

Book Reviews

In turn, pre-eminence passed from Padua to Leyden in the seventeenth century and then on to Edinburgh in the early eighteenth century. The intellectual current from Holland to Britain did not, however, flow in only one direction. Some of the principal influences on Boerhaave were British: Robert Boyle and Isaac Newton in physical science, Francis Bacon in general philosophy, John Ray in Botany, his Scottish teacher Archibald Pitcairne as well as Thomas Willis, William Harvey and of course Thomas Sydenham in medicine.

Continental precursors of Boerhaave receive more attention in the book. For example, Lester King compares in fascinating detail Boerhaave's *Institutiones medicae* with that of Lazarus Riverius and with the *Fundamentae medicinae* of Friedrich Hoffmann.

The book is handsomely produced. Its English texts are excellent and contain only a handful of minor spelling mistakes. However, it is still not possible to choose the 'correct' spelling for the place where Boerhaave lived and worked: the publishers and most of the contributors in English or German use the local form 'Leiden', the Italian scholar Dr. Belloni writing in French uses 'Leyde', but the editor himself and one other contributor use the familiar 'Leyden'.

In no other respect does the book fail to satisfy the inquisitive reader, and it forms a most worthy companion to Dr. Lindeboom's splendid biography of Boerhaave.

SYDNEY SELWYN

Herman Boerhaave (1668–1738): His Life, Thought and Influence upon Japanese Medicine in the Period of Dutch Learning, by GORO ACHIWA, Tokyo, Ogata Bookstore, 1969, pp. 206, illus., no price stated.

The history of medicine is studied with enthusiasm in Japan and Dr. Achiwa is one of its ablest exponents. He has travelled widely in Europe and America in pursuit of his researches and now gives us a valuable monograph on the crucial influence of Herman Boerhaave in the development of Japanese medicine.

The only communication between Japan and the world at large between the years 1639 and 1868 was with Holland, through the port of Nagasaki. European medicine first reached Japan through books printed in Holland and the books of Boerhaave first arrived in Japan around the year 1800. Before 1850 more than thirty European medical works, Boerhaave's and van Swieten's among them, were translated into Japanese and helped to frame the Japanese modes of scientific thought in a western mould. As one of Europe's leading clinicians and medical teachers Boerhaave is seen as paramount by Dr. Achiwa at that crucial period.

The book is in Japanese, with a brief English summary and a foreword in English by that authority on Boerhaave, Professor Lindeboom. It is well produced in hardback, with index, portraits and other illustrations.

F. N. L. POYNTER

The Discovery of the Unconscious. The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry, by HENRY F. ELLENBERGER, London, Allen Lane (The Penguin Press), 1970, pp. xiv, 932, £6.50.

This really magnificent book must become one of the classics of medical, let alone of psychiatric, history. From Zilboorg onwards an unfortunate bias has marred

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much of what has been written in English on the history of psychiatry, so that the tyro might easily conclude that before Freud little real comprehension of psychiatry existed. The unconscious, and dynamic psychiatry has received far too much emphasis, and as for Freud, surely few physicians in the history of medicine have been the subject of such intensive, some might say excessive, study. The result has been that for some of us a slight sinking feeling at the pit of the stomach takes place on being confronted with yet another book on the history of dynamic psychiatry. I must confess that this was my reaction to what seemed a formidable tome to review. In the event, reading this book has been a labour of love, an experience which has left a deep sense of admiration for what is undoubtedly a 'tour de force'. Professor Ellenberger starts with an advantage few possess, a truly cosmopolitan background. Born in South Africa as a Swiss citizen, he was educated in German-speaking Switzerland, studied medicine in France and Switzerland, practised psychiatry in the United States and finally went to Montreal, where he is Professor of Criminology in the Université de Montréal. As a result his sources are far wider than is usual—his command of a truly remarkable bibliography can only be described as masterly. It must be said, however churlish one may feel in the saying, that it is somewhat strange how little attention he has paid to the important work carried out by the British school—Laycock receives no mention, for instance, and perhaps less than justice is done to Braid, Elliotson and the history of the mesmeric movement in England, as well as to the influence of Hughlings Jackson and Herbert Spencer. But no author is ever perfect, and the riches we are presented with more than make up for the omission. This absorbing story is told so very well—the characters, doctors, patients, literary men, come alive—they are living people, living in a skilfully recreated contemporary world. According to Ellenberger, the role of what he calls 'creative illness' has played a considerable part in the development of dynamic psychiatry, Mesmer, Freud and Jung and Adler, all experiencing this rare condition out of which came a new awareness of mental processes. Particular doctor-patient relationships too have exerted a profound influence on theories of psychopathology—Mesmer's patient, Maria Theresia Paradis, Breuer's Anna O, Janet's Leonie, Freud's Elisabeth von R-, all hold an honoured place in this truly remarkable history. We shall not see the like of this book for many many years to come. The production matches the content, and the price is by no means excessive.

DENIS LEIGH

A Short History of the Radcliffe Infirmary, by A. H. T. ROBB-SMITH, Oxford, The Church Army Press for the United Oxford Hospitals, 1970, pp. 233, £1·00.

The Radcliffe Infirmary has been fortunate in its historian. Dr. Robb-Smith makes plain his love for the place and has adopted a style reminiscent of John Aubrey. Acknowledging his debt to A. G. Gibson for the early years, he has surrounded the dates, the names and the facts with enlightening gossip which gains rather than loses by not being always germane to the Infirmary. The reader is carried along, although swept along would in places more accurately describe the sensation, in a breathless tide of reminiscence, comment and whimsy. The whole effect is enchanting and the reader need not be an Oxford man nor a Radcliffe addict to be enchanted, although for such the pleasure must be all the greater. Beginning in that first English age of