



E. M. HOLMES

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When Edward Morell Holmes was elected president of the British Pharmaceutical Conference in 1899, a pharmaceutical editor said of him: "There are a few pharmacists in Great Britain whose friendship with Mr. Holmes has enabled them to discover his distinction apart from his office as curator of the Pharmaceutical Society's Museum. There are also a few, a *very* few, who only know him as a curator. When last year's Conference (1899) elected him president, that was done because the members liked him, but behind this was the fact that he has contributed more to the botanical side of British pharmaceutical literature than any other man living."

As a student Mr. Holmes earned the British Pharmaceutical Society's bronze medal for a herbarium of British plants; in 1877, he was awarded the Flückiger Medal, and in 1915, the Hanbury Medal. Last November he concluded a half-century of service as curator of the Museum of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain; in January of this year he celebrated his 80th birthday. A year or more ago our honorary member met with a serious accident which resulted in the loss of a limb; in a recent communication which accompanied the photograph herewith, he wrote that he "tried to come up smiling!" He also referred with pride to the ring on his finger—which contains a new red fossil seaweed in a cornelian—"it retains its pink color and shows the cystocarpic fruit, and is apparently," he states, "a nitophyllum." He writes further that "it is the first cornelian I ever picked up, no such fossil alga has ever been found before! nor since!" While Mr. Holmes considers the collection and study of seaweeds a hobby he is an authority on the subject, and has been so known for many years. Probably twenty-five years, or more, ago he contributed a paper to the Linnean Society on "New Marine Algae from Japan," which was illustrated by exquisitely drawn figures by J. N. Fitch under Mr. Holmes' direction; more than twenty new species and varieties were described. Mrs. Holmes is also an enthusiast in the study and has accompanied her distinguished husband on many of his algae hunting excursions, aiding further with an artistic brush to complete and illustrate the records of their studies.

In complying with a request to submit data relating to the Museum, Mr. Holmes closes the accompanying note with the following: "All that I have been able to do has been to make the Museum respected by all who have visited, and really useful not only to students and members of the Society, but to all interested in pharmacognosy and economic botany in relation to drugs. That has been my life work, except for my private hobby, seaweeds. To the British Marine Flora I have added about 250 species new to Britain, and a few friends another 100, so that whereas the last standard work described 400 British species, there are now nearly double that number known."

In preparing a brief sketch of one who has contributed so largely to pharmaceutical and related literature—each one of the British Year Books for the past 50 years contains a number of abstracts of his contributions for the corresponding year—the realization comes that it is impossible to give more than the titles of contributions and this is superfluous because our readers have access to these references. Therefore, the further remarks will deal with the Museum, the history of which records some of the activities of the Curator, and also reflects his interest and devotion in serving others.

During the years 1842–1872, Professors Redwood and Bentley and Mr. James Collins were the curators. In these earlier years the Museum comprised not only specimens useful for teaching pharmacy, but many specimens of historical interest and not of value in the former connection. In 1850 a part of the *Materia Medica* collection of Dr. Pareira, consisting of 640 specimens, was donated to the Society. In 1851 contributions were made by Mr. D. Hanbury from the International Exhibition. In 1859, 300 specimens from the collection of the celebrated botanist, Robert Brown, were presented; in 1862, further collections of medicinal products from the International Exhibition of that year—derived from India, Turkey, Cape Colony and Manila. Many of the specimens of these collections had no great immediate value to pharmacy. Although an effort was made to catalog the specimens prior to the time of the curatorship of Mr. Holmes no great progress was made, but soon after his appointment the work of assorting and identifying the specimens was begun and the catalog was published in 1878. These collections have historical value and interest. Mr. Holmes referred to a number of them in a communication and liberty is taken in presenting these data, as reported by him, as a closing part of the sketch—for after all he has made the Museum as well known as the Curator of the past half-century.

