

Book Reviews

PETER HANNS REILL, *The German Enlightenment and the rise of historicism*, Berkeley and London, University of California Press, 1975, 8vo, pp. x, 308, £11.70.

The second half of the eighteenth century is one of the most fascinating periods in the history of medicine. The old ideas of disease etiology were crumbling and physicians searched phrenetically for a substitute. This they thought they had found in the several systems of medicine, the neural pathology, homeopathy, and in mesmerism, although the concept of anatomical pathology which was eventually to replace most of these did not reach full force until the early nineteenth century.

It follows that a book dealing with contemporary ideas of the Enlightenment (1740 to 1790) will be a useful work to provide a discussion of the background against which medical and scientific advancement took place. The author studies German thinkers and their historical consciousness, and he endeavours to show that the Enlightenment was not a unitary movement. In Germany it was dominated by two opposing intellectual traditions, pietism and rationalism. Their historical speculation explored relations between religion and rationalism, religion and law, aesthetic and historical thought, new theories of history, the use of causation in historical analysis and the rediscovery of the Middle Ages. By revealing these little-known aspects of Enlightenment thought, Dr. Reill shows how their purveyors anticipated nineteenth-century scholars, and he gives a new interpretation of a period usually thought to have been relatively static in the area of learning, historicism. His book is produced at a high level of scholarship and can be highly recommended to all students of the eighteenth century. A further study would be to see if any influence was felt in the medicine and science of this period.

VICTOR L. HILTS, *A guide to Francis Galton's 'English men of science'*, Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1975, 4to, pp. 85, \$5.00, (*Trans. Amer. Philosoph. Soc.*, 1975, 65 (new series)).

Galton's *English men of science; their nature and nurture* of 1874 was based on the responses he received to questioning slightly over one hundred individuals. From these data he was able to discuss the personality and education of contemporary scientists and the origins of their interest in science. Naturally, he could not identify his respondents by name at that time, and until now the mass of details his book contains has been of limited use. Professor Hilts now liberates it from anonymity, using Galton's manuscript material. The biographical value of this information is immense, for each scientist, ranging from James Alderson to Philip J. Yorke and including Babington, Bastian, Carpenter, Darwin, Fergusson, Hooker, Huxley, Paget, Burdon-Sanderson and Spencer, is listed, with reference to 'Qualities: health, energy and mental peculiarities', 'Origin of taste for science', and 'Education'. There is also an index table of all entries, and the listings are preceded by a lengthy introduction dealing with Galton's questionnaire, a breakdown of the questionees by branch of science and an excellent 'Commentary' on Galton's use of his data.

This *Guide* can be easily used and it will prove to be an indispensable source of intimate insights into the giants of science in the second half of the nineteenth century. It will find its way into every library dealing with science and medicine and their histories.