A conference on "Transactions of the Book" was held at the Folger in November 2001 in conjunction with this exhibition, with the support of the Center for the Book, Library of Congress. The conference brought together scholars who focus on the early modern period, featuring, as well, notable historians Adrian Johns and Elizabeth Eisenstein as session chairs. Roger Chartier gave a keynote address on "Don Quixote in the Printing House."

This exhibition, the catalogue, and the conference represent a model of a coherent program for study of the history of the book. Together, they validate the collecting habit of Henry Clay Folger to the full: "rather soiled by use" reveals the reader in a remarkable way in a unique collection of early modern texts.

JENNIFER J. CONNOR

University of the Sciences in Philadelphia

David L. Cowen. *Pharmacopoeias and Related Literature in Britain and America, 1618-1847*. Variorum Collected Studies Series. Aldershot, Hampshire; and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2001. x, 296 pp.; \$105.95 U.S. (hardcover). ISBN 0-86078-842-3.

This collection brings together thirteen articles by David L. Cowen, written over his long career in researching literature on pharmacy, and published in journals as diverse as the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, *Pharmaceutical Historian*, *Medical History*, and *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*. The high cost of the volume may be offset by its reproduction of articles from what are normally widely scattered sources in libraries – including some German-language publications. The concept of 'pharmacopoeial' literature is broadly construed to include sectarian medicine, veterinary medicine, and domestic and folk medicine since, as Cowen points out, *materia medica* and pharmacotherapy were "what the practice of medicine was all about" (vii). More bibliographical than historical, the essays range from 1951 to 1987 by date of first publication, and are reprinted in facsimile with continuous pagination for the collection. Their geographical arrangement illustrates the spread of this literature from Edinburgh to the United States.

Throughout these essays, Cowen demonstrates his understanding of the need to study extant copies of books: he identifies ghosts; corrects other errors in the historical literature; presents checklists of

editions using sound bibliographical descriptions; includes photographic reproductions of title pages, maps of publication locations, and tables of publications by date and country (embracing not just Europe and North America, but India and Madagascar as well). He occasionally suggests how this literature was affected by factors central to the publishing enterprise: revision of the Edinburgh *Pharmacopoeia* took place only when the last copies had been “sold off” or the “usual eight-year copyright was expiring” (7); publication of the earliest proposed *American Dispensatory* did not occur in 1772 when the author was unable to raise the \$30,000 to print and distribute the work free to Rhode Island practitioners (208).

While the essays contain a wealth of detail, they also have much repetition for their original, distinct audiences. Cowen outlines the decision to reproduce the studies for ease of reference by readers familiar with his work, but those who look forward to reading the collected set will find both this repetition and the varying physical format distracting. It is also unfortunate that the dates in the collection title are so precise and unexplained. Presumably 1618 refers to the first edition of the London *Pharmacopoeia*, a work that is not directly discussed here, while 1847 refers to the latest foreign translation of the Edinburgh *Dispensatory*. Yet the first five essays thoroughly explore the development and influence of the much more influential pharmacopoeia from Edinburgh from its first edition in 1699; similarly, both checklists and tables of British pharmacopoeial literature extend to 1871. Using these two British publications to frame the collection also does not adequately capture the concluding essays on Boston editions of Nicholas Culpeper, domestic and veterinary medical books printed in North America in the German language, and folk medicine of the Pennsylvania Dutch. A more general title would have conveyed the breadth of these studies for the interested reader and better served the author – an acknowledged leader in this field since he first began teaching history at Rutgers University in 1933.

JENNIFER J. CONNOR

University of the Sciences in Philadelphia