

Book Reviews

not forget that, in towns, hospitals and town physicians were responsible for the care of the sick poor.

The catalogue entries are preceded by discussions that often bring up new problems for further research. A descriptive index of *objecta pharmaceutica* and a very full names index conclude this beautifully illustrated catalogue.

Renate Burgess
Wellcome Institute

AUGUSTIN ALBARRACIN, *Santiago Ramón y Cajal o la pasión España*, 2nd ed., with introduction by P. Lain Entralgo, Barcelona, Editorial Labor, 1982, 4to, pp. 311, illus., [no price stated], (paperback).

Compared with other Continental countries, Spain produced very few outstanding medical scientists in the nineteenth century. It is, therefore, understandable, as well as right and proper, that Spanish historians should laud the few who qualify. Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1852–1934) is one of them, and a great deal of literature is now available concerning the man and his immortal contributions to neuro-histology. It was he who presented more evidence than anyone else favouring the neurone doctrine; and no part of the nervous system escaped his remarkable technical skills, acute observations, and perceptive interpretations. This biography of him is unique in two ways: it relates Ramón y Cajal accurately and in detail to his topographical, social, and political background; and it presents a remarkable pictorial history of him. Concerning the second of these, the illustrations are profuse, excellent, and unparalleled, for many have not appeared elsewhere. Thus both the text and its supporting pictures provide an important addition to the biography of Spain's greatest neuro-scientist.

Edwin Clarke
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HELEN SWICK PERRY, *Psychiatrist of America. The life of Harry Stack Sullivan*. Cambridge, Mass., and London, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982, 8vo, pp. viii, 462, illus., £14.00.

Few physicians have had the impact on their times that Harry Stack Sullivan (1892–1949) did. This biography by an associate and admirer, Helen Swick Perry, portrays the institutional and personal channels through which Sullivan affected psychiatry, psychoanalysis, anthropology and the other social sciences, and public policy. His teachings continue to symbolize the social dynamic view in psychiatry. More than any other one person he established the practicality of psychotherapy for schizophrenics, and he helped develop modern personality theory.

Perry trained as a professional writer, and this biography is leisurely and careful, with a very generous amount of speculation and literary connexion included alongside the results of the most exhaustive research. The only major source omitted appears to be the interview material recorded in Kenneth Leo Chatelaine's dissertation (only recently published as a book), and it would not affect Perry's contentions in any important way. Secondary sources are little used, and much evidence apparently based on correspondence is not documented in detail.

The core theme of the book is that Sullivan's life and work reflected his background in a rural New York county; indeed, 155 pages go by before he even enters medical school. Two sometime associates from Chenango County, psychiatrist Clarence Bellinger and, later, anthropologist Ruth Benedict, provide lengthy instructive parallels and contrasts. The book reads very well except for some repetition, and the story is told with unusual candor and includes, for example, Sullivan's own youthful schizophrenic episode, now established beyond a reasonable doubt.

Perry also deals forthrightly and in very substantial detail with the four factors that severely blunted Sullivan's influence with his contemporaries: his drinking; his irresponsible and deceptive (possibly dishonest?) financial dealings; his failure to acknowledge the sources of his ideas; and his partial acceptance of, and emphasis upon, homoeroticism. Unlike other writers, Perry deals with this latter subject with some refreshing scepticism, but without playing down the emphasis that was there in professional as well as personal aspects of Sullivan's life. (This