

Book Reviews

the Chair of Psychology in Trinity College Dublin, has produced an excellent account of the man, his work and his contacts, and appends a list of his inventions and a bibliography of his writings. It is a tactful, sympathetic, and well-written book, which complements admirably the copious four-volume biography by Karl Pearson published 1914 to 1930. It can be highly recommended as a balanced and undistorted account of the imperfections as well as the remarkable attributes of a Victorian polymath.

E. T. RENBOURN, *Materials and clothing in health and disease*, with 'The biophysics of clothing materials', London, H. K. Lewis, 1972, 8vo., pp. xii, 599, illus., £9.50.

Dr. E. T. Renbourn is one of the very few experts on clothing and its constituent materials considered as an aspect of human biology and social behaviour. He has, in the past, carried out extensive and important research on the physiological and psychological reactions to the wearing of different kinds of clothing, and he has collected together the results of it in this book. Dr. Renbourn is ideally suited for such work, being a scientist, a medically qualified physiologist, a hygienist, and a psychologist.

He is also a historian, and has, for example, published a noteworthy study of the solar topi and spinal pad, a work that is not widely enough known. The present book contains an excellent historical survey of the functions of materials and clothing, and throughout there are references to historical aspects of clothing and costume. Thus there is 'The natural history of clothing' (pp. 224–245), 'The history of clothing physiology' (pp. 242–249), and a comprehensive treatment of 'The psychology of dress' (pp. 450–471), which, like other parts of the book, has frequent allusions to history.

There is a surfeit of books on the history of costume fashion, and various kinds of clothing but none on the history of clothing from a medical point of view. Dr. Renbourn's treatise is therefore most welcome and can be recommended to all those concerned with this aspect of the history of hygiene and of social behaviour. The technical as well as the historical details should also be of interest for they will provide a deeper insight into the physiology of clothing, an essential background for a historian of clothing.

FRANK RICHARDSON *Napoleon's death. An inquest*, London W. Kimber 1974, 8vo., pp. 271, illus., £4.95.

There is a large volume of literature dealing with Napoleon's various disorders and especially with the cause of his premature death. Major-General F. Richardson, M.D., bases his book on twenty years of study of Napoleonic material and his interpretation of the terminal illness is as plausible as we are ever likely to obtain, unless, of course, some entirely new source material is discovered. His book is well written and the hind-notes are keyed to, but independent of, the text. He has brought together a vast amount of material, although at times its arrangement may be found confusing.

It is usually considered that Napoleon died of carcinoma of the stomach, but by carefully sifting the medical and other evidence General Richardson concludes that