

Book Reviews

Chemical, Medical and Pharmaceutical Books printed before 1800: A catalog of holdings in the University of Wisconsin Library edited by JOHN NEU, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1965, pp. viii, 280, \$6.00.

We are still not provided with 'keys' to many of the distinguished collections of manuscripts and books in the history of medicine and science that are attached to smaller universities and institutions. The book under notice can thus be sure of the gratitude of scholars in many fields if its example is followed by others. It is in itself most useful, informative, and at its low price highly welcome. For it forms a guide through such illustrious collections as that of Dennis I. Duveen in the history of chemistry and alchemy and of the late Edgar Goldschmid in historical anatomy and pathology. Both these collections were acquired by the University of Wisconsin libraries which had already profited by the collecting activities of such authorities as William Snow Miller, the author of the classic on the histology of the lung and its history, and the unforgettable George Urdang whose work opened up a new chapter in the history of pharmacy. One special feature of the catalogue is the inclusion of many items of the Duveen collection which had not been listed in Duveen's alchemical bibliography, quite apart from the fact that after the acquisition of the Duveen collection the Boyle and Priestley libraries, brought together by Hugh Sinclair, were added. The items are given in two columns with page numbers (of one-volume works) and an indication of the presence of illustrations and charts, but without giving their number and nature, and without listing frontispieces and portraits.

WALTER PAGEL

Surgery in America, Selected Writings, by A. SCOTT EARLE, Philadelphia and London, Saunders, 1965, pp. 280, illus., 59s. 6d.

This is a beautifully produced book containing extracts of American surgical writings from before the British Government's surrender of the country up to the writings of Murphy and Halstead in this century. Therefore the book covers the two centuries beginning with the advertisement inserted in the *Boston News Letter* by the grateful parents of the patient of the third lithotomy performed in 1710 by Zabdiel Boylston, up to the articles by Murphy and Halstead at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The whole book is splendidly illustrated, many of the portraits being from the actual collection of the author, who has an excellent collection of historical medical portraits as well as a consummate knowledge of the surgical history of America. He states in the preface that these papers were unearthed during the preparation of a surgical history of America soon to be published. The two books will make a splendid pair for the bookshelves of the growing body of medical historians.

I particularly like the historical footnotes which go with every doctor mentioned. Very seldom does the author say that he knows nothing of any doctor mentioned. Thus the young acting assistant surgeon, Hichbom, is only mentioned as having been killed in the battle of Chancellorville while alone in an exposed dressing station while serving with Shaw Billings, who gives a wonderful description of the bitter murderous Civil War.

There is a tremendous thrill in the story of Ephraim McDowell's first operation to remove an ovarian cyst on Mrs. Crawford, who rode the sixty miles from Greenburg