

## Book Notices

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WILLIAM A. R. THOMSON, *Herbs that heal*, London, A. & C. Black, 1976, 8vo, pp. 184, illus., £4.25.

Dr. Thomson has had a long and distinguished career in medical journalism and lexicography. His main interest in medicine has been therapy, and thus his presentation here of herbs and plants that still have a useful role in medicine. There have been a number of similar books published recently, indicating a resurgence of interest in folk medicine and homeopathy. This one, however, stands out from the others, due to the author's professional approach to his subject and to his ability to argue the case for the use today of natural therapeutic agents and for research into them. It will be of considerable interest to the medical historian because of the historical material it contains, and because of the plea for the re-instatement of ancient remedies.

MICHAEL L. A. ANDREWS, *The life that lives on man*, London, Faber & Faber, 1976, 8vo, pp. 183, illus., £4.95.

At least two books published recently have dealt primarily with the history of man's cutaneous parasites. This one, in reverse, describes the flora and fauna of the human body surface with the addition of historical and literary facts and allusions. It is an eminently readable account based on a television programme and intended for a non-specialist audience. Thus, there are no references, only a very brief bibliography. It is curious that the author omits from the latter a book very like his own: Theodor Rosebury, *Life on man*, New York, Viking Press, 1969. This is concerned only with man's microbes, but on the whole it is a much better book on account of the broader issues such as cleanliness and dirt and their taboos that are discussed.

CARLO M. CIPOLLA, *Chi ruppe i rastelli a Monte Lupo?*, (Saggi 169), Bologna, Il Mulino, 1977, 8vo, pp. 134, illus., L.3,500 (paperback).

Professor Cipolla's third study of plague and public health in seventeenth-century Tuscany chronicles with vigour and wit the diverse reactions within a small town to the onset of plague in 1630–31. The exemplary narrative, based on material in local archives, warns the historian against rash *a priori* categorization of human behaviour, and the idle and inquisitive against things that go bump in the night.

H. HOLTER and K. MAX MØLLER (editors), *The Carlsberg Laboratory 1876/1976*, Copenhagen, The Carlsberg Foundation, 1976, 4to, pp. 447, illus., [no price stated].

J. L. Jacobsen (1811–1887), owner of the Carlsberg Brewery in Copenhagen, founded the Chemical and Physiological Laboratory in 1876. Since then its career has been a distinguished one, each of the two sections employing and training outstanding scientists who have contributed importantly to their subjects. This commemorative volume, composed by twenty-nine authors, some of them deceased, gives a detailed account of the research carried out by the Laboratory, some associated with the Brewery, and of the main individuals who worked there. It is an impressive record, made possible by private enterprise and an enlightened philanthropist, and described here in an attractively produced book with a minimum of technical jargon in the text. Like the Carlsberg Foundation, which is a charity akin to the Wellcome Trust, the Laboratory is financed solely by the profits from commerce, the sale of Carlsberg lager.

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PAUL S. SEAVER (editor), *Seventeenth-century England. Society in an age of revolution*, New York, New Viewpoints; London, Croom Helm, 1976, 8vo, pp. viii, 181, £5.00.

Because of an undue emphasis on the English civil wars and revolution, historical interpretation of the seventeenth century has been distorted. The editor has therefore selected four important essays to redress the balance, by looking at the century as a whole: Lawrence Stone on social mobility; Joan Thirsk on agriculture and social change; D. C. Coleman on labour in the English economy; J. H. Plumb on the growth of the electorate. This selective survey will be of interest to the historian of medicine to help assemble the essential background against which he must place his special studies. However, the articles are all readily available in their original places of publication.

ANITA GREGORY, 'Anatomy of a fraud: Harry Price and the medium Rud, Schneider', *Annals of Science*, 1977, 34: 449–549.

A whole issue of the *Annals* is devoted to this paper in which the author discusses the claim made in 1933 by the psychical research worker, Harry Price, who accused Schneider of fraudulence on one occasion. She carefully analyses available material, some unpublished, and offers a very fair assessment.

UNA MACLEAN, *Magical medicine. A Nigerian case-study*, Harmondsworth, Middx., Penguin Books, 1977, 8vo, pp. 167, 70p. (paperback).

First published in 1971, this book now appears unaltered in cheap paperback format. It reports an investigation carried out in the Yoruba population of Ibadan, which sought to discover the uses made of magico-religious based traditional medicine. These were found to be widespread, and the juxtaposition of primitive with Western medicine is a fascinating aspect of an excellent account of present-day African medical beliefs and therapy, as is the possible limited use of parts of it in the West. The book is well written and fully documented by a careful and experienced scholar.

DAVID PALFREYMAN, *John Jeyes . . . the making of a household name*, Thetford, Norfolk, Jeyes Group Ltd., 1977, 8vo, pp. 127, illus., [limited edition, not for sale].

In 1877 the first British patent for an effective disinfectant was granted to John Jeyes (1817–1892), an entrepreneurial inventor, and on it a business was built and a universal commodity produced. This book describes the man and his business, but unlike most commercial biographies it places Jeyes and his product against a background of the last two decades of the nineteenth century and so escapes the denunciation of parochial antiquarianism. It is, in fact, a valuable addition to medical as well as to business history.

G. HOWARD POTEET, *Death and dying. A bibliography (1950–1974)*, Troy, N.Y., Whitston Publishing Co., 1976, 8vo, pp. xxvii, 192, [no price stated].

The central theme of this unannotated list of references is the psychology of death, and topics such as euthanasia, legal interpretations of life and death, and suicide are mostly excluded. There is a list of periodical and book sources, the bibliography by subject heading, and an index of authors.

