

Contributors

physical as well as a nominal existence, and the well-equipped library in the rooms given over to his department in the old Faculty building offer to undergraduates and postgraduate students the opportunity of browsing, or of undertaking serious research in the history of medicine.

Professor Coury has also given much thought to the problems of medical education and the present monograph brings together two of his chief interests. At a time when the methodology and content of the medical curriculum is under critical review in many countries, this brief history of medical teaching in France acquires more than usual significance. Beginning in Carolingian times—for there was medical teaching in the cathedral schools before the rise of the universities—this informative account emphasizes the increasing aridity and formalism of medical teaching in the pre-revolutionary period. As with so many other departments of life in France, the French Revolution of 1789 was the watershed, and after a few years of chaos, a new approach to clinical medicine and its teaching arose in the hospitals. As in Britain, these, and not the university lecture rooms, became the real centres of medical education, and in them was forged that hierarchical chain of continuity (again, to be matched in Britain) between master and pupil and surviving until the master was retired and the former pupil in his chair. The history also gives us much information about the role of the medical corporations, extra-mural courses, and private teaching in the development of the present system in France, as well as on the important professional and scientific societies and their publications. It should be of interest not only to medical historians but to all medical teachers.

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