

Sir Hans Sloane studied botany, materia medica and pharmacy in England and France. It is said that before consenting to accompany Al-bermarle to Jamaica in 1687, he consulted Sydenham on the subject, and that the Father of English Medicine told him that he had better drown himself in Rosamund's Pond, a sheet of water in St. James' Park, which was then a fashionable resort for in-tending suicides.

In fifteen months he collected 800 plants, most of which were new

spécies: of these he published in 1696 his "Catalogus Plantarum," and in 1707 and 1725 he published two large volumes entitled, "A Voyage to the Islands, Madera, Barbados, Nieves, St. Christopher, and Jamaica, with the natural history. . . . of the last of those islands," with many engravings from crayon drawings.

On the 16th of April, 1691, Evelyn writes: "I went to see Dr. Sloane's curiosities, being a universal collec-tion of the natural productions of Jamaica, consisting of plants, fruits, corals, minerals, stones, earth, shells, animals and insects, collected with great judgment: several folios of dried plants, and one which had about 80 several sorts of ferns, and another of grasses; the Jamaica pep-per, in branch, leaves, flower, fruit, etc. This collection, with his journal and other philosophical and natural discourses and observations indeed very copious and extraordinary, suffi-cient to furnish a history of that island, to which I encouraged him."

During his stay in Jamaica, Sloane is said to have re-sided in an old Spanish-fronted building in the lane at the back of King's House, Spanish Town. His wife, whom he married in 1695 and who died in 1724, was Elizabeth, daughter of Alderman Langley, and widow of Ffulk Rose of St. Catherine (who from 1675 to 1693 represented first St. Thomas-in-the-Vale, and afterwards St. John, in the House of Assembly, and who in 1693 had be-queathed to her his estate Knollis Plantation). In 1693 Sloane was Sec-retary to the Royal Society of which he edited the Transactions for twenty years and to which he contributed twenty-two papers, he practised with great success as a physician. In 1716 he was created a baronet, being the first physician so honoured, and made

Physician-General to the Army; from 1719 to 1735 he was President of the College of Physicians; and in 1727 President of the Royal Society. He bequeathed his books, manuscripts, prints and curiosities (including his Jamaica collections) to the nation on condition that £20,000 (or less than half what they had cost him) was paid to his executors. The collection formed the basis of the British Museum. He gave to the Apothecaries Company the freehold of the physic garden at Chelsea, and he assisted to start the Foundling Hospital.

Copies of both his Catalogue and his History, as well as his autograph, are in the West India Library of the Institute.

His History was satirised by the brilliant Dr. William King, D.C.L.,

who, taking to drink, ruined him-self in spite of his abilities and the patronage which they secured for him. Pope told Lord Burlington that he remembered that King could "write verses in a tavern three hours after he could not speak." He satirized the Transactions of the Royal Society in his "Useful Trans-actions" commenced in 1709, but which, however, only lived through three numbers, the last parodies in "A Voyage to Cajami in America," the "History of Jamaica" by Sloane. A Copy of "A Voyage to Cayami" is in the West India Library of the Institute.

National Library of Jamaica