

## Book Reviews

impunity, and, what is more, 'accomplish the act with reflection'. Perhaps psychotherapy has become so much more difficult because we are no longer exposed to such simple temptations.

RICHARD HUNTER

*Aldrovandi on Chickens: The Ornithology of Ulisse Aldrovandi (1600)*, vol. II, Bk XIV, translated and edited by L. R. LIND, University of Oklahoma Press, 1963, pp. xxxvi, 447, illus., \$6.95.

This is a delightful book. There are many reasons for being grateful to L. R. Lind for his translation and to Professor Loyal F. Payne, who not only persuaded him to undertake this task but obtained from various sources the subsidies that rendered possible both the translation and publication.

Aldrovandi seems to have been fascinated by almost everything, alive or dead. In his Introduction, Lind mentions 18 volumes of plates in colour, containing more than 3,000 drawings of fruits, flowers, plants and animals, and manuscripts bound together in 363 volumes. His published works fill over a dozen folio volumes and his *Ornithology* occupies over 2,000 pages. Of these, barely a tenth are devoted to chickens, but this is perhaps the section which concerns the average person most. This is also the section which Harvey refers to in his work on generation.

While Aldrovandi is concerned with the role the chickens play in proverbs, apologues, apophthegms, riddles and hieroglyphics, he also devotes a considerable space to their use in medicine.

Aldrovandi has summarized all that he has been able to learn of chickens in the great collection of books at his disposal but also tells us something of contemporary practice. Certain aspects of this, such as a Dutch method of fattening hens, do not seem to differ very much from those practised today or for that matter from those described by Varro.

*Aldrovandi on Chickens* has been reduced from the three volumes of *Ornithology* to a single octavo and considerable care has been devoted to this transformation. The illustrations on ornithology have been especially esteemed. Many of these occupy a full folio page and achieve a happy balance with the opposing page of rather heavy print. In other instances, print and illustrations are combined in a single page. In the translation the same paper has been used throughout for text and illustrations. The marginal notes have been placed at the bottom of the page and the illustrations so reduced that even the largest no longer have to lie lengthwise. Occasionally Aldrovandi has quoted a fragment of verse and this has been translated as prose and incorporated in the text. It might have been better to have written these fragments in verse form. But by and large one has nothing but praise for the way in which this book has been produced.

Alessandro Ghigi has written a brief but informative foreword and the translator, L. R. Lind, an introduction, which tells us much about the life and works of Ulisse Aldrovandi.

C. E. KELLETT

*A Short History of the Gout and the Rheumatic Diseases*, by W. S. C. COPEMAN, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press (London, Cambridge University Press), 1964, pp. xi, 236, illus., \$6.

Dr. Copeman has exceptional qualifications for writing this history, being a specialist on the diseases considered, and also eminent as a medical historian and promoter of

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the historical study of medicine in this country. The book is based upon some lectures which he delivered at the University of California in 1962. These he has now considerably augmented and amplified.

Gout is a disease of great antiquity. It is mentioned in the Hippocratic *Corpus*. Aretaeus of Cappadocia recognized its hereditary character. Cosimo de Medici, the Emperor Charles V and his son, Philip II of Spain, Lord Burghley, Robert Cecil, Edward Gibbon and Benjamin Franklin were some notable sufferers. So too were many physicians, including the elder Scaliger, Girolamo Cardano, William Harvey and Thomas Sydenham. Dr. Copeman traces the steps of progressive knowledge of the malady, its anatomy, pathology, symptomatology and treatment by colchicum and other drugs through the work of Todd, Bichat, Sir Alfred Garrod, Sir William Roberts and other physicians of the nineteenth century up to its recognition as a separate and specific biochemical disorder.

Both acute and chronic rheumatism were frequently confused with gout; and, even in the present century, 'rheumatic gout' was still diagnosed by some practitioners, although, in the seventeenth century, Sydenham and Boerhaave distinguished acute rheumatism from 'the allied disease, Gout and the Scurvy'. Cullen in 1776 described 'acute rheumatic polyarthritis', and in 1802 William Heberden observed that acute rheumatism was largely a disease of childhood. Pitcairn, Matthew Baillie and Jenner early observed the close association of heart disease with rheumatic fever. Chapter VIII of this book on 'Acute Rheumatism and Chorea' ably summarizes the history of the subject.

Rheumatoid arthritis (Chapter IX) has also a long pedigree. Its ravages can be detected in skeletons of the ancient Egyptians and Nubians, and it was known to Hippocrates. The history of the disease is traced up to the present day, and the chapter includes brief references to gonorrhoeal rheumatism and tuberculous arthritis. Chapter X treats of the history of ankylosing spondylitis; Chapter XI of osteoarthritis; and Chapter XII (the final chapter) of non-articular rheumatism ('Fibrositis'). This is an excellent history of a complex, difficult and crippling group of diseases.

A. S. MACNALTY

*Medical History from the Earliest Times* (Reprint of 1894 edition), by Edward Theodore Withington, London, The Holland Press, 1964, pp. viii, 424, 63s (\$10.00).

Edward T. Withington published this book in 1894 'in the hope that it may form a not unwelcome contribution to a neglected department of medical literature', and during the intervening seventy years its popularity as a short history of medicine has been maintained. Its scarcity and value have in the last few years been reflected in the high prices asked in booksellers' catalogues. This reprint is therefore to be welcomed, despite the fact that no attempt to bring the book up to date has been made; only the original frontispiece is missing.

Although the author ends with Bichat and so does not deal with any of the nineteenth century, his handling of the periods up to 1800 are characterized by accuracy of statement, by precise historical perspective which emphasizes the central figures and relegates their satellites to compendious summaries, and by impeccable documentation. As none of the modern short histories of medicine satisfy all these criteria, the publishers were fully justified in producing this reprint.

However, a great amount of scholarly research in medical history has been carried out since 1894, and a number of Withington's interpretations are no longer valid.