

Book Notices

MARTIN ROTH and ROBERT BLUGLASS (editors), *Psychiatry, human rights and the law*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, 8vo, pp. x, 341, £27.50.

The perennially troubled relationship between psychiatry and the law reflects shifting socio-political pressures as well as the differences in basic standpoints between the two disciplines. A comparison between the British Mental Health Acts of 1959 and 1983 illustrates many of the underlying issues, and the brief historical chapter in this volume of the proceedings of a 1983 medico-legal conference sketches some of the relevant factors that have come into play over the intervening twenty-five years. The remaining fourteen papers are more concerned with the present and the future. The medical contributors tend to be factual but stodgy, whether from the United Kingdom or as the representatives of Italy, Denmark, the USA, and West Germany, who provide an international flavour to the content. The non-medical participants, lawyers and social theorists, are livelier and more wordy: one of them takes up a quarter of the whole book to discuss mental health legislation as an indicator of values and policies. By and large, however, the expert will be familiar with the material and the general reader can find it readily enough elsewhere.

CLAUDIA KREN, *Medieval science and technology. A selected, annotated bibliography*, New York and London, Garland Publishing Co., 1985, 8vo, pp. xix, 369, \$53.00.

This select bibliography will be valuable for the newcomer to the subject with only English at his disposal, for the brief summaries of the arguments of articles in other languages are, where checked, clear and succinct. But the section on medicine displays some alarming gaps. The *NLM Bibliography* is in, but not *Current Work*; the first edition of Lawn's *Salernitan questions*, but not its enlarged and corrected Italian translation; Chartres is extensively covered, Padua and Bologna not at all; we have Kristeller's fundamental paper on early Salerno of 1944–5 but not his equally significant account of Bartholomaeus, Musandinus, and Maurus, *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 1976. Above all, recent German scholarship in medieval medicine gets little notice, and the works of the "Würzburg School" are passed over in silence. How significant this omission is can be seen from the introduction to the collection of papers on medieval medicine, *Medizin im mittelalterlichen Abendland*, edited in 1982 by Baader and Keil. Theirs is a selection of material made by practising historians of medicine, and, whether for good or ill, none of the articles they chose to reprint finds its way into this bibliography. But their introductory survey covers far more than does this, in which, naturally, medicine forms but one part. But it is disturbing, to say the least, to view the gaps in the selection. Beginners may derive some advantage from it, but they should be aware that some areas of the field have been far better cultivated than this guide suggests.

JOSEPH BEN-DAVID, *The scientist's role in society*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1985, 8vo, pp. xxvi, 209, £8.25.

Professor Ben-David's short book originally appeared in 1971 and has over the years achieved a classic status as a sweeping but stimulating analysis of the role and rise of science in Western society from antiquity to the 1960s. His comparative approach and cosmopolitan outlook are always evident, and his chapter on the emergence of the research ethos in nineteenth-century Germany remains a remarkable *tour de force*. More recent research has extended our knowledge of some of Ben-David's themes, but this unchanged reprint still reads well. A new introduction permits him to reflect on this literature and to place his volume within the context of contemporary history and sociology of science.

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LOUIS BAKAY, *An early history of craniotomy*, Springfield, Ill., C. C Thomas, 1985, 8vo pp. xii, 168, illus., \$25.75.

The title of this book, presumably, does not indicate that it was written a long time ago, rather that the author intended it to be a history of early craniotomy. This sort of carelessness is typical of a book that seems to have been written in total isolation. It is so riddled with errors that readers must treat any assertion they cannot verify with extreme caution. Within the first thirty pages, the author has asserted that, prior to the eighteenth century, apoplexy meant partial paralysis (p. 5), he has included a section on 'Venisection' [*sic*] and credited Celsus (who he clearly regards as a practising craniotomist) with the perfection of the terebra (p. 28). This is all very unfortunate since the author has attempted to present the views on craniotomy of a large number of surgeons. There is, however, no organizing theme in this history of what is an extremely interesting topic. Moreover, a number of significant figures are absent, for example, the French surgeon Pierre Dionis, and all the Irish surgeons. This absence may well follow from Bakay's apparent ignorance of the best treatment of his subject, Fred and Cecilia Mettler's splendid article on 'Trauma of the central nervous system' which was published in the *Proceedings of the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease* in 1943. In his preface, Bakay writes "Neurosurgery then, as now, did not attract dullards." Maybe not, but it is hoped that their operating skills cannot be measured by their historical practice.

J. RUPREHT, M.J. VAN LIEBURG, J.A. LEE, and W. ERDMANN (editors), *Anaesthesia. Essays on its history*, Berlin and New York, Springer-Verlag, 1985, 8vo, pp. xxi, 409, illus., DM.118.00.

The essays in this volume are the edited proceedings of the First International Symposium on the History of Modern Anaesthesia. All the essays (there are eighty-three of them) are very short. For the most part, they record the activities of "pioneers" and "fathers". The papers in the later parts of the volume cover more recent events and are more valuable, not being resurrections of familiar material. Even these, however, range from very anecdotal "reminiscences" to some carefully researched studies of technical questions.

J. N. ISBISTER, *Freud. An introduction to his life and work*, Oxford, Polity Press, 1985, 8vo, pp. xi, 318, illus., £25.00 (£6.25 paperback).

Isbister proceeds sensibly on the assumption that Freud's ideas can hardly be understood independently of his life and character, and that Freudianism makes little sense except in dialectic with Freud himself. Mostly, his expositions are clear-cut and mainstream, though he finds Freud's hostility to religion a particularly crass expression of late-positivism, developed in part as a stick with which to beat Jung. In general, Freud the iconoclast is esteemed more highly than Freud the ideologue.

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 collections of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.)

VERNON COLEMAN, *The story of medicine*, London, Robert Hale, 1985, 8vo, pp. vii, 264, illus., £9.95.

DAVID F. FARDON, *Your head start on the prevention and treatment of brittle bones*, New York, Macmillan, 1985, 8vo, pp. xi, 276, illus., \$16.95.

ALBERT LEESER, *The case for homoepathy*, High Wycombe, Hippocrates Publishing Co., 1985, 8vo, pp. 88, [no price stated] (paperback).