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had a respectable record of success, as reflected in a mortality rate of under ten per cent. This conclusion, based as it is on a careful examination of hospital records, some of which are presented here in appendices, is of considerable importance because most authorities have claimed the reverse to be the case, in that hospitals contributed to mortality and that they represented "gateways to death".

The main criticism concerns the author's lack of medical knowledge, which, although not influencing his overall conclusions, is evident in the chapters dealing with the clinical aspects of patients. Thus in that devoted to hospital surgery he is able only to present statistics and cite from contemporary authors, but can offer no criticism, interpretation or opinion. On the whole there are too many quotations in this book. Another fault is that although documentation of the primary data is excellent and primary sources in profusion are employed, there is not sufficient reference made to the secondary literature. Thus when the incidence and distribution of bladder stone is being discussed, for example, recent and relevant historical work on this topic is not mentioned. The book's title also is unsatisfactory, because without the sub-title it is meaningless.

Nevertheless, this book is an important addition to the history of medicine and typical of the kind of study that, hopefully, will become commoner. Medical historians need the expert help of the general, social and economic historian to study areas where they lack special knowledge and skills. Each must recognize his own limitations, however, and a closer symbiosis of the two groups should obviate the type of criticisms mentioned above.

D. W. FORREST, *Francis Galton; the life and work of a Victorian genius*, London, P. Elek, 1974, 8vo., pp. xi, 340, illus., £5.50.

If important contributions to a very wide variety of intellectual activities is a measure of a genius, Galton certainly qualifies for this epithet. He worked in anthropology, anthropometrics, criminology (finger-prints), currency reform (decimalization very similar to ours today), geography (the stereoscopic map), meteorology (the anticyclone, his own term), photography (composite photographs), psychology (twin studies and I.Q.), and sociology. He was also a gifted inventor (Galton whistle, telotype which lead to the telex, rotary steam engines, etc.), as well carrying out significant African explorations. However, he is remembered today particularly for his application of statistics to the study of heredity and for the subject he established, eugenics, the name also being his. He was a compulsive measurer and measured everything from human physique to mental ability and the efficacy of prayer. By investigating word associations and the theory of the unconscious he preceded Freud, who was thereby indebted to him.

But Galton had the mind of a mathematician and statistician so that he lacked imagination and sympathy, and some of his eugenic principles, whereby, for example, the mentally superior were to prosper at the expense of the less gifted in order to improve the race, were quite impracticable.

Galton's social background was equally significant, and outstanding individuals such as Charles Darwin (cousin), Josephine Butler (sister-in-law), Florence Nightingale, George Eliot and many more were part of it. Professor D. W. Forrest, who holds

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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