

Book Reviews

Clearly, the uses and application of such a work are limited. One is tempted, therefore, to conclude that the author may have been better advised to have utilized Cooper's *Catalogue* as the basis for a much enlarged and comprehensive bibliography of medical and scientific literature in English published before 1700, rather than settling for the more limited, but nonetheless worthy, project of a "verified edition" of a single work.

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LEONARD WEISTROP, *The life and letters of Dr Henry Vining Ogden 1857–1931*. Milwaukee Academy of Medicine Press, 1986, 8vo, pp. 339, [no price stated].

This admirable book features a charming, talented, self-effacing physician and throws new light on William Osler and Harvey Cushing. By determined detective work, Dr Weistrop eventually tracked down 334 letters involving Ogden, William Osler, and Harvey Cushing. They were from the Ogden family, the Milwaukee Academy of Medicine, the Osler Library at McGill, and the Fulton Library at Yale. The Milwaukee Academy wisely authorized this book for its centennial celebration.

Ogden studied medicine under Osler at McGill and boarded in the same house for over two years. These affable, keen, accomplished men became lifelong friends. Cushing found later that Ogden could provide more about Osler's days in Montreal than anyone else. In Milwaukee, Ogden's exceptional clinical ability and kindly interest in patients made him the community's outstanding physician. No other local doctor had such access to the consultant services of William Osler and Harvey Cushing!

Henry Ogden rode hobbies hard. For years, he hiked the prairies and canoed the lakes of Wisconsin and nearby states, expertly collecting and describing specimens of birds, flowers, and animals. His garden contained carefully labelled wild flowers. Ogden's collections in natural history were donated to the Milwaukee Public Museum and the University of Wisconsin.

Both Osler and Cushing admired Ogden's versatility, erudition, and expertise in subjects as varied as natural history, baseball, and English literature. Ogden, who lacked their single-minded devotion to medicine, led a more balanced life. Unlike Ogden, who retired in poverty, the ambitious Osler occasionally charged very large fees. Happily, friends supported Ogden comfortably throughout retirement and a lengthy illness, asserting that he had been undercharging his patients. Dr Weistrop found that Cushing in his image-polishing biography of Osler, when quoting a letter from Osler to Ogden, had deleted a racist statement.

The author has rescued from oblivion the inspirational life of a most engaging medical personality. Furthermore, his excellent book is required reading for any bold spirit about to write another life of Osler.

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JOHN M. RIDDLE, *Dioscorides on pharmacy and medicine*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1985, 8vo, pp. xxvii, 298, illus., \$35.00.

Dioscorides on pharmacy and medicine comprises five chapters: Dioscorides' life and the state of the medical art in the first century AD (ch. 1); the method Dioscorides chose to relate his pharmacological information about individual drugs (ch. 2); the organization of his chapters on plants (ch. 3), animal and mineral drugs (ch. 4); the fortune of the *de materia medica* at the hands of Galen and the copyists (ch. 5).

By innovative use of modern pharmacognosy and ethnobotany, Riddle's evaluation of the effectiveness of Dioscorides' pharmacy, as well as his determination of the basis of the underlying organization of the *de materia medica*, is a significant and permanent contribution. He demonstrates cogently what was and has not been hitherto appreciated by practitioner,