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PAUL GASSER, *Charles Krafft (1863–1921). Ein Pionier der Appendektomie und der Krankenpflege in Europa*, Basle and Stuttgart, Schwabe, 1977, 8vo, pp [vi], 121, S.Fr./DM.24.00.

There are two sections: the life and personality of Krafft, an outstanding Swiss surgeon; his pioneer work on the etiology, pathology, and surgery of the appendix. There is a bibliography of his publications. On the whole, it seems that Krafft is given undue credit, and others, such as R. Fitz of Boston, less than is usual. On the other hand, American and British authors have probably underplayed Krafft, so this book may help to redress the balance.

M. ELLIOTT RANDOLPH and ROBERT B. WELCH, *The Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute. The first fifty years 1925–1975*, Baltimore, Md., Williams & Wilkins, 1976, 4to, pp. viii, 216, illus., \$12.00.

This renowned eye clinic and research centre is part of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, founded by a grateful patient, and named after Dr. William H. Wilmer, one of America's most celebrated ophthalmologists. Its origins, activities, and its staff over the fifty years are described here in detail. The research carried out in the Institute and the specialists it has produced have been equally outstanding, thus making it one of the most famous in the world. This well-illustrated, modestly priced, and skilfully produced volume is a fitting tribute to its fame.

GUENTER B. RISSE, RONALD L. NUMBERS and JUDITH WALZER LEAVITT (editors), *Medicine without doctors. Home health care in American history*, New York, Science History Publications, 1977, 8vo, pp. [x], 124, illus., \$7.95 (\$4.95 paperback).

An 'Introduction' by Professor Risse is followed by five essays on the various aspects of self-help medical care. John Blake writes on domestic medicine manuals; James Cassedy on factors inducing American self-help 1800 to 1850; Numbers and R. M. Morantz on individual practitioners of home medicine; and J. H. Young on methods used in domestic medicine, especially patent medicine. They were given at a 1975 symposium, and each is a penetrating and scholarly study. A similar handling of domestic health care in other countries with comparative analyses would be most rewarding.

CYNTHIA EAGLE RUSSETT, *Darwin in America. The intellectual response 1865–1912*, San Francisco, W. H. Freeman, 1976, 8vo, pp. ix, 228, illus., £6.80 (£3.50 paperback).

It is claimed that after the Civil War Darwin "altered the course of the mainstream of American thought", at a time when a re-orientation of national intellect was needed and innovative thought was sought after. His concepts influenced the scientist, the novelist, and the social theorist and Cynthia Russett surveys the impact of Darwinism on these and other intellectual disciplines, but especially religion, philosophy, and social thought. Her scholarly book will, therefore, be of value to historians of biology, who wish to explore Darwin's effects on American intellectual life, both lasting and transient, and who ask fundamental questions concerning modern science.

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WILLIAM H. WILLIAMS, *America's first hospital: the Pennsylvania Hospital, 1751-1841*, Wayne, Penn., Haverford House, 1976, 8vo, pp. [vi], 186, illus., \$12.50.

Unlike many parochial accounts of medical institutions this book provides a good account of the background social forces and circumstances that shaped early American charity. The author is a historian and his work is well documented, except for the textual quotations. It deals with this hospital as an example of the philanthropic tradition, of the pioneering spirit, and of the wish to provide for the sick and the advancement of medicine characteristic of this era in American medicine. Although there are some deficiencies in medical matters his book can be recommended. The illustrations are modest in number, considering the variety that must be available.

LLOYD E. HAWES, *Benjamin Waterhouse, M.D., first Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic at Harvard and introducer of cowpox vaccination into America*, Boston, Mass., Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, 1974, 4to, pp. 55, illus., [no price stated].

A brief biography profusely and elegantly illustrated, and including a concordance of Waterhouse's *Hortus sicca*, compiled by Dr. J. Worth Estes. It is based on memorabilia in the Countway Library, and should inspire others to produce similarly attractive and useful books. Eighteen pages deal with vaccination.

MARTIN KAUFMAN, *American medical education. The formative years 1765-1910*, Westport, Conn., and London, Greenwood Press, 1976, 8vo, pp. x, 208, \$12.95.

The author specializes in American social history, mostly medicine and public health. He shows in this book how medical education in America declined in the nineteenth century as disreputable schools multiplied in the absence of controls and lowered their standards as they competed for students. The reaction to this situation appears in contemporary publications which Kaufman has carefully researched. Unfortunately he is less able to account fully for the deterioration, and pays little attention to the content of medical education *per se*, to the individuals responsible in the schools, or to the medical reformers. Other criticisms of his approach can be made, so that he has not contributed significantly to the interpretations of his topic although new data are revealed.

JEREMY L. TOBEY, *The history of ideas: a bibliographical introduction. Volume II: Medieval and early modern Europe*, Oxford, Clio Books, 1977, 8vo, pp. xii, 320, £11.75.

The first volume of this series was reviewed in *Medical History*, 1977, 21: 101, and the reviewer concluded that it contains numerous errors in the section dealing with the history of medicine and is therefore unreliable. Looking at the same section in the second volume (pp. 140-143), exactly the same kind of mistakes are to be found. Moreover, the selection of relevant secondary literature dealing with the medieval period through the seventeenth century is unbalanced and inadequate, as might be expected in a bibliography of this coverage prepared by one man. The publishers claim it "can be used by students and as an authoritative reference by librarians". As far as the history of medicine is concerned, it can be recommended to neither group.