

Book Reviews

The original MS contained two chapters, on 'sex and sexuality' and 'mystical and religious experience', which the editor Dr. Mettler, professor of anatomy at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, and historian of medicine, had to omit, as he states, for lack of space. Had Dr. Landis's health permitted something of interest could have been brought out by a further chapter on self accounts down the ages because there is a growing suspicion that the manifestations of mental illness are changing and not only due to better attitudes and more treatment. Social and cultural influences might have been considered in the same context as well as some formal attempt made to compare if not contrast the manifestations of organic and non-organic states.

Dr. Landis has worked the ground hard and well. He has made an original contribution and brought together much material hitherto known only to a very few collectors. Students of abnormal psychology will gain from it invaluable insights into the sick mind as recorded in spontaneous products unhampered, unforced and unembarrassed by interview. Many will want to go back to read some originals *in extenso* such as the classic autobiographies which were Dr. Landis's starting point and from which he quotes most frequently: Daniel Paul Schreber's *Memoirs of my Nervous Illness* (Leipzig 1903; translated and edited by Ida Macalpine and R. Hunter, London, Dawsons, 1955) and John Perceval's *Narrative of the Treatment Experienced by a Gentleman, during a State of Mental Derangement; Designed to Explain the Causes and the Nature of Insanity* (London, 1838 and 1840; edited by G. Bateson, London, Hogarth Press, 1962).

One closes the book astonished almost as much as the sufferers who laid themselves bare in these pages, by how little we can claim really to understand the working of the mind in ease and disease and its relation to the functions of the brain. This being so and while we still have largely to work within the limitations of symptomatic classification, psychiatric patients are reduced to numbers and diagnoses only at peril.

By a misreading of the great Manchester Physician John Ferriar's *An Essay upon Apparitions* (London, 1813) that author is credited (on page 114) with visions which in fact he quoted from the experiences of Nicolai, the Berlin bookseller, whose frank revelations figure in many psychiatric texts of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

RICHARD HUNTER

Quaderni di Storia della Scienza e della Medicina. Università degli Studi de Ferrara. 1963–1965. *Il Fenomeno Paracelso*, by R. BLASER, 1963, pp. 37, illustr. *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola nei suoi rapporti di amicizia con Gerolamo Savonarola*, by P. ROCCA, 1964, pp. 29, 2 illus. *Arcangelo Piccolomini Ferrarese (1525–1586) e la sua importanza nell'anatomia Postvesaliana*, by F. PIERRO, 1965, pp. 35, frontis. and 4 illus., no prices given.

The new series of short monographs appearing under the auspices of Ferrara University and its professor of Medical History, Ladislao Münster, is appropriately introduced by a study of Paracelsus. For the latter was, according to his own deposition (accepted in lieu of the witness' oath by a Basle magistrate) a graduate

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(M.D.) of this university at the time of Alfonso d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia, i.e. some time between 1513 and 1515 (see *Med. Hist.*, 1964, 8, 317). It is an authoritative essay from the pen of Robert Blaser, an eminent Paracelsian scholar to whom we are indebted for a detailed knowledge of the Basle period in Paracelsus' life and a number of important, notably linguistic, studies. Here the 'Phenomenon Paracelsus' is approached by means of a survey of the varied activities and viewpoints of Paracelsus, the thinker, the creator of a 'new' medicine, the psychologist, the man whom personal experience and insight into the 'mystery of nature' enabled to succour suffering humanity. A short bibliography includes a number of Italian papers published during the war and thus little known abroad.

Rocca's essay successfully describes the links of personal friendship and ideas (notably anti-astrological) which drew together Pico and the Florentine preacher. It is adorned with the beautiful group of three friends—Pico, Poliziano and Ficino—from the *Miracolo del Sacramento* of the Florentine Cosimo Rosselli, a fresco (1486) in Sant'Ambrogio at Florence.

Piccolomini of Ferrara is by no means unknown in the annals of anatomy. He was given full credit by Portal for his description of the Linea alba, of intra-hepatic anastomoses of the portal and cava veins, and some advanced insight into the origin of some of the cranial nerves. Haller, however, deprecated his 'bad and arbitrary' pictures, Sprengel his denial of correct observations of some of his predecessors, for example the Fallopian tubes in woman, and Haeser brackets him with Carcano Leone as 'less important' in a small-type passage. In view of these conflicting opinions Pierro's new review and assessment of the work and personality of Piccolomini is welcome. Its result is that the latter should be grouped with the post-Vesalian Galenists such as Jacobus, Sylvius, Winther of Andernach, Zerbi and others, but he has to his credit certain observations, including (in addition to those mentioned) the central canal in the spinal cord, the different arrangement of the venous valves in the extremities and the upper part of the body, the continuity of the visceral and parietal pleura and peritoneum and the normal and pathological anatomy of the kidneys.

WALTER PAGEL

Medicine and Health in New Jersey: A History, by DAVID L. COWEN, The New Jersey Historical Series, volume 16, Princeton, N. J., New York, Toronto, London, D. Van Nostrand Company, 1964, pp. xvi, 229, illus., \$3.95.

Around the turn of the century a number of state medical histories were written and then for some reason interest lagged. In more recent years, several new studies have appeared. The author of this one, Professor David L. Cowen, was asked to write a short medical history of New Jersey, and he has done an admirable job. Despite the brevity of the work (about 200 pages), the author has covered virtually every important aspect of medicine. In addition to dealing with such standard topics as medical practice, education, associations, regulations, journals, hospitals and dispensaries, he has provided a remarkably clear picture of public health developments. For the historian, medicine and public health in the 20th century is an exceedingly difficult subject to handle. It was an era in which discoveries came tumbling after