

Book Reviews

medicine. The bibliography updates its 1956 edition, includes works published as late as 1983, and concentrates on historical rather than historic items, the latter being covered by Sir Edward Ford and the bibliography of Australian medicine currently in progress.

Gandevia urges the reader to read the introduction: this outlines the rationale, parameters, format, and future of the work. It is pleasing to know that subsequent updating, albeit on a limited scale, is planned. The twenty sections range from the medical aspects of exploration and transportation to biography and medical journalism. Annotations serve to elucidate a title or draw attention to a particular emphasis or contribution. However, the outstanding feature of the bibliography is its detailed author and subject indexes. These should first be consulted for a listing of available secondary sources for a specific topic or author. Unfortunately, the faint, small print detracts somewhat from the overall presentation. Nevertheless, the bibliography is an indispensable reference work for studies in Australian medical history.

Helen R. Woolcock
University of Western Ontario, Canada

S.M. HILLIER and J.A. JEWELL (editors), *Health care and traditional medicine in China 1800–1982*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983, 8vo, pp. xix, 453, illus., £25.00.

A book on medicine and health care in China with the emphasis on the twentieth century has been a desideratum for a long time. The volume under review offers also a historical introduction and a description of the use of traditional medicine in a vast country where most facilities of modern western medicine are available only in a few cities. A great amount of material has been presented here without having been digested. Five chapters deal with health care from 1800 to 1982. Since the inception of the People's Republic in 1949, there has been the "Great Leap Forward" during 1958–9, the "Three Bitter Years" 1962–65, the "Cultural Revolution" 1965–76, and the present post-Mao phase. Then comes a chapter on preventive medicine covering the same ground for 1949–82. Next come four chapters on traditional medicine, which are completely different in character from the rest of the book because they explain principles and describe methods, while the other chapters deal with social organization. Then come four chapters on the special topics of paramedical personnel, psychiatry, nutrition, and family planning, again plodding through the same phases with their medical policies. That the chapters are by various authors is no excuse. An editor ought to have streamlined the text and cut out the mass of meaningless detail.

All statements are documented by quotations, mostly from Chinese newspapers and periodicals. The statistics, however, lose their significance when figures given during one phase are frequently contradicted and replaced by other figures for the same period, during the subsequent phase.

In spite of these drawbacks, some information on a specific subject can be extracted by a patient and persistent reader. For instance, the present reviewer is fascinated by the account of the rediscovery of traditional prescriptions from Han tombs which were scientifically investigated and resulted in the isolation of an anti-malarial crystal of *Artemisia annua* in 1972.

Marianne Winder
Wellcome Institute

JOHANNES OEHME, *Pädiatrie im 18. Jahrhundert*, Dokumenta Pädiatrica Bd. 12, Lübeck, Hansisches Verlagkontor, 1984, 8vo, pp. 171, illus., [no price stated].

This slim volume with many pictures of eighteenth-century physicians and reproductions of the title-pages of medical works on the diseases of children intends to portray Enlightenment paediatrics. As a quick introduction, the book has its uses. It is clearly divided into sections covering prenatal care, feeding of infants, diseases of the newborn, the classification of diseases of schoolchildren, infectious diseases, skin diseases, and infants' exposure to venereal

Book Reviews

disease, nervous and psychosomatic illnesses, surgical and other corrective treatment, the beginnings of social hygiene in paediatrics, therapy for children, and, at the end, a list of doctors and their publications in this field in the eighteenth century. However, not very much more than short summaries of medical insights from selected works appear under each heading. In general, one has the impression that the eighteenth century did concern itself readily with children's disease. Physicians of rank dedicated whole works, or large sections, to what must have been very prevalent ills. However, I question whether one can approach a difficult subject, such as the emergence of a professional discipline in medicine, in quite this way. All it says is that the nosography of medicine did not exclude children's diseases, as it did not exclude women's diseases. But this adds nothing to the quality of the knowledge. Unfortunately, the book reads like a modern manual on children's diseases. For today's paediatrician this knowledge is useless. For the historian of medicine the list raises the problem of approach. Names alone do not say why some doctors found children's diseases interesting. Nor does it explain why, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, physicians like Johann Peter Frank took a particular interest in children when he proposed that better health did not come by way of private practice, but should instead involve a concerted effort by doctors and community officials. Medical history necessarily postulates a look at more than the rediscovery of clinical progress. In this sense the book is a mere skeleton, not a full-fledged introduction to what we should ask about children's diseases and medical treatment.

Johanna Geyer-Kordesch
University of Münster