

## Book Notices

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ROBERT J. MOES (editor), *Thirty books in the library of the Los Angeles County Medical Association: a compendium of medical history*, Los Angeles, Friends of the LACMA Library, 1984, 4to, pp. 134, illus., \$78.00 + postage.

The library which is the subject of this book traces its origins to the last years of the nineteenth century, though it was not until 1934 that it passed into the custody of the Los Angeles County Medical Association and was provided with a building. *Thirty books*, which is elegantly printed in a lavish edition of five hundred copies, is a celebration of this fiftieth anniversary. The thirty classics chosen from the library's two thousand rare books range in date from 1479 to 1929, and include first editions of such works as Vesalius's *Fabrica* and Hunter's study of the gravid uterus. They are accompanied by illustrated biographical essays on their thirty authors. The result is a handsome volume which is a pleasure to handle, though one which has only slight usefulness. Scholars would have preferred fuller bibliographical details of these particular copies rather than lightweight biographies. An illustration, for instance, of the manuscript marginalia in the Padua 1479 edition of the *Canon*, or of its chained binding, would have spoken volumes compared with a "reconstituted appearance of the head of Avicenna". As it is, the level of bibliographical description is low, and even such basic terms as title-page and frontispiece are confused.

PHILIPPE ARIÈS and ANDRÉ BÉJIN (editors), *Western sexuality. Practice and precept in past and present times*, trans. by Anthony Forster, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1985, pp. ix, 220, £17.50.

This is a rather chequered collection of essays arising out of a seminar held by Ariès and Béjin in 1979 and 1980. Some of the better pieces—e.g., Foucault on chastity, and Rossiaud on medieval prostitution in France—have been superseded by lengthier work already published. The same applies to Flandrin's important study of the place of love in married life. There are two essays, both by André Béjin, of substantial interest to the historian of twentieth-century medical specialization. In 'The decline of the psychoanalyst and the rise of the sexologist', he traces the mutation of dynamic psychiatry into sexology, inevitable, one might say, given the inherent intellectual bias of Freudianism and the social emergence of "permissiveness" in post-war society. In 'The influence of the sexologists and sexual democracy', Béjin explores the role of the sexual expert as "normaliser" and "controller".

JEAN STENGERS and ANNE VAN NECK, *Histoire d'une grande peur: la masturbation*, Brussels, Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1984, pp. 232, FB. 780 (paperback).

This is a useful and unpretentious survey of writings against masturbation from the Church Fathers down to Freud. It demonstrates neatly that before the eighteenth century, masturbation was regarded as a minor sin but rarely as a disease or as a severe threat to health. All this changed in the century after *Onania*. Particularly welcome are the discussions of the transformation from Tissot's stress on hygiene, to the growing psychopathological orientation of nineteenth-century writings. Unfortunately the analysis rarely rises above the level of the précis of texts, and wider social contexts and explanations are signally lacking.

BARBARA J. SHAPIRO, *Probability and certainty in seventeenth-century England: a study of the relationships between natural science, religion, history, law, and literature*, Princeton University Press, 1985, pp. x, 347, £10.50 (paperback).

The hardback version of Professor Shapiro's volume has been noticed in this journal (1984, 28:105). Its incarnation in paperback, at one-third the price, will be welcomed by scholars concerned with the large number of disciplines dealt with in her lively narrative.

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CHARLES NEWTON PEABODY, *ZAB (Brevet Major Zabdiel Boylston Adams 1829–1902, physician of Boston and Framingham)*, Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, for the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Boston, 1984, 8vo, pp. xii, 255, illus., \$17.50.

Let it be acknowledged at the outset without quibbling or belabouring that this is an antiquarian, commemorative production that displays all the shortcomings of its genre.

