

PREFACE

There can be no denying that the gentle art of book collecting or bibliophilia is one of the most engaging pursuits in which man can indulge his leisure. From the earliest times to the present era, even previous to the invention of the art of printing, this pleasant and gratifying pastime has been pursued both by those of modest means as well as those of wealth. The present work can be considered to embody the results of some 20 years affliction with bibliophilia or, as some would have it, bibliomania.

My main interest was, and indeed still is, the gathering of old and newer books on chemistry, but as the harvest proceeded I soon found other more or less related subjects being involved ; alchemy, technology, metallurgy, mineralogy, dyeing, pharmacy and balneology. A special word about this last subject is not amiss, for the important part which many early works on balneology play in providing details of contemporary development and practice in analytical chemistry does not appear to have been previously recorded. The decision as to whether such and such books should or should not be included in a given collection must, of course, be largely a matter of personal judgement or liking, and any inclusions or omissions in the present collection must therefore be attributed to my own idiosyncrasy.

The present work claims to be no more than a carefully compiled and annotated catalogue of my own library and will therefore, suffer from all the characteristics inherent in so personal a compilation. The reason which has prompted the publication of this catalogue, for the sake of those interested in the field, is the paucity of tools available to the student, whether he be bibliophile, bibliopole or historian. The classic tool is Ferguson's " Bibliotheca Chemica," which is an extremely carefully made and fully annotated catalogue of a collection of books formed by Dr. Young and now reposing in the Glasgow Institute of Technology : it is a model of bibliographical excellence but has become so scarce as to be beyond the reach of most students.

The Young collection was particularly strong in 16th and 17th century books on both alchemy and chemistry—it was comparatively weak in 18th century works relating to chemistry and contained virtually no 19th century chemical works. These latter two centuries are important to the student of the history of chemistry, and my own collection provides a considerable selection of representative works relating to this period.

Mention should also be made of Ferguson's own extensive library, now housed at Glasgow University, a short-title catalogue of which was recently published in the small edition of 40 copies, none of which were for sale. The other important

reference book available is Bolton's " Select Bibliography of Chemistry " which is considerably more extensive in scope than Ferguson's work but lacks much necessary detail relating to most of the works quoted.

George Sarton has recently pointed out (Isis 39, 60) the need for a complete bibliography of chemistry which would include the material available in all the main libraries of Europe and America ; this need is an obvious and urgent one, but would require so considerable an amount of finance for its achievement that it seems unlikely, under present conditions, to be within the means of any individual. Pending the production of such a comprehensive bibliography, it is hoped that the present work will be found useful.

In the catalogue the system which has been followed is that of listing the authors in alphabetical order and their various works in chronological order. To make the catalogue as convenient and useful as possible copious indexing has been provided and cross references have been freely used. The footnotes will be found to vary considerably in length and detail, and this difference will reflect my own personal interest in a given book, especially when new and important facts have come to light, or in the case of hitherto unknown works.

The formation of such a library would have been impossible without the willing co-operation of many members of the book trade and this assistance is hereby gratefully acknowledged ; Messrs. Davis, Ettinghausen, Feisenberger, Lambert, Maggs, Offenbacher, Scheler, Thiebaud, Weil and Zeitlinger come specially to mind in this connection, although it is pleasant to be able to recall the willing help given by many others, and indeed by almost all booksellers with whom I have at various times made contact. A special debt is due to Emil Offenbacher whose unremitting efforts in the years immediately preceding the recent war helped to lay the foundations of the collection, and to Ernst Weil, whose unfailing kindness and encouragement have always been freely given, and without which the necessary courage to undertake the preparation of the present catalogue could not have been found ; my gratitude must also be expressed to Robert Stockwell and his colleagues, who never flinched at the untidy MS. handed to them and who succeeded, in such austere times, in producing so workmanlike and agreeable an example of the printers' art. It only remains to add that the arduous task of seeing the book through the press was accomplished through the unstinted and accurate labour of Mr. E. Jutro, to whom I am also indebted for the compilation of the index.

D. I. D.

London.

October, 1948.