

years. Henry Winram Dickinson (1870–1952) was the first Honorary Secretary of the Newcomen Society and later its President, and it is with the magnificent work of this Society and of Dickinson, who was its mainspring, in connexion with the history of science and technology that Dr. Singer deals in this notable lecture. Dickinson worked at the Science Museum, South Kensington, for thirty-five years and rose to the rank of Senior Keeper. He was concerned with the opening of the new block, opened in 1928, by King George V, and played an important part in the acquisition and arrangement of some of the most important historical exhibits, including the early Watt engine and Watt's own garret workshop which was transported bodily from the great engineer's house outside Birmingham. In 1931 Dickinson was associated with Dr. Singer in organizing the International Congress of the History of Science and Technology which was held at the Science Museum. Even more fascinating than Dr. Singer's recollections of his friend are his considered opinions on the history of science and technology and its place in the modern world. Here he is speaking in his happiest and most inspiring vein on a subject to which he has devoted his life and upon which he is the greatest living authority. At the conclusion of his lecture Dr. Singer was presented with the first Dickinson Memorial Medal—an event that was happily recorded in an excellent photograph reproduced in the brochure under notice.

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Medicine and the Navy. J. J. KEEVIL. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1957–8; Vol. 1, 1200–1649. Vol. 2, 1649–1714. Pp. viii, 255; xii, 332. Illustrated. 40s. per volume.

The rare combination of qualities in Surgeon-Commander Keevil's 'make-up', as well as his distinguished war record, proclaimed him as the appropriate writer of the history of medicine and the Royal Navy. That Sir Henry Dale should have written an introduction to the work must add to the expectant interest with which these volumes have been awaited, and the verdict of civilian and sailor must be that the ready support given by the Wellcome Trustees to the enterprise has enabled a monumental work to be placed in the hands of the historian, the Admiralty, as well as the reading public.

The first volume of the work deals with the medieval period, the Tudor period, and the period of the early Stuarts. Not unnaturally the problem of scurvy repeatedly fills the pages and as the author remarks,

perhaps one of the most bewildering aspects of the history of scurvy is the manner in which a cure was repeatedly found, only to be lost again because of a wrong theory of its manner of operation, or because some uncontrollable factor offered a preferable explanation when it came to accounting for deaths which caused the failure of an expedition.

This was the great period of Drake, the Hawkins, Effingham, and Frobisher and surgeons such as Clowes, Alexander Read, Peter Lowe, Banester and the great

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Woodall, whose *Surgions Mate*, appearing in 1617, was addressed primarily to surgeons serving in East Indiamen. In 1678, two years after his association with the Navy, he published *The Viaticum*. The contributions of these great men, executive officers and surgeons, are dealt with fully and in delightful prose.

The second volume deals with the Commonwealth and Protectorate period and with that of the later Stuarts. In the preface the author insists that by the beginning of the eighteenth century many surgeons were beginning to serve in H.M. ships almost continuously and to discover a pride in that service which remains traditional. In the reigns of William III and Anne the need for hospital ships was fully recognized, and not only did they serve for the care of the sick but they constituted a meeting-place where sea-surgeons could come together, and where projects for the advancement of the service could be discussed.

The period with which this volume deals contained many famous names of admirals and surgeons: Admiral Robert Blake, who though beyond contemporary surgical aid with a renal calculus, yet put to sea again and died from nephritis two hours before the flagship anchored in Plymouth Sound on 7 August, 1657. We are introduced to his fleet-surgeon, Haselock, to Richard Wiseman, surgeon to Charles II, sometimes called 'The father of English surgery', to James Yonge, often credited with the priority in the flap method of amputation, for which he himself acknowledged his indebtedness to Lowdham, of Exeter.

The putative relationship between scurvy and air-pollution and other causes is dwelt upon, and even when Cockburn cured a scorbutic patient with an electuary flavoured with lemon juice and noted that the man 'recovered apace and came to his perfect health', he made no deduction from this, and was clearly unfamiliar with all that had been recorded by travellers on the use of this fruit in scurvy.

A valuable feature of this volume, as of its predecessor, is the 'Chronology' at the end, enumerating many of the important occasions of the period under consideration. There is frequent mention of St. Thomas's Hospital by its distinguished alumnus. The waxing and waning of the influence of the Barber-Surgeons Company and the Society of Apothecaries in the sphere of naval medicine find frequent mention. The English is impeccable, and the reader is carried happily along amidst all the detail which must have demanded great industry and patience. When it is remembered that the writing of this volume took place when the author's life was already menaced, admiration can know no bounds.

The illustrations are excellent and numerous, and the volume is produced in the manner that one has come to expect from the famous publishing firm that is responsible. This is a volume that should be in every library, and there will be few surgeons who have belonged to the Senior Service and who will not desire to possess it.

GORDON GORDON-TAYLOR

Charles Dickens and His Family. A Sympathetic Study. By W. H. BOWEN. Privately printed by W. Heffer and Sons, Limited, Cambridge, 1956; pp. 182. 21s.

Some writers inspire a devotion in their readers which leads to the formation of societies to keep their memory green and to researches into their private lives, about the details of which there is an insatiable curiosity. Dickens is one such writer, and Mr. Bowen is evidently one of his devotees. As he says in his foreword, the idea originally contemplated in this study was to review Dickens's medical history, but in