Because of the nature of this volume as a collection of articles, it is not a systematic history of quantum chemistry. Such histories are being written, for example, *Neither Physics nor Chemistry: A History of Quantum Chemistry*, by Kostas Gavroglu and Ana Simões (1), but the individual contributions in this book do add to our knowledge of the history of this important area of contemporary science. *Pioneers of Quantum Chemistry* is enriched by a large number of historical photographs: George Wheland in his Baylor Military School uniform, Robert Mulliken working at his messy desk at the LMSS, and Linus Pauling lecturing at Moscow State University in 1984, for example. Historians of chemistry will certainly want to peruse this book although its rather high price may mean that it will not find its way into a large number of personal libraries.

(1) Kostas Gavroglu and Ana Simões, *Neither Physics nor Chemistry: A History of Quantum Chemistry*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2012. Reviewed in *Bull. Hist. Chem.,* **2012**, *37*, 103.

Jeffrey Kovac, Department of Chemistry, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-1600; jkovac@utk.edu

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A Festival of Chemistry Entertainments, Jack Stocker and Natalie Foster, Eds., ACS Symposium Series 1153, Washington, DC, American Chemical Society (distributed by Oxford University Press), 2013, xiii+118 pp, ISBN: 978-0-8412-2716-3, $150 (hardback; e-book also available).

If the phrase "chemistry entertainments" strikes you as an oxymoron, then this book is not for you. I suspect, however, that the phrase makes perfect sense to many readers of the *Bulletin*, as well as to readers of the "Newscripts" column of *Chemical and Engineering News*, collectors of chemistry trivia, and aficionados of science-themed songs, verse, and puzzles. The authors and editors of this volume have all shown the capacity to be entertained by chemistry and they endeavor here to entertain other like-minded chemists, chemistry students, and chemistry fans.

The book is based on a symposium organized by Jack Stocker at the 235th National meeting of ACS in New Orleans in April 2008. Stocker was a long-time professor of chemistry at the University of New Orleans and an extraordinary collector of chemistry memorabilia. As an ACS tour speaker, Stocker was willing to travel anywhere to share his collection, which he called "chemage" (a portmanteau of chemistry and garbage). He gathered quite an assembly of raconteurs, collectors, aficionados, and composers of puzzle and verse to share their enthusiasm for the whimsical in chemistry. This volume is one result of that occasion.

For those who were there, the symposium (and by extension the volume) evokes two bittersweet impressions. One is of resilience, as ACS met in New Orleans for the first time since Katrina. Stocker had lost much of his collection, but he was still sharing it with others as well as sharing his enthusiasm for chemistry and for his city. The other is of loss, for Stocker passed away the following year at the age of 85. One need not have been at the symposium or known Stocker, though, to appreciate the book, which stands on its own as a miscellaneous collection of metachemical fun.

One of the book's chapters has "history" in the title: "ACS History in Personal Debates, Both 'political' and 'Political.'" Former ACS President Mary Good writes about some of the politics within and outside ACS during her long years of service to the organization. She touches on matters ranging from the small-scale diplomacy of arranging for scientists who did not get along well to share the same stage, to some scientific fallout from the large-scale geopolitics of the Cold War. Her chapter makes for both interesting reading and raw material for further historical inquiry.

Another chapter that is rich in personal recollection is Mary Virginia Orna's, "Always a Cross(ed) Word." It is a delightful memoir that describes the development of her love for Latin and chemistry in high school. The latter became her career, while the former turned into a serious avocation in crossword puzzles. As a puzzle constructor, Orna has published in the *New York Times*,

among other places. The chapter explains some of the challenges and constraints of constructing a crossword puzzle. It recounts how her interests in crosswords and chemistry eventually combined. And it illustrates the text with several examples of published puzzles (including solutions at the back of the chapter).

Wordplay and reminiscence, combined with a large dose of humor, are front and center in Howard Shapiro's contribution, "Curriculum Witty." The chapter is mostly in verse, much of it singable to the tune of Gilbert and Sullivan's patter song about the modern major-general. The text notes that most of his talk was delivered in song with guitar accompaniment (which obviously loses something in print). Shapiro has delivered scientific papers in song before, including one on flow cytometry. This chapter includes pieces of his own and others' settings of science to verse and music, including an addendum to Tom Lehrer's song, "The Elements."

The book's opening chapter, by William Carroll Jr. (another former ACS President), revisits the "Newscripts" column of *Chemical and Engineering News*. It focuses on the Ken Reese years of that *C&EN* feature, although it also includes assorted examples of whimsy from *C&EN* from before Reese's tenure. The selection of examples displays Carroll's dry sense of humor—which, naturally, was more apparent in person than it is in text and illustrations alone.

Humor is also the theme of the contribution by the volume's co-editor, Natalie Foster. Her chapter describes several examples of the infiltration of satire or hoax into the more or less formal chemical literature. They include a letter by Alonzo S. Smith on the "hat" and "raft" conformations of Fe_6H_8, a biographical article about Claude Emile Jean-Baptiste Litre, and the first and last issue of the *Berichte der durstigen chemischen Gesellschaft*. The letter (note the author's initials) was published in *Chemistry in Industry* in the 1950s and subsequently abstracted in the *Chemisches Zentralblatt*. The pseudo-biographical article on Litre was published in the late 1970s as a joke in the newsletter *Chem 13 News*, then reported seriously in a couple of IUPAC publications, an encyclopedia, and even *C&EN*. Finally, this issue of the *Berichte* was published in the 1880s in the style of the better known *Berichte der deutschen chemischen Gesellschaft*. Its title translates as *Reports of the Thirsty Chemical Society* rather than the German Chemical Society. The issue contains several spoofs, including a depiction of Kekulé's structure of benzene using monkeys.

Kathryn Meloche, Janice Mears, and Roger Schenck contributed a chapter on oddities from the databases of their employer, the Chemical Abstracts Service. This chapter is like a cabinet of curiosities, displaying for the reader superlative items from the databases such as the shortest abstract, the longest name (of an author and of a substance), and the compound with the greatest number of elements. The article also treats strange structures, weird patents and the occasional cameo by chemist who would go on to be a head of state or government.

That brings me back to Jack Stocker, whose chapter finishes the book. It is also a collection of curiosities, not from CAS but from his own collection of memorabilia or "chemage" titled "Absurd Items That Survived Katrina: A Small Cornucopia of Miscellaneous Whimsy." These include visual puns in the form of chemical structures and equations, whimsical names, felicitous acronyms, and an apparatus diagram containing a superfluous surprise.

The volume contains groaners, to be sure, but each chapter has something to bring a glint of pleasure to the eye of anyone capable of entertainment by chemistry.

Carmen J. Giunta, Professor of Chemistry, Le Moyne College; giunta@lemoyne.edu