

Book Reviews

glossary of technical terms, a series of extracts of famous medical texts from the Ebers Papyrus to Henri Dunant, a table of contents, an index and six line drawings.

The author goes out of his way to point out in his Foreword that the book is not for the expert. On the other hand, it seems to me much too detailed for the school child. The trouble with German scholars is their inability to be concise. Thus, although this book can be warmly recommended to the adult reader, I doubt whether the unfortunate school child will be able to digest its many facts, however well-intentioned the author might be to include them.

I. M. LIBRACH

Carl Ludwig, Begründer der messenden Experimentalphysiologie 1816–1895, by HEINZ SCHRÖER (Grosse Naturforscher Band 33), Stuttgart, Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft M.B.H., 1967, pp. v, 340, illus., DM. 32.50.

Biography in the literal meaning of the word as perpetuated by tradition since Diogenes Laertius and Plutarch is subject to limitations since events and problems which transcend the life of the given individual are necessarily omitted. In the particular case of Ludwig's presentation by Schröer it means leaving aside aspects of actual interest to the historian: the analysis of his part in the development of the mechanistic movement which he initiated with his three celebrated companions, Brücke, Helmholtz and Du Bois-Reymond; the significance of quantitative physiology which he promoted as compared with qualitative physiology at a time when so much remained to be discovered; physics versus chemistry as analytical tools in the experimental method. Since the author's purpose is to narrate and not to interpret, he fulfils his aim and makes of Ludwig's biography a model of thoroughness and objectivity.

The first part describes the humane scientist and his wandering life from one university to another, still highly productive, until he settles in Leipzig where for thirty years he accomplishes fundamental work in the most famous institute of physiology of its time, created by him and so much envied by Claude Bernard. It became the 'United Nations' centre for physiologists from all over the world who came to work under him and spread his ideas and methods.

The second part is consecrated to his scientific discoveries which are related in great detail, the author stressing most rightly the relationship between techniques and biological progress, a much neglected aspect nowadays when the fashionable intellectual history is thought to hold the key to every historical problem.

Notes, indices, unpublished letters dealing with scientific matters and a rich bibliography complete this valuable book.

JOSEPH SCHILLER

Our Ophthalmic Heritage, by CHARLES SNYDER, London, J. & A. Churchill, 1967, pp. xii, 170, illus., £5.

Since 1961 the *Archives of Ophthalmology*, one of the special journals of the American Medical Association, has been carrying regularly short historical essays contributed by the distinguished librarian of the Lucien Howe Library of Ophthalmology at Harvard.

The publication of thirty-seven of these essays in book form is a measure of the appreciation which they gained. Highly readable, they deal with phases and persons of special interest to the practising oculist. The historical events drawn from the

Book Reviews

Old World cover well-documented events, and to European readers the greatest interest lies in the essays—about a third of the total here presented—that deal with the emergence of ophthalmology in the United States during the second half of the last century. As elsewhere, saints and sinners—generally colourful—pass across the stage; and tragedy too, as shown by the essay on Homberger. ARNOLD SORSBY

The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine, by ILZA VEITH, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1966, pp. 260, illus., \$8.00.

The Chinese Canon of medicine has never attracted the attention of sinologists and we are still awaiting a complete translation of this celebrated work based on accepted philological standards into any Western language. We must, however, congratulate a medical historian such as Professor Ilza Veith, and a physician such as Dr. Chamfrault, who have not hesitated to take certain risks in offering the *Neh Ching* to a western public. In fact, this new edition differs very little from the first in 1949; that is to say, the *Ling Chou*, the second part of the *Neh Ching* which treats of acupuncture, is omitted in its entirety. Even in the first part (*Sou Wen*—Essential questions) the translation is far from complete, since out of the 80 chapters we are given the text of only 34. Rare and unusual diseases (chapters 47–48) and other interesting subjects are not, therefore, taken into consideration. Moreover, Professor Veith does not indicate on which edition she has based her translation. Recent editions of the Canon which have been published in China are: (1) *Houang-Ti Nei King Sou-wen*, Shanghai, 1954, 2 vols.; (2) *Ling-Chou King*, Shanghai, 1955, 1 vol.

Professor Veith follows the lines of Hume, Hübötter and Wong and Wu. Pathological anatomy borrows from the publications of E. W. Cowdry, E. T. Hsiem (1921) and Chavannes. If reference had been made to the historic memoirs of Sseu-ma Ts'ien, a partial French translation of which has just been republished (Paris 1967), the chapter of medical biographies (chapter 105) would have been quite unnecessary.¹ All the documentation is now superseded by numerous Chinese works published between 1949 and 1966.²⁻⁸ Moreover, the chronology of different parts of the *Neh Ching* has been systematized by Dr. Bridgman, who has not been quoted.

With these reservations this work cannot fail to be of service to researchers who have no knowledge of Chinese and who are interested in the celebrated Canon of Chinese medicine. P. HUARD AND MING WONG

¹ *Che-Ki (Mémoires historiques)* présentation de la *Tchong-Houa Chou-Kia*, 1959, 2 vols of biographies.

Dr. R. F. Bridgman has made a scholarly commentary on this work. (*La médecine dans la Chine antique*, Bruges, 1955).

² *Tchong-Kouo kou-tien wen-hio kien-che* (Short history of classical Chinese literature), Peking, 1958.

³ K. C. Wong, Index of articles on Chinese Medical History—*Tchong-wen yi-che louen-wen so-yin*, Shanghai, 1960–1963.

⁴ K. C. Wong, List of Publications on Chinese Medical History, Shanghai, 1960.

⁵ K. C. Wong and Fu Weik'ang—Catalogue of Publications on Medicine in China in Foreign Languages (1656–1962), *Shanghai Academy of Chinese Medicine*, Medical History Museum, Shanghai, 1963.

⁶ *Chang-han-louen che-yi* (Exégèse du traité du froid nocif), séminaire du traité du Froid nocif, travail de l'Institut de Médecine traditionnelle de Nankin, 1958.

⁷ *Chang-han-louen t'iao-si* (Analyse du traité du froid nocif), Agence d'hygiène du Peuple, Peking, 1963.

⁸ For Japanese medicine reference should be made to the original edition of *Nihon-igaku-shi* (History of Japanese Medicine), 1036 pp.