

Book Reviews

scientific scepticism, Johnson still finds it “curious that, of all available psychiatric drug treatments, lithium therapy is still the one treated with most suspicion and mistrust by so many clinicians and even with outright and overt hostility by a few”(p. 129). There are many more obvious reasons than he is prepared to entertain.

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TERRY CLIFFORD, *Tibetan Buddhist medicine and psychiatry. The diamond healing*, York Beach, Maine, S. Weiser; Wellingborough, Northants, Thorsons, 1984, 8vo, pp. xx, 268, illus., £12.95.

Eastern medical systems are enjoying a great vogue at the moment because they are holistic, endeavouring to heal the whole person, not just bits of the patient's body or mind. This book is an excellent example of a description of this method because the intertwining requirements of body, mind, and spirit are each shown to receive treatment. This treatment then helps the other strands of the personality. (1) Buddhist medicine deals with the spiritual and ethical requirements. It provides inner peace as a prerequisite for well-being. (2) Tantric medicine purifies the invisible system of channels and wheels known from yoga. (3) Somatic medicine deals with the body; and (4) psychiatric medicine with the troubles of the everyday mind. They are not watertight compartments and influence one another.

The core of the book is formed by a translation of three chapters on psychiatric medicine from the Tibetan, with part of the original text in facsimile. Tables of plants and other substances used in psycho-pharmacology are provided, with explanations on their appearance and details of their application. Subjects difficult for Western readers, such as the concepts of deities and demons, are explained in Western terms.

Any criticism made of such a comprehensive and well-balanced survey of the field is really of small importance. While history is touched upon only where it is useful for elucidating some connexions, it is alleged in three different passages that uroscopy was an indigenous Tibetan invention. This is by no means certain, because Western influences existed during the Middle Ages. Though the genuine works of Galen do not deal in detail with the diagnosis of diseases from the urine, Byzantine writers like the fourth-century Magos of Emesa in Syria and the seventh-century Theophilus Protospatharios of Constantinople had worked out elaborate systems. Syriac and Byzantine learning was taught at Gondeshapur in Persia, and Persian ideas are known to have travelled to Tibet via the trade routes.

Some other small criticisms could be made about inconsistent terminology, such as the indiscriminate use of the words “airs” and “winds” instead of deciding to use one or the other. The sources mentioned are sometimes secondary but the detailed bibliography will help the more interested reader to consult the primary sources.

To keep the price within the reach of the ordinary reader, the book has foregone glossy colour plates, but it has a great number of very useful working illustrations.

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H. A. SNELLEN, *Two pioneers of electrocardiography. The correspondence between Einthoven and Lewis from 1908–1925*, Rotterdam, Donker, 1983, 8vo, pp. 140, illus., Dfl.55.00.

Although Willem Einthoven received the 1924 Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology for the discovery of the mechanism of the electrocardiogram, he fully realized that it was Thomas Lewis who had made the prize possible by demonstrating clinical application of the instrument. Starting in 1908, Einthoven and Lewis wrote to each other frequently between their respective homes of Leiden and London, and by 1924 they had become good friends. Fortunately, Einthoven saved almost all of his letters. Thanks to H. A. Snellen's continued interest in publishing Einthoven's writings, we now have this complete collection of the correspondence between Lewis and Einthoven. Professor Snellen has supplied biographical sketches of these two men and has summarized key developments every year or two. He