

mation that the databases offer is far in excess of the needs of most undergraduate students. Equally much of this is potentially of little use to research students, who may have access to the databases on which the book draws and so will be in a position to assess particular subtleties which are beyond the capabilities of a single book.

Overall the book suffers from a general lack of integration of both style and content. Consequently, it does not read well, many of the topics in early chapters appear brief and disjointed, while other subjects are too detailed to allow the broader picture to emerge. The book includes a few typographic errors and spelling mistakes, particularly of rock names. Some of the *P-T* diagrams and tables are rather poorly produced and explained. Bucher and Frey have produced a textbook which covers some aspects of the petrogenesis of metamorphic rocks in great detail, certain sections will undoubtedly be very useful to certain readers, and hence it will be a valuable addition to geological libraries. However, the book is aimed at students and although the price puts it within their reach, the drawbacks suggest to me that students may prefer to purchase a more balanced metamorphic textbook. T. J. DEMPSTER

Wilson, W. E. *The History of Mineral Collecting 1530–1799: with notes on twelve hundred early mineral collectors*. Mineralogical Record, **25**(6), 1994, 243 pp. Price \$24.00.

This Special Issue commemorates the 500th anniversary of the birth of Georgius Agricola (Georg Bauer: 1494–1555), the Father of Mineralogy and the Father of Mineral Collecting. The book is divided into two major sections: the narrative text, arranged by century and (for the XVIIIth century) by country, and the reference section consisting of an annotated census of all known collectors active before 1799, a bibliography of their published collection catalogues, and a general bibliography.

The earliest known surviving mineral specimens are two native silvers from Schneeberg, Saxony; in 1477 miners encountered the convergence of 12 silver-bearing veins in the St Georg mine, and at this junction a mass of solid silver $4 \times 1 \times 2$ m weighing ~ 20 metric tons was uncovered. Turning to the XVIIIth century, after a description of the French scene (including colour photographs of some of the specimens from the collection of René Just Haüy), there is a 27-page documentation of collecting in Great Britain (including Scotland and Ireland). Here details are given of the collections of Sir Hans Sloane, John Woodward, William Borlase, Philip Rashleigh, A.J.Forster, Charles Greville, James Sowerby, Alexander Crichton, James Smithson and William Phillips, amongst others. Similarly, accounts are given of collectors in Germany (Goethe, Werner) and Austria (von Born, Zois), Hungary, Bohemia, the Low Countries, Switzerland, Italy, Russia, the Scandinavian countries, Spain (and Mexico), Portugal (and Brazil) and America. A fascinating reproduction of the 25 guidelines for visitors to mineralogical museums to follow (C. F. Nickelio, 1727) includes a plea for 'cleanly scrubbed hands' (rule 1) followed later by (rule 18) 'everyone should be wary of having sticky hands and light fingers'.

As is usual with *Mineral Record* publications, the work is well illustrated, with drawings, coloured sketches of minerals (e.g. from the works of Rashleigh and Sowerby) and colour photographs. In his concluding chapter, the author points out that the beginning of mineral collecting in the XVIth century was a necessary prerequisite to the development of the first systematic classification schemes for minerals, and also led to the developing interest in the chemical analysis of minerals and to the study of their structure and physical properties.

This book gives a truly fascinating description of the birth of our science and at \$24.00 should be snapped up by all mineralogists while it is available.

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