

## Book Reviews

problems in the congenital variety which would have been unaffected by a simple tenotomy. What was done for the deformity, pes calcaneo-valgus? Little was fluent in French, and later German. Was the "*Dissertatio inaguralis medica: symbolae ad talipedem varum cognoscendum*", presented for a Berlin MD in 1837, in Latin throughout and, if so, was it composed by Little?

It is regrettable that Dr Scheichkorn's energy and enthusiasm, which twice carried him across the Atlantic, were unable to encompass rigorous revision of the manuscript: errors of typography, grammar, and even of fact abound. If these could be rectified, a second edition would be more worthy of its great subject and a greater credit to its author. Nevertheless, he does not fall below a  $\beta^+$ .

J. W. Dickson

MONICA E. BALY, *A history of the Queen's Nursing Institute: 100 years, 1887–1987*, London and Sydney, Croom Helm, 1987, 8vo, pp. 157, illus., £10.95 (paperback).

It is typical of the foresight of the Queen's Nursing Institute that Monica Baly was made its Centenary Fellow, and produced this book for its centenary celebrations. Dr Baly is a respected nurse historian, and her earlier study of the life and work of Florence Nightingale adds interest to this book: some of its most interesting sections are extracts from correspondence between Florence Nightingale and others, and it shows her influence on the development of district nursing. However, the book's most important revelation is probably that of the results a committed voluntary organization can achieve, in this instance with the continuous support of the Rathbone family. From its initial developments in 1887, the Institute has continued to initiate such ideas as the introduction of a research officer, in the 1960s, and the funding of the post of Professor of Community Nursing in 1987.

The Institute, which has always acted as a pressure group, influenced district nursing services throughout the world. It now complements the work of the statutory services. In highlighting changes in health needs, medicine, society, and economics, Dr Baly shows how the Institute has developed to meet the challenges these changes posed.

This is a book that will be treasured by Queen's Nurses who are proud of their tradition, but will also be of interest to a much wider audience of nurses, physicians, voluntary organizations, and indeed all those interested in the development of nursing care outside institutions.

Barbara M. Robottom  
English National Board for Nursing  
Midwifery and Health Visiting

DAVID KNIGHT, *The age of science. The scientific world-view in the nineteenth century*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1986, 8vo, pp. xi, 251, illus., £17.50.

In this attempt to place science in the "cultural context of the nineteenth century", R. Lieberich's (of St Thomas's Hospital) Discourse at the Royal Institution in 1872 provides an obvious instance of cultural science, and scientific culture. Lieberich tried to "explain" the work of J. M. W. Turner, among other painters, in terms of a supposed eye disorder; he showed how, when a reproduction of a Turner canvas was viewed through a suitable lens, faults were "corrected" to natural exactitude. This Discourse is also a good example of David Knight's thesis: that if science is an organized body of public knowledge which can offer satisfactory explanations and simple predictions which can, in turn, be tested, then science's embrace was at its widest in the nineteenth century.

Each of the twelve chapters centres on a theme, not a decade, although their ordering is roughly chronological. This format does not oblige the reader to pay attention to any one branch of science for long. Medicine does not figure particularly often, but Knight uses its history to effect. He credits surgery as the first discipline to make the jump from craft to publicly-taught science, in late eighteenth-century France; and uses such alternative therapies as homeopathy to make the important point that it is not a rationale (which homeopathy has) which defines a science, but theory, the ability to explain and predict.