The book is also intriguing as the biography of a largely unimportant American surgeon, Zabdiel Boylston Adams (1829–1902). The first third of the volume is devoted to Adams's medical training at Harvard (and briefly in Paris) and early practice in Boston, and the second to his experiences as a surgeon in the American Civil War. But it is the final section, which describes his practice from 1867 in the small town of Framingham, Massachusetts, that holds the greatest interest for most medical historians. Drawing heavily on manuscript materials, substantially in private hands, the author (himself a surgeon in Framingham) reconstructs the aspirations, routine, and disappointments of a man who distinguished himself on a local level by his work on the town's board of health and as medical legal examiner, but who was never particularly successful as a medical practitioner. Dr Peabody has thus provided a detailed, sometimes poignant portrait of the life of an American country doctor during the last third of the nineteenth century.

M. FATTORI and M. BIANCHI (editors), *Spiritus*, Rome, Edizioni dell' Ateneo, 1984, 8vo, pp. xii, 644, [no price stated] (paperback).

These proceedings of a conference, held under the auspices of the Lessico Intellettuale Europeo, are concerned with the meaning of the word "spiritus" in Europe from the world of Christian antiquity to Christian Wolff. Historians of medicine will be most concerned with the studies of the word in Locke, Berkeley, and Bacon, and, in particular, with the essays by Debus and Walker on spirits in the medical world of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Given the importance of the concept in medieval medicine, it is a pity that no author followed up Temkin's argument for the standardization under the Arabs and in the medieval universities of what in Galen were hypothetical entities.

ROBERT A. HAHN and ATWOOD D. GAINES (editors), *Physicians and western medicine. Anthropological approaches to theory and practice*, Dordrecht and Boston, D. Reidel, 1985, 8vo, pp. ix, 345. Dfl.145.00/\$54.00.

This book promises rather more than it can deliver. It begins with the laudable programmatic claim that anthropology should examine biomedicine in the same way that it surveys any other cultural product. However, it is quite clear that for all the authors in this volume modern medicine has a residual core of knowledge that is true in a sense that other sorts of cultural belief are not. Margaret Lock, for example, describes nineteenth-century accounts of the menopause as an example of "an extremely warped clinical construction of reality" (p. 119). Warped from what?—one might ask. Similarly, in what is otherwise an extremely interesting piece, Cecil Helman offers two models of disease, one of which he obviously believes describes reality more correctly than the other. This reality is biological. The excessive use of inverted commas, a move towards diagrams and jargon seems to indicate, sadly, that anthropologists are moving progressively farther away from a historical understanding of western medicine. This is a pity, given some of the promising interactions between the disciplines that have recently occurred.

C. BRUCE PERRY, *The voluntary medical institutions of Bristol*, Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 1984, 8vo, pp. 22, illus., 90p + 17p postage (paperback) (obtainable from Department of History, University of Bristol, Bristol BS8 1RJ).

Professor C. Bruce Perry, Emeritus Professor of Medicine in the University of Bristol, presents an account of the response in the Bristol area to the problem of the sick poor. In 1736,

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local philanthropists raised subscriptions from seventy-eight individuals to found the Bristol Infirmary, the second provincial voluntary hospital in Britain. An account of the Infirmary and its staff is given. In 1831, the Bristol General Hospital was founded, the two institutions eventually amalgamating in 1939 to form the Bristol Royal Hospital. Other institutions briefly discussed include the Bristol Dispensary (1775), the Clifton Dispensary (1812), Bristol Vaccine Institution (1838), Redland Dispensary (1860), Eye Dispensary (1810), Homoeopathic Dispensary (1852), Dispensary for Sick Children (1857), Magdalen Hospital (1801), and Bristol Lying-In Institution (1821).

INGRID EBNER and GLEN P. JENKINS, *Skeletons in our closet*, Cleveland, Ohio, Cleveland Health Sciences Library, 1983, 8vo, pp. 44, illus., \$8.00 (paperback) (available from Ingrid Ebner, Howard Dittrick Museum, 11000 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44106, USA).

