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modern scientific ideas as the truly great intellectual achievements they are, and perhaps rightly fears their debasement in the new dark churches of irrationalism, and their belittlement by those without the generosity or intellect to comprehend them. He is however, I believe, in the end, wrong. We should be able to see scientific ideas as produced and sustained by bodies of men and serving social ends of all sorts, and *at the same time* value them as inspiring intellectual accomplishments. Otherwise we place them beyond history.

W. D. FOSTER, *The Church Missionary Society and modern medicine in Uganda. The life of Sir Albert Cook, K. C. M. G. , 1870-1951*, Newhaven, Sussex, [for the author], 1978, 8vo, pp. 234, £7.50 + 50p postage. (Obtainable from the author, Department of Pathology, Macclesfield Hospital, Cheshire SK10 3BL.)

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Beneath his inauspicious title, *The Church Missionary Society and modern medicine in Uganda*, W. D. Foster has concealed a remarkable piece of biographical writing. Albert Cook, the child of a middle-class Anglican Victorian family was born in 1870. As a Cambridge undergraduate he was inspired with an evangelical fervour that was to remain with him until his death in 1950. Nearly the whole of his life, between 1896 and his death, was spent as a practising missionary and doctor in Uganda. Though hardly a Boswell, Cook had that same mania for recording in minute detail all the incidents of his life, and, equally important, his reflections upon them. These diaries, plus those of his mother and his almost complete correspondence with her, have provided Foster with the material for an intimately detailed account of a unique aspect of British Colonial life.

To begin with the book is an exquisite picture of medical education in late Victorian England, coupled with a voyeuristic intrusion into the daily life of the middle-class drawing room. Cook's mother recorded that they were "anxious to prove Christians can be happy without cards and dancing – we had music, microscopes, chess, fossils, and *family prayers*". [italics in original] (p. 20). From here the biography slips, appropriately, into a style suited to an Edwardian adventure story. Uganda in the early years of this century was unknown, untamed, impassable, and, above all, highly dangerous. Evangelic inspiration was able to sustain feats of endurance from the first missionaries that almost defy belief. Death from malaria, trypanosomiasis, and typhoid was all too common, as it was from hostile tribesmen. Marches of hundreds of miles across bush and swamp to the sick in mind and body were an everyday occurrence. Somehow or other, though, England was never very far away. "[The] party were entertained to a dinner of zebra soup, fried sardines, antelope rissoles, stewed bustard, roast guinea fowl, chocolate blancmange and jam tarts and, despite the lack of liquid refreshment other than coffee, ended up singing 'God Save the Queen' and 'Auld Lang Syne'." (p. 48). To any in whom the phrase "British Colonialism" is likely to induce a flush of embarrassment the "carryings on" of Albert Cook are certain to precipitate apoplexy – separate hospitals for Europeans and blacks, beatings for the native boys, and a "social purity campaign" rate amongst the most insignificant of his enthusiasms. But Cook was rather more than an ideologue of British expansionism.

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Deeply religious, he dedicated his life to the medical mission, working eighteen or twenty hours a day, couching cataracts, delivering obstructed foetuses, cutting for stones, lancing abscesses, and performing those myriad other minor medical activities that alleviate illness or postpone death. All this for a pittance, much of which he reinvested in the hospital. Cook, who was a doctor of great ability, would have amassed a fortune in Harley Street. He was rewarded with a knighthood late in life, but as a young man all the job offered was spiritual fulfilment and death from blackwater fever.

Foster's unfolding of Cook's diaries is a meticulous study of the sort of forces that could sustain a man's almost suicidal sense of mission and his ability to act it out in an utterly hostile environment. One of these forces, of course, was Cook's belief, but equally sustaining on a day-to-day basis was the capacity to transfer the English social system to the jungle without compromising it one bit. "One feels a little prejudiced against Miss H. on account of a very pronounced cockney accent but they say she improves on acquaintance and, of course, a mere tone of voice doesn't make much difference to spiritual work." (p. 96). The "much" speaks volumes. Tea, tennis, the umbrella and the *British Medical Journal* were all in Uganda from the start. Failure to endorse their role could mean failure of the mission itself. "One notices that the kind of recruit furnished by the CMS lately, especially the female line, is very far inferior physically to the senior ladies of the mission who had to face the three month march up country. One of the latest arrivals cannot play tennis..." (p.116).

Against the backdrop of change in Europe, two world wars, the invention of radio, aeroplanes, Cook's indefatigable energy wrought major changes in Ugandan medicine, including the building of a large hospital, and the instauration of a midwifery school. A totally self-confident, compassionate man with an unsophisticated but "tremendous belief in the British Empire" (p. 231), Cook's life provokes judgements Foster rightly resists. This is an excellent biography, not least because of its humour. I hope it reaches the wide readership it deserves.

ELISABETH BENNION, *Antique medical instruments*, London, Philip Wilson for Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1978, 4to, pp. xii, 355, illus., £28.00.

The title of this book is misleading. Most of it deals with surgical instruments, the rest with surgical and medical appliances. The time-span is from the Middle Ages to the onset of the antiseptic age (1870), and material from a large number of collections is surveyed. Dental and veterinary instruments are included, and there are also examples of medical receptacles, infant and invalid feeding utensils, toilet articles, etc. The production is elegant with a plethora of illustrations, sixteen of which are in colour. An introductory history of the medical profession is, however, superficial, inadequate, and at times erroneous. It is also unbalanced, as it deals mainly with British medicine and one is not surprised to find that the works cited in the Bibliography are entirely English or American. The Chronology Chart is also curious in regard to the names included; thus Clifford Allbutt is listed as a surgeon.

However, although the author may not be fully proficient in medical history, she is well-versed in her knowledge of the instruments and appliances themselves. Her book will therefore be of interest to the auctioneer, the dilettante collector, and the amateur