

Book Reviews

honesty and independence. There is no substitute for hard slog was Darwin's repeated, Smilesian refrain.

Neve's introduction is also useful in that it explores what Darwin left out of his autobiographical reflections. For instance, Darwin was extremely reticent about the death of his mother, though this should not be taken to imply that he had recovered from her loss. And he was no less circumspect about many of the structures and supports that made his scientific career possible. Darwin presumably believed in his rhetorical construction of himself as a self-made man of science. But Neve rightly emphasizes the vast colonial infrastructure of ships, men and communications that made Darwin's voyage and his collection of specimens possible. Likewise, his webs of informants, family connections, allies, female editors and translators typically enjoyed only cursory mention in his autobiography, but we need to remember the essential roles they played in the genesis and presentation of Darwin's ideas.

The introduction closes with a discussion of his exegesis on 'Religious Belief', Darwin's sincere attempt to persuade his wife and family that it was a surfeit, not an absence of compassion or humility, that drove him to agnosticism. For all the warmth of Charles's relationship with Emma, his rejection of revealed religion drove a wedge between them and brought both considerable pain. Yet the rift between Charles and Emma on the subject of religion illuminates more than an important, and rather tragic, aspect of their private worlds. As Neve points out, like all the best autobiographies Darwin's provides a microcosm of much more prevalent tensions in late Victorian society. And rarely is the crisis of faith more palpable than in Darwin's moving and heartfelt prose.

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Notes and Records of the Royal Society: A Journal of the History of Science, Millennium Issue, January 2001, **55** (1), ed. Alan Cook,

pp. 181, illus., £15.00, US\$23.00. Orders to: The Royal Society, 6 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AG, UK.

This "millennial issue" of the Royal Society's history of science journal differs little from normal issues except in the content of the customary brief preface by the then editor, Sir Alan Cook FRS. When *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* began under the anonymous editorship of the then librarian, H W Robinson, it was conceived as an "in house" periodical detailing the current affairs of the Society (now long since transferred elsewhere) together with some brief historical notes, to be distributed exclusively to Fellows. By 1940 it had begun to be what it has remained, a learned journal devoted to any aspect of the Society and its Fellows, with articles by both Fellows and non-Fellows and normal rules of subscription. Since 1960 it has been edited by a (named) Fellow with the assistance of a committee or advisory board (nowadays named in each issue) always containing some historians of science or medicine. The journal now appears three times a year and the previously sober cover has been replaced by an attractively coloured and illustrated one, different for each issue. The prevailing tone tends to be factual rather than analytical so that it usefully complements existing professional journals.

Although articles on medical Fellows (who were most numerous in the nineteenth century) are not common in *Notes and Records*, there are usually some biologically orientated articles well worth reading. Here are a dozen mostly short articles together with a book review (usually several), the annual Anniversary address by the President (Sir Aaron Klug) and a note by a member of staff on Jstor, which permits access to the Society's scientific journals since their commencement in 1665. Readers of *Medical History* can surely find the general articles here of interest, these being 'The history of science and the image of science' by William Shea, who considers briefly the public attitudes to science at the present time; an intriguing survey of "Predictions", a well-chosen review of the (mostly erroneous) attempts by distinguished

scientists to predict likely and unlikely achievements in science and technology, by John Meurig Thomas FRS; and 'History of science and technology in education and training in Europe' by Professor Claude Debru of Paris, an abstract of a lecture given at an international conference on the subject. There are also a number of articles for biologists: Brian Ford on 'The Royal Society and the microscope', a well illustrated account of its history from 1663 to the present, best on the later period; Graham E Budd on the ideas of various Royal Society Fellows on palaeontology, from the seventeenth century to the present, also best on the later period (specifically note 5 is incorrect and the citation is erroneous); G E Fogg FRS, 'The Royal Society and the South Seas', the longest article and the most like usual articles in the journal, an excellent factual survey; and two brief articles by the editor, 'Pictures of plants illustrating exotic collections' (in the Society's archives) and 'Royal weather' surveying a few of the Society's contributions to meteorology. Less relevant are two further articles by the editor, 'Time and the Royal Society' and 'The centenary of the National Physical Laboratory,' and 'Zenographic longitude systems and Jupiter's differential rotation' by Raymond Hide, only for the mathematically and astronomically competent.

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Robert Arnott (ed.), *The archaeology of medicine. Papers given at a session of the annual conference of the Theoretical Archaeology Group held at the University of Birmingham on 20 December 1998*, BAR International series 1046, Oxford, Archaeopress, 2002, pp. v, 128, illus., £25.00 (paperback 1-84171-427-5).

Collaboration between medical historians and archaeologists, which was a feature of the Theoretical Archaeology Group conference held in Birmingham University in 1998, is vital. A concern that emerges from many of the papers in this collection is the difficulty of interpreting

historic, textual information: enlightenment comes when it is analysed in conjunction with the examination of archaeological evidence. The papers encompass almost 4000 years of history from the Hittites of Asia Minor, ancient Egyptians, Greek and Roman medicine, Anglo-Saxon and Tudor periods until the near present.

An overview of palaeopathology by Charlotte Roberts explores sources such as skeletal and mummified remains and historical documented evidence, and discusses the importance of archaeologists having some medical knowledge and interested clinicians receiving archaeological training. She cautions against damage to skeletal material with no clearly defined aim as it is a non-renewable resource. Macroscopic and radiographic examinations are of fundamental importance. The CT scanning of the mummies illustrated by Joyce Filer provides maximum information without destruction of the specimens.

Chrissie Freeth notes the universality of dental disease. From Babylonian times until the eighteenth century, toothache was believed to be caused by the "tooth worm". There were many weird suggestions for curing toothache and for the spontaneous exfoliation of a tooth. One example is a prescription by Pliny to touch the offending tooth with the frontal bone of a lizard during a full moon. Despite evidence of dental therapeutics in papyri and other texts, it is surprising that there is so little archaeological verification.

Robert Arnott, the editor, describes written evidence concerning magical medicine in the Hittite Empire and in contemporaneous correspondence which indicates that treatments were imported from Mesopotamia and Egypt. He advises the instigation of the study of skeletal material as the next step.

Caution is advocated by Niall Mckeown in the reading of literary evidence. The Hippocratics considered that invasive medical intervention of the body was likely to result in death. The most common procedures were draining of pus and amputations. Most treatments were based on exercise, diet and pharmacology. In her paper about Roman military valetudinaria, Patricia Baker writes about the problematic identification