This well-produced little book, with its intriguing title, concerns the skeleton as represented in the anatomical works in the Rare Book Collection of the Cleveland Health Sciences Library. It covers a period of nearly 400 years, approximately 1500 to 1865. The history of the representation of the skeleton in woodcuts, copper engravings, etchings, and lithographs is traced, and the achievements of the artist and anatomist who produced each book are discussed. There are twenty-five illustrations closely integrated with the text, and a useful bibliography (both of general works and on individual artists/anatomists) completes the work.

LEFANU, W.R., *British periodicals of medicine, 1640—1899* (reprint), Oxford, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine (Research Publications No. VI), 4to, pp. 66, £3.00 (paperback).

W.R. Lefanu's *British periodicals of medicine, a chronological list*, Part I, 1684—1899 was originally published in 1937 and reissued, with a second part taking the listing up to 1938, in the latter year. It is an invaluable reference tool for anyone working in British medical history and it is good to have Part I now back in print. It has been reproduced in facsimile with a new introduction by Mr Lefanu, a number of minor corrections to the original publication, and seventy-eight additional titles (mostly in the field of popular medicine). The latter has been produced by Jean Loudon and other members of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine at Oxford. In keeping with its new Oxford flavour, Oxford locations have been added to both original list and its supplement. The whole package represents excellent value, and is available for £3.00 from Jean Loudon, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine, 45–47 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6PE, England.

## NEW PERIODICALS

### *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*

This publication of the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine is a continuation of its *Nouvelles/Newsletter*, issued 1978–83. Two issues will be published each year, in June and November. Manuscripts are invited, in the French or in the English language, on all aspects of the care of the sick or the people's health. Illustrations will be included. These may be formal papers, which will be sent for review, or shorter articles, which will be informally editorialized. Manuscripts for consideration should be sent to Dr.K.B Roberts, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University, St John's, Newfoundland A1B 3V6.

The cost of membership (corporate or individual) of the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine is \$Cdn15.00; this subscription includes the *Bulletin*.

### *Uppsala Newsletter (History of Science)*

*Uppsala Newsletter* is an occasional publication of at least two issues a year. It is published by the Office for History of Science at Uppsala University as an attempt to give surveys and information about this discipline in Scandinavia. The *Newsletter* will include the history of medicine and technology, and will be sent free of charge to anyone interested. Please write to the Editor (Tore Frängsmyr), Office for History of Science, Uppsala University, Box 256, S-75105 Uppsala, Sweden.

## BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED

(The inclusion of a title in this list does not preclude the possibility of subsequent review. Items received, other than those assigned for review, are ultimately incorporated into the collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.)

J.D. HARE, *Starting from scratch*, published by the author (PO Box 3044, Butztown, PA 18017, USA), 1983, \$3.00.

RICHARD F. MOULD, *Mould's medical anecdotes*, Bristol, Adam Hilger, 1984, 8vo, pp. xii, 147, illus., £9.95.

AXEL HINRICH MURKEN, *Lehrbuch der medizinischen Terminologie*, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1985, 8vo, pp. 237, DM.36.00.

DEREK J. ODDY and DEREK S. MILLER (editors), *Diet and health in modern Britain*, London, Croom Helm, 1985, 8vo, pp. 325, £22.50.

HANS PFEIL and HEINRICH SCHIPPERGES, *Der menschliche Leib aus medizinischer und philosophischer Sicht*, Aschaffenburg, Paul Pattloch Verlag, 1984, 8vo, pp. 142, DM.18.50 (paperback).

JANICE REID (editor), *Body, land and spirit. Health and healing in aboriginal society*, St Lucia, London. and New York, University of Queensland Press, 1982, 8vo, pp. xvi, 241., \$32.50.

ULRICH ROSENBERG, *Szenarium einer Revolution*, Berlin DDR, Akademie Verlag, 1984, 8vo, pp. 266, M.28.00 (paperback).

IVOR WATERS, *The parish doctor*, Chepstow, Moss Rose Press (41 Hardwick Avenue, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 5DS), 8vo, pp. 20, £1.50 (paperback).