

CHARLES RICE

NEW YORK, N. Y.

1841-1901

First Vice-President American Pharmaceutical Association, 1883-1884

Chairman U. S. P. Revision Committee, 1880, 1890, 1900



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CHARLES RICE, PH.D.

The New York conclave of the American Pharmaceutical Association and the approaching meeting of the U. S. Pharmacopoeial Convention prompted this writing. This sketch must, on account of the large amount of work achieved by Dr. Charles Rice, be incomplete, in fact the data of this article are taken from the memorial volume prepared for private circulation soon after his death.

Very little is known of the early life of Charles Rice. He was born in Munich, October 4, 1841, of Austrian parents, and educated in public and private schools and seminaries in Munich, Passau and Vienna. It was through one of his relatives, an accomplished classical scholar and master of several Oriental languages, that he developed a taste for linguistic studies, in which choice he was not only encouraged by several scholars of prominence, but special instruction was given him by Dr. Gaugengigl of Passau, Professor Marcus Joseph Mueller, and Abbot Hannaburg, of Munich.

Charles Rice came to the United States during the war between the States and soon thereafter received an appointment as surgeon's steward on the sloop-of-war "Jamestown," bound for a cruise around the world. While he had undoubtedly attended chemical lectures before leaving Europe, it was probably during these three years that he gained his first pharmaceutical experience. Everyone is to some extent directed by an unseen hand, but it is not always the case that the direction is so pronounced as in the life of Dr. Rice.

After the return of the "Jamestown" he proceeded to New York, where he was seized with malarial fever and taken to Bellevue Hospital, which from this time until the day of his death became the scene of his remarkable achievements. Recovering from the attack of the fever, and during his convalescence, he assisted John Frey, the apothecary of the Hospital and superintendent of the Drug Department. Thereafter he received a permanent appointment, and after Mr. Frey's death was elected chemist of the General Drug Department, and subsequently also of the Department of Public Charities and Corrections, and these offices he held until the day of his death.

It is very evident that Dr. Rice had planned for educational work. As a philologist he was honored and revered by scholars not only in his adopted country but abroad as well. It is said that he could read twenty languages and converse fluently in eight others. It was, however, in the Sanskrit that he became famous throughout the world.

The bibliography of his writings, related to pharmacy, would require a number of pages, but it was as chairman of the Pharmacopoeial Revision Committees of 1880, 1890 and 1900 that he became best known to pharmacists, not only as an investigator and worker but also as an efficient organizer. He was chairman of the Editing Committee of the New York and Brooklyn Formulary in 1884, and chairman of the Committee appointed by the American Pharmaceutical Association to convert this book into the National Formulary. He was associate editor of *New Remedies* and of its successor, *The American Druggist*, in 1876 to 1891.



Courtesy J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia

A VIEW IN THE LIBRARY OF DR. CHARLES RICE, SHOWING HIS DICTIONARY RACKS

In 1867 he became a member of the New York College of Pharmacy, and in 1870 was elected a trustee and served as chairman of the Examination, Library and other committees, but declined to accept any other elective office. The New York University conferred on him, in 1879, the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy. He was also an honorary fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine and held honorary and active membership in many foreign and American scientific bodies. He joined the American Pharmaceutical Association in 1870; was its first vice-president in 1883 to 1884, and reported the progress of pharmacy from 1891 to 1892.

Dr. Rice died May 13, 1901; the funeral services were held in the chapel of the Hospital, near to the scene of his labors, and his body rests in Woodlawn Cemetery, New York City.

E. G. E.