

BOOK REVIEWS

Chinese folk-botany. 'Augustine Henry (born 2 July 1857 in Dundee, died 23 March 1930 in Dublin) was one of the most important European plant collectors in central China in the last century. His collections amounted to about 158,000 dried specimens, and included many hundreds of previously unnamed and undescribed species'. So begins the introduction by Dr E. Charles Nelson, taxonomist at the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin, to the facsimile reprint of Augustine Henry's '*Notes on Economic Botany of China*'* and thus is Henry straightway placed in his rightful position in the history of Chinese botany.

As so much has already been written about Henry, suffice it to say here that he studied both natural history and medicine, and after qualifying went to China in 1881 as a doctor in the Chinese Customs Service at Shanghai. The following year he was sent to Yichang in the province of Hubei where he spent several years. This and a great deal more is known about Henry, but it sets the background for '*Notes on Economic Botany of China*', the result of his combined knowledge of Chinese, medicine and botany.

As Nelson remarks, Henry 'tried to reconcile Chinese vernacular names with the scientific names'. The entries in his 'Notes' start with the Chinese name in Wade-Giles spelling followed by its Chinese characters in parenthesis. Each item contains full explanatory passages with the Latin names of the plants. It is quite evident that Henry did not always accept identifications: if he had good reason to doubt any he often indicated what information, or part of the plant, was still required to clear up any confusion.

It is interesting to compare some random examples of Henry with Shiu-ying Hu's *Enumeration of Chinese Materia Medica* published in 1980. For 'Ch'ing-mu-hsiang' both give *Aristolochia heterophylla* and they are also in accord with 'Ch'uan tuan' as *Dipsacus asper*. For 'Ko-hua' Henry stated that, among other products, it was ascribed to *Pachyrhizus* but he posited that it might be *Pueraria* and Hu confirms 'Ko-hua' as *Pueraria lobata*. There are other examples in Henry and in Hu which differ in one way or another but it would be difficult to resolve these without an adequate knowledge of Chinese and of Economic Botany.

The importance of Henry's 1893 publication is that it has now been made available on a wide scale, as there appear to be only two copies of the original in existence. The 'Notes' are in random order, so the index of Latin names provided by Nelson is an invaluable short cut to the main text, as most readers will be more familiar with these than with their Chinese equivalents.

Dr Nelson has a great interest in, and knowledge of Henry and it is fitting that he should introduce this reprint, which will be welcomed by all sinologists. Some pages of the reprint are rather pale though still legible and this may have been unavoidable.

L. A. LAUENER

Botanical Illustration. The aim of this American book† is to provide information on the production of high quality illustrations, specifically publications on systematic botany, and is directed at both artist and author. It deals with the production of line drawings of plants, with the preparation of maps and graphs and the production of continuous-tone work ready for the printer.

The introductory section deals with collaboration between artist and author, and explains US copyright laws. British copyright information can be obtained from the Department of Trade and Industry. The section on tools and materials, with a discussion of their uses, is extensive and detailed. The items listed, many of them useful but not essential, are those sold in America but they or their equivalents are available in Britain. Sizes and proportions of plates are

*Reprint of '*Notes on Economic Botany of China*' by Augustine Henry, 68 pp. (1893), with introduction, 15 pp. by E. C. Nelson. Index. Paperback. Boethius Press (Ireland). 1986. £7.50. ISBN 0 86314 101 3.

†Holmgren, Noel H. & Angell, Bobbi. *Botanical Illustration: Preparation for Publication*. New York Botanical Garden. ISBN 0 89327 272 8.