

Book Reviews

treasures there is only room to mention the Isaacus Judaeus Manuscripts (369 *et seq.*), the oldest of the manuscripts, an Anglo-Saxon codex of c. A.D. 1025 (No. 46) and finally the magnificent *Apocalypse* (49 of c. A.D. 1420) which was studied by the late Fritz Saxl (see his classical account with two excellent appendices by Otto Kurz, one of which deals with the famous five-picture-series of medical illustrations in *J. Warburg Institute* 1942, V, 82–142).

Our note, of necessity brief and inadequate, cannot conclude without according particular praise to the whole organization of the work including its multitude of cross references and in particular the indices. There are eleven of them: according to dates, languages, scribes, illustrations, special bindings, previous owners including libraries, bookplates, lecture notes, subjects. Indeed it would be very difficult to find anything comparable among 'Books about Books'.
WALTER PAGEL

Early American Medical Imprints. A Guide to Works Printed in the United States 1668–1820, by ROBERT B. AUSTIN, Washington, D.C., National Library of Medicine, 1961, pp. 240, \$1.00.

This very much needed work sets out to include every medical work, interpreted in its widest sense, even some material pertaining to veterinary medicine, vital statistics and medical legislation, although, as the author declares in his introduction to the book it is not intended to be exhaustive in these latter subjects. The imprints described are books, pamphlets, theses and broadsides, and thirty-six periodical titles taken from Ebert's paper on medical periodicals printed before 1821.

The book is arranged in alphabetical order with the author's name, title, place of printing, printer and date of publication. Added to this is a short description with number of pages and size. The number given to these imprints in the *American Bibliography* by Charles Evans is also included and, furthermore, references to the location of copies in American libraries is given. A total of 2,106 imprints appear in this monograph which is supplemented by a chronological index which only gives the year and number of entries.

To the considerable number of years that Mr. Austin put into his work should be added the eager collaboration given to him by many friendly institutions in the United States which, traditionally, have been opening their repositories to the search of the scholars. This work, no doubt, is going to make much easier for medical librarians the checking and cataloguing of material pertaining to two important periods in American history, the colonial century and the early years of independence when medical literature took a very radical turn. The alphabetical arrangement may be useful in routine library procedures but, from the historical point of view, a chronological presentation of the material might possibly have been more interesting, giving, in the eyes of the historian, a better shaping of medical ideas through the years. It is regrettable that the author, from the beginning of his research, made clear his intention of omitting the medical material appearing in almanacs and general newspapers which actually contain more genuine American medicine and unique information regarding the knowledge and practice of medicine, at least during the colonial period. Furthermore, only an exhaustive search through the medical legislation of the early colonies could fulfil the needs of medical bibliography in these periods. Despite the limited scope of the guide, now published by the National Library of Medicine, this monograph, which is the crowning work of Mr. Austin's thirty-five years as cataloguer of that library, is bound to be a very important tool in American bibliography, and will increase even more the interest in medical Americana.

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