

### Book Reviews

in the setting of history the author has divided his book into chapters with a historical basis. Thus the first chapter is on Greek and Roman life and medicine and deals with insight into the personalities, so far as they are ascertainable, and the ways of thought of the 'pace-setters' of early medicine. He quotes the Homeric poems to show the common medical beliefs of the time which are expressed with vigour and clarity. Disease was inflicted by the gods: the *Iliad* for example describes in great detail a pestilence sent by Apollo to ravage the camps of the Achaeans. 'He came down from the peaks of Olympus and shot his arrows first at mules and dogs, then at humans . . . the plague went on for nine days'. He then describes the high mortality, and ends 'It's cause was known: none but Apollo could have sent it'.

Both Indian and Persian medicine are then described and are also found to be a combination of religious, magical and empirical rites and procedures. He quotes Sigerist as saying 'All archaic civilizations have a great deal in common and archaic medicine is very much the same everywhere'. This remains largely true also of European medicine in the Middle Ages where surgeons were needed by warring states and accidents in civil life, whilst for medical purposes there were herbalist physicians and priest physicians who practised magical and religious medicine as well as that learnt from the Graeco-Arabian manuscripts which were extant. The Renaissance and the resuscitation of science is well and interestingly dealt with, as are the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England (these all in one chapter), whilst Chapter 7 brings us on to the development of hygiene, infection, mid-wifery and surgery. The second half of the book elaborates the main themes of discoveries in chapters on bacteriology and the bacteriological control of food and water, and the transmission of disease by arthropods, worms, protozoa and others, as befits the author's distinguished career in the tropics. Then come chapters (perhaps less than adequate) on drugs, antibiotics, hormones, and anaesthetics; nutrition. Occupational medicine, the degenerative diseases, cancer, radiology and medical genetics are then all passed rapidly and skilfully under review. Next comes the evolution of psychological medicine and an account of the change in the attitude of the law of recent years which has resulted from the modern approach to mental illness. Lastly there is a chapter on the evolution of statistical methods and experiments on man and animals. At the end of this the author draws final conclusions in which he briefly considers the new Welfare State, industrial compensation, family allowances and other innovations. His final words are: 'the medical profession can claim to have performed a social service with a proud record. Its object has always been to preserve life and to diminish pain and distress, and in this perhaps it may have influenced for the better the administrative systems under which we live'.

There is a selective list of references and an index. A delightful and well arranged little volume.

W. S. C. COPEMAN

*Anthology of Orthopaedics*, by MERCER RANG, Edinburgh and London, E. & S. Livingstone, 1966, pp. xi, 243, illus., 42s.

Mr. Rang has included a wide variety of both the classical papers of orthopaedics and some more obscure writings. These are skilfully arranged in chapters that deal with the separate aspects of orthopaedics and are accompanied by the author's

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commentary. In this way the work is given continuity. In certain parts, like the sections that deal with traction in the treatment of fractures and the evolution of arthroplasty and osteotomy, we are given an excellent outline of each subject with the original papers used as landmarks in the story.

The layout of the book, the type and the small portrait sketches of each character, make the book a visual pleasure. Many of the author's short biographical notes, however, are spoilt by the inclusion of trivialities and humorous asides which mar the otherwise high standard of the book. The selection of material has been good, the cutting of certain papers has been arranged without destroying the sense of the original.

It is perhaps unfair to criticize an anthology for being incomplete, but it is disappointing to find no reference to Sir Astley Cooper in the section on fractures, when his *Treatise on Fractures and Dislocations* laid the foundations of the present-day management of these injuries. It was by following his example that Colles and Smith made their acute observations that are quoted. In fact, Cooper describes a case of Colles' fracture in his book and illustrates it with drawings of a post mortem dissection and a wrist showing the typical dinner-fork deformity. In mentioning Smith's fracture this is described as a supination injury when it is a pronation injury. These are, however, small faults in an otherwise accurate and surprisingly comprehensive book.

The book is written by a practising orthopaedic surgeon and it will, I think, have a wide appeal to clinicians who are too busy or lack the facilities to consult the original texts. It will stimulate some to look further into the past and for these there is a complete bibliography and advice on important source books.

P. J. STILES

*The Life of an Egyptian Doctor*, by NAGUIB MAHFOUZ, with a foreword by Sir Cecil Wakeley, Bt., Edinburgh and London, E. & S. Livingstone, 1966, pp. xii, 192, illus., 40s.

It is a happy touch to write one's autobiography for 'my children and my grandchildren' for if an excuse is needed, surely this is the best of all. The story is absorbing both for doctors and non-medical readers; in it the author describes his childhood, his student years and his career as a gynaecologist, a career which progressed literally step by step with the establishment of his specialty in Egypt.

Mahfouz was born a Christian and he was trained entirely in Egypt, starting school at the American Mission before attending the Government school and passing on to the School of Medicine in Cairo. Here he came under the influence of English and German teachers, most of whom showed the pioneering enthusiasm to be found in a new or re-constituted school; Mahfouz is appreciative of their merits both as teachers of medical subjects and as mentors in character building.

After he qualified, Dr. Cresswell, Dr. Keatinge, Professor Madden and the surgeons Frank and Herbert Milton allowed and helped Mahfouz to make the small beginnings of a gynaecological department. Later, Dr. Roy Dobbin was appointed to Kasi El Aini Hospital, Cairo, and brought to his young colleague the up-to-date methods and enthusiasms of the Dublin school of obstetrics and gynaecology.

Since 1904 Mahfouz has worked at this hospital, in private hospitals and later at the Coptic Hospital as Professor of Gynaecology, and the volume of his work over this long period of years had been immense. Seventeen years ago he produced the