor involved is by no means prohibitive, it requires love of the subject and patience to bring together a good working collection.

In connection with the reading of this paper an assortment of the different kinds of slides available was shown with the aid of a lantern kindly loaned for this purpose by Parke, Davis & Co., and operated by a member of their scientific staff. The following slides were shown:—

A. PERSONS OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY.

Geber teaching chemistry.
Rhases in his laboratory.
Paracelsus.
Lemery.
Scheele monument.
Latin terms used by Scheele.
La soeur apothicaire Pierre Monnet.
Joseph Pelletier.
Joseph Bienaimé Caventou.
Das Liebig Denkmal in Giessen.
A. B. Prescott.
Chas. Rice.

B. THE EVOLUTION OF THE APOTHECARY SHOP.

Facade of a Pompeian house.
Floor plan of store in Pompeii.
A store for the sale of food stuff (Pompeii.)
Dispensary of the monastery Muri (Switzerland.)
Hospital pharmacy, Dijon (France.)
An itinerant drug seller (15th Century, England.)
Pharmacie Anglaise of comeinin (Antwerp, Belgium.)
Lipiciere de village by G. Dou.
Tenier: Chem. Laboratory (Dresden Art Gallery.)
Apothekerkuiche des Apothekers, d'Ailly (National Museum, Amsterdam.)
Apothecary shop (From *Hortus sanitatis*.)
Apothecary shop (From J. Amman.)
Apotheke zum goldenen Loewen.
Apotheke in Heppenheim.
Hochzeitschaut, Hamelin (Sertuerucr.)
Floor plan of *Farmacia Serravello*.
Kopenhagen. Environs of Kong Salmons Apothet.
Scheele's *Apotheke* in Koeping (Sweden.)
An apothecary's shop (15th Century.)
Chemist, from "Book of Shops."
S. A. D. Sheppard's pharmacy, Boston, Mass.
L. A. Seltzer's (basement) pharmacy, Detroit.
Arzneischrank, (Germanic Museum.)

C. MATERIA PHARMACEUTICA.

Distillation of mercury, sublimation of mercury.
Symbol for sulphur, distillation of sulphur.
Symbol for vitriol, preparation of vitriol.
Symbol for salt, preparation of salt (16th Century.)
Scratching of poppy head (India.)
Opium Saloon (Shanghai.)
Peru balsam.
Gutta percha.

D. PHARMACEUTICAL APPARATUS.

Balance: *Silphionhandel*.
Balance: Roman *Schwellkwaeg*.
Balance: 16th Century.
Chest from Pyx Chapel.
Roman perfume bottles, *unguentaria*.
Unguentaria, etc.
Glass ware.
Glass ware.
Mensa ponderaria.
Mill for grinding olives.
Oil press (Herculaneum.)
Expressing olive oil (Stradanus.)
Still with barrel condenser.
Apparatus described in Adam Lonicer's Distilling Book.

E. MISCELLANY.

"Oldest prescription."
Papyrus harvest, plays and wine harvest.
Scribes with role and pallet.
"The oldest prescription known."
Formula for medicament to drive away witches.
Apprentice's certificate. 1743.
Specimen of practical examinations as master apothecary (France.)
Pharmaceutical pots.
The apothecary of "M. de Pourceaugnac" by Moliere.
Coat of arms of Paris Guild of Apothecaries.
Book-plate of Pharm. Soc. of Switzerland.