

## Book Reviews

university might be proud and which, as Dr. Wightman says in his 'Guide to the Bibliography', builds up a background to the science of the Renaissance. Those who read these volumes would wish to have more of them and will envy the students who are so fortunate as to have Dr. Wightman as their guide.

F.N.L.P.

*The General Infirmary at Leeds*, vol. 1, *The First Hundred Years, 1767–1869*, by S. T. ANNING, Edinburgh and London, E. & S. Livingstone, 1963, pp. xii + 107, 46 illustrations, 30s.

The General Infirmary at Leeds was founded in 1767, and what is now referred to as the Old Infirmary served, with additions and alterations, until 1869, when the New Infirmary on the present site came into use. This volume thus covers almost exactly the first hundred years of the Institution's history, and it is hoped that the second volume will appear in time for the bicentenary.

The story is attractively told. It is not presented entirely chronologically, but rather as a series of semi-independent essays. Thus the first chapter deals with the early beginnings, and stresses that what was visualized from the outset was no mere parochial institution but a true General Infirmary, drawing patients from an extensive area. Later chapters describe the buildings, the consultants, early medical education in Leeds, the nurses, the patients, and so on; and clear pictures are presented of a century's development in each of these spheres. Yet somehow the pictures are so skilfully blended that one never loses sight of the fact that what is essentially being unfolded is the history of an institution as a whole. This is not interrupted by biographical details, the intention being to furnish these in an appendix to Volume II. Most of the other detail is so well chosen and so skilfully presented as to enhance the feeling that one 'was there' at the time. Such, for instance, is the description of the difficulties in airing the water-closets, or the report to the Board that 'A very acceptable present of eighteen coloured views in the Holy Land, for suspension in the wards, was received from Mr. S. Clapham'.

Of the figures encountered in the book the one that emerges most clearly is that of William Hey (the First). We encounter him at one of the meetings of 1767 that led to the establishment of the General Infirmary, and later as one of the originally appointed surgeons, as the only medical member of the first Building Committee, as directing the fixing of lightning conductors on the first extensions to the Old Infirmary, as (in 1774) supervising the fixing of an oil lamp (to replace candles) on the staircase, as one of the founders of a medical society and medical library, as a regular attender at weekly Board meetings, as a surgeon in busy private practice and yet always with time for his hospital patients, as the author of *Practical Observations on Surgery* (1803), as the inventor of the well-known saw for skull operations, as one of the early lecturers on anatomy in Leeds, and ultimately as one of the founders of the Medical School there. It is ironical now to reflect that William Hey possessed no qualification by examination.

Altogether this is a most interesting and readable book. It appears accurately documented, though surely it is a slip to say that the Park Street building (1865) was 'the first in this country to be erected expressly as a Medical School'. The Old (Surrey Street) Medical School in Sheffield, designed and built as such, was opened in 1829.

J. G. MCGRIE