

Book Reviews

Rae's numerous quarrels with the naval establishment, with members of the Royal Geographical Society, with Lady Franklin, and with the British public through the press are related without interpretation. This is a biography without personalities, and can be recommended only for its bibliography and as a reference book for students of Arctic exploration.

The book is attractively produced, a tribute to the workmanship of a small specialist press.

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KARL E. ROTHSCHUH, *Naturheilmovement, Reformmovement, Alternativebewegung*, Stuttgart, Hippokrates Verlag, 1983, 8vo, pp. 148, illus., DM.58.00.

This closely (sometimes microscopically) printed work is intended as popularization. Whatever its faults and risks, it can be placed first on the reading-lists of anyone seeking an initial framework for research into the movements and "great" names of medical and semi-medical heresies within German-speaking countries during the last 200 years or so.

The author, a veteran of medical historiography, is clearly unhappy at having to compress so much into 140 pages. His discussion begins with Rousseau, to whom he attributes most of the subsequent movements in Germany. His excursions into two millennia of European civilization prior to Rousseau force him into potted histories which are at best old-fashioned. Both before and after Jean-Jacques, the main method is to identify how various writers (all too appropriately, their names are italicized) transmitted a tradition. Any popular currents are mentioned only fleetingly, except when one of the italicized immortals is lowly-born. And dimensions both social and political are seldom tackled, except as part of the background to the real thing.

This procedure is particularly disquieting, given the author's plausible argument that present-day "alternative" movements are fundamentally similar to those he is tracing. For, by the decades around 1900, his often uncommented listing of beliefs and of men (very occasionally their wives, sisters, or models) begins to include racism and anti-semitism. This, one presumes, is hardly the author's fault but surely has something to do with the compression and conventionality of his work. In particular, to mention the Third Reich merely for having swallowed or crushed these movements (p.126) is somewhat one-sided—given, for example, that the "architect and artist" Paul Schultze-Naumburg was allied not merely with reformers of life-style (in particular, of female dress: p.121) but also with the likes of Julius Streicher.

Rothschuh is seeking to link pre- with post-1930s movements. But in his haste, he may encourage a revival of the political ambiguities in the movements he narrates.

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J. O. LEIBOWITZ and S. MARCUS (editors), *Sefer Hanisyonot. The book of medical experiences attributed to Abraham ibn Ezra*, Jerusalem, Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1984, 8vo, pp. 345, illus., \$28.00.

The publication for the first time of *Sefer Hanisyonot. The book of medical experiences*, edited, translated, and commented upon by two eminent scholars, has not only rescued the work from oblivion but also the name of the great Arabic medical author 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Haitham, of whom we know little. The sub-title of the book, *Medical theory. Rational and magical therapy. A study in medievalism* is appropriate, for it brings before the reader the whole spectrum of medieval medicine and its application. This twelfth-century medical treatise attributed to Abraham ibn Ezra and based on an earlier treatise of al-Haitham, no longer existing in its original Arabic, is an example of the synthesis of Islamic with Jewish culture which gave rise to the scientific and literary fame of the medieval Jewish-Arabic world.

The work begins with an introduction and evaluation of the philosophical basis of the first

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part of the treatise, which as a whole comprises nine parts devoted entirely to therapeutics. This is followed by a review of the historical sources and useful short biographical sections relating to Ibn Ezra and al-Haitham. The content of each part of the treatise, excluding the first which has already been dealt with, is described with reference to other medical writers. The psychological and symbolic significance of the remedies is discussed and the theories commented on in the light of modern scientific knowledge. An index to this fascinating elucidation of the text is given on pp. 339 ff.

The problem of comparing the extant Hebrew manuscripts is dealt with in the section preceding the translation and commentary of the Hebrew text. Nine manuscripts are described and the distinction between the books of *Nisyonot* of Ibn Ezra and *Segulot* of Ibn al-Haitham made. The difficult task of exploring the relationship between the manuscripts, noting their similarities and differences, is clearly set out and the apparatus employed shows with admirable clarity the many variants between the texts by means of a novel graphical method. The work concludes with four plates of manuscripts consulted, a useful bibliography, and the index already referred to.

The editors have every reason to be proud of the technical skill and erudition their work displays, and the Wellcome Trust can be well satisfied in having supported the publication of a considerable achievement of scholarship.

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IAIN PATTISON, *The British veterinary profession, 1791–1948*, London, J.A. Allen, 1983, 8vo, pp. x, 207, illus., £9.50.

A comprehensive history of the British veterinary profession would be a most welcome publication to many readers, especially those interested in the emergence of occupational hierarchies and a profession's role within society. The modern veterinary surgeon is a splendid example of upward social mobility, his status before the eighteenth century similar to that of other skilled craftsmen, but strikingly improved from the 1790s with increased professional awareness and higher educational requirements. Iain Pattison's survey begins in 1791 with the establishment of the London Veterinary College, under the direction of Vial de St Bel, whose early death from glanders made possible the appointment of a surgeon, Edward Coleman, as Professor. The choice was made by a prestigious "Medical Experimental Committee", which included John Hunter, George Baker, and William Fordyce. Throughout the book, Pattison deals harshly with Coleman, referring to his friends, such as Astley Cooper, as "cronies" and condemning him for earning some £3,500 a year from pupils' fees and army consultancies, commonplace sources of income for senior surgeons in the early nineteenth century.

The emergence of veterinary journals was clearly of importance in consolidating the profession, and Pattison relies heavily on four such journals, only one of which is earlier than 1875. An interesting range of other publications from the early nineteenth century is ignored, such as the short-lived *Veterinary Examiner*, which first appeared on 1 December 1832, seeking to facilitate "the Studies of the Veterinary Pupil" by publishing the lectures of such eminent teachers as Coleman, Dick, and Youatt. The protracted negotiations to secure a Royal Charter for the London College in 1844 provide an impressive tale of spite and obstruction. As in several other instances, Pattison cannot refrain from exclaiming at the wonder of it all, noting Thomas Walton Mayer's efforts in this field as "without telegraph, telephone, typewriter, carbon paper or internal combustion engine", just as he cannot avoid such homespun philosophizing as "animals never imagine they are ill" or referring to Aleen Cust, the first female to qualify, as a "veterinary lady". Pattison rightly observes that "the vital role of *The Veterinarian* in the early days of the British veterinary profession ... cannot be over-emphasised", but it is nevertheless unacceptable to take its views, news items, and personalities as the whole of the profession.

The 1865–6 outbreak of cattle plague deservedly receives the author's attention as "the beginning of a Government veterinary service in Britain", but he considers the epidemic can