

## Book Reviews

*Bibliography of the History of Medicine (National Library of Medicine)*, No. 1, 1965, Bethesda, Md., U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1966, pp. x, 290, \$1.75.

This very welcome bibliography—a by-product of *Index medicus*—was produced in the National Library of Medicine's Historical Division. Its citations were retrieved from the computer into which indexers now regularly feed information culled from the medical periodical literature. What a far remove this is from the *Index's* early days, almost ninety years ago, when only the unnatural faith of a publisher saved it from extinction.

The *Bibliography* will appear annually and then in quinquennial cumulations. It will, incidentally, serve as a complement to the Wellcome Institute's *Current Work in the History of Medicine*. Wisely in this first issue the editors have made no attempt to apply value-judgments in selecting their citations, on the principle that most historians are capable of making up their own minds. Nevertheless, one can foresee that this policy, if pursued in the cumulations, will lead to confusion in the minds of many users simply because the core of good material will be in danger of submersion under a mass of derivative and mediocre articles. Perhaps this hazard might be reduced, when that time comes, by the introduction of many more subject headings of greater specificity than those used in this volume.

Criticisms of this first experimental volume are as follows: (i) inadequate proof-reading (e.g. 'Antisepsis' as a heading; Royal College of Physicians under 'Societies—Hungary'; article on Polish surgery under 'Surgery—England'; article on Harvey under 'W. Harvey, 1807–76'; and so on), (ii) omitted cross-references (e.g. Martha Tracy under 'Public Health' but not under 'Women in Medicine'; four articles on Thomas Mann under 'Famous Persons', but only two of them under 'Literature and Medicine'); (iii) lack of running titles, leading to difficulty in finding one's correct place; (iv) excessive subdivision of headings (by place, century, and then place again), even to the extent of combining centuries in addition to providing for them individually. This leads to absurdities, such as the placing of references to the American Civil War on different pages, with references to later events intervening.

Nothing, however, can detract from Dr. John Blake's enterprise in offering this new and potentially most useful publication to medical historians. One hopes that the weaknesses listed above will be eliminated from the next volume. Perhaps also new headings can be provided for 'Red Cross' (at present hidden under 'Societies'), and for ethical *cum* chronological divisions of medical history such as Indian, Egyptian, Chinese and Greco-Roman medicine (at present dispersed under the various subject headings).

E. GASKELL

*The State and the Mentally Ill; A History of the Worcester State Hospital in Massachusetts, 1830–1920*, by GERALD N. GROB, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press; London, Oxford University Press, 1966, pp. xv, 399, 60s.

The definitive history of psychiatry has still to be written. A few sketches exist; a few themes have been explored; a few scholars are aware of the force of Karl Jaspers' comment that the 'history of mental illness may be conceived in terms of history in