COLLECTIONS OF THE MUSEUM OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The collections referred to are as follows:—

1. A collection of old English drugs of the 17th century apparently presented by Dr. Maton, who at one time was President of the Linnean Society. These are contained in small bottles of greenish glass of crude workmanship.
2. Some years later a very complete collection of drugs of the same period, in an appropriate old mahogany cabinet, was presented by Messrs. Corbyn Stacey & Co. These drugs were stated to be used for examining their assistants before they were appointed as there were no official examiners in pharmacy in those days.
3. A collection of Chinese drugs in small boxes presented by Dr. F. Porter Smith in illustration of his work on Chinese *Materia Medica*. Many of these had been reduced to powder by the ubiquitous mal brouer beetle so well known to pharmacists, but those that were left were preserved in stoppered bottles and form a most valuable set of specimens for identifying the drugs described by him and render it possible to determine that many of them were not correctly de-

terminated botanically. It is, indeed, a wonder that, with the difficulty of access to botanical works in China at date, that he was able to correctly identify as many as he did.

4. To them were added the Chinese drugs described by D. Hanbury of which an account is given in the "Science Papers."

5. A very complete collection of Chinese drugs made by Dr. Hokai of Hongkong and shown at the Indian and Colonial Exhibition subsequently presented to the Society. The whole Chinese collection has had the advantage of being examined by Dr. Augustin Henry who was formerly under Sir Robert Hart and, as one of the best Chinese botanists, was able to contribute useful information concerning these drugs, having been Surgeon to the Chinese Customs.

6. A collection of Indian Drugs presented by Dr. W. Dymock in illustration of his papers on Indian drugs published in the *Pharmaceutical Journal* during the years 1876-1879.

In 1872 a Herbarium of British plants was commenced, so that students competing for the Herbarium prize might have the opportunity of personally identifying any plant collected by them. This collection is now practically complete and many alien plants of frequent occurrence in this country have been added. An herbarium of medicinal plants of all countries was also commenced, the few existing in 1872 consisting only of plants obtained from botanic gardens at Chelsea and Regent's Park contained in two folio albums. The herbarium now contains nearly all the medicinal plants at present obtainable, the latest addition being that of the Siamese Benzoin plants (*Styrax benzoides* Craib) from Dr. Kerr of Chiengmai, which arrived only this month. A catalogue of the Herbarium up to the date of issue was published in 1896, and then included 1153 species.

7. To this fine collection have been added the medicinal plants of the late Daniel Hanbury's Herbarium.

8. A complete series of the Eucalyptus species from Mr. J. H. Maiden accompanied by specimens of the Eucalyptus oils from Mr. R. T. Baker.

9. A collection of herbarium specimens of all the species of Cinchona cultivated in India and Ceylon from Dr. G. Bidie of Madras, together with specimens of their barks which have mostly been analyzed by the late Dr. Paul, and their analyses recorded in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*.

10. A collection of species yielding myrrh and gum arabic was presented by Dr. G. Schweinfurth.

11. A collection of essential oils presented by Messrs. Schimmel & Co. of Leipsic of all the kinds manufactured by them.

12. The Dr. Hanbury collection of materia medica presented by the late Sir Thos. Hanbury. Many of the specimens were still unnamed at his death, but a number of these have been examined at my request, and reported on by continental histologists and subsequently identified, but only a MSS. catalogue of the collection has been prepared as the Council thought that in view of the small demand by pharmacists in this country for the 1878 catalogue of the Museum, it would be an unnecessary expense to publish it.

Two other collections of interest consist of (1) a collection of the native drugs of Madagascar collected by Dr. G. Parker during the time that he acted as physician to the Queen of Madagascar, and (2) a collection of the native drugs of Morocco presented by Dr. A. Leared and obtained by him from the Shereef of Morocco, a catalogue of these being published in his work on Morocco and the Moors.

A fine collection of Brazilian drugs, 250 in number, was presented by Dr. Domingo Parodi of Buenos Ayres.

But the collection of Foreign and Colonial Materia Medica was very largely added to by the specimens obtained by the Curator from the International Exhibition in Paris in 1878 and in the International Exhibition in this Country.

Among the countries already represented in the Museum are the United States, Mexico, United States of Columbia, Bolivia, Chili, the Argentine, British Guiana, Venezuela, W. Indies, Ceylon, E. and W. Africa, S. Africa, Egypt, the Straits Settlements, Java, Japan, etc. The specimens in some of these collections may be stated in round numbers as India 1000, China 1000, Japan 200, Ceylon 300, Natal 200, Cape Colony 100, so that the Museum is probably one of the richest of its kind in the world.