

Book Reviews

half-forgotten figures. The mention of the names and characteristics of the men and women who made the hospital famous will help maintain tradition now buffeted by the onslaught of the National Health Service. But for those who do not know Edinburgh the book is disappointing. There has not been sufficient space to give in logical sequence the story of the emancipation of paediatrics from obstetrics, its apprenticeship under the guardian wing of medicine and its evolution as a speciality in its own right.

Four interesting biographies, two of physicians and two of surgeons, lift the book from the dull and factual to pulsating interest as we see momentarily, not just the bricks and mortar of the hospital but something of its vital life. Unfortunately there is some needless repetition. On page 28, nineteen lines are devoted to Dr. John Thomson whereas a fuller biography is given on pages 39 to 42.

The illustrations are interesting and varied, but the crude colouring of the frontispiece is not worthy of the excellent production of the rest of the book.

JOHN RENDLE-SHORT

A History of Embryology. JOSEPH NEEDHAM, F.R.S. 2nd edition. Revised with the assistance of Arthur Hughes. London: Cambridge University Press, 1959; pp. 304. Illustrated. 52s. 6d.

In the early nineteen-thirties Dr. Joseph Needham gave a series of lectures at the University of London entitled 'Speculation, Observation and Experiment as illustrated by the History of Embryology', and, in amplified form, these were published in 1934 as *A History of Embryology*. This has been out of print for a number of years and now a second edition has been published, in the revision of which the author has been assisted by Dr. Arthur Hughes, Lecturer in Anatomy in the University of Cambridge. The present volume also includes a concluding chapter by Dr. Needham which summarizes the influences which have operated in the history of embryology from the speculations of the ancients to the birth of the science of experimental embryology as we know it today. Although the present book is entitled *A History of Embryology* it only brings the story to about 1800. The continuation to the end of the nineteenth century is hinted at as a project for the future.

To have produced a second edition of this well-known book is of course a great service to the history of medicine and biology in general but most readers will regret the rather abrupt ending. It is painfully reminiscent of the familiar phrase 'to be continued in our next', which punctuated the monthly instalments of the riddles of Sherlock Holmes. In what has already been printed we are told a great deal about the speculations of the ancients and of the restricted observations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but the story breaks off just as we approach the age of experiment. We are left waiting for the continuation of the exciting story of the consequences of 'seeing what would happen if . . .' and all that developed from this attitude in the nineteenth century.

CUTHBERT DUKES

Notable Names in Medicine and Surgery. HAMILTON BAILEY and W. J. BISHOP. 3rd edition, London: H. K. Lewis, 1959; pp. 216. Illustrated. 35s.

It is a real pleasure to welcome a new edition of this useful and lavishly illustrated book. Eponyms are frequently used in wards, operating theatres, out-patients

Book Reviews

departments and lecture theatres, in general practice, among the nursing profession, in the pathological laboratory, dispensary, chemist's shop, factory, or the showroom of the medical and surgical equipment house—Stensen's duct, Pott's fracture, Spencer Wells' forceps, Wassermann reaction, Glauber's salts. Students, nurses and their teachers wanting to know who these people were will find the answer amongst these 83 short, well-written biographies. Each is illustrated with a portrait and often a picture of the hospital in which they worked and a diagram of what they described. Many will be surprised to find that Lugol died more than a century ago, and that Klumpke was an attractive-looking lady. Not the least interesting features are the pictures of many of the world's most famous hospitals and universities and the extraordinary range of beards and moustaches. There is much new material in this edition.

WILLIAM BROCKBANK

Variations on a Theme by Sydenham: Smallpox. P. B. WILKINSON. Bristol: John Wright, 1959; pp. 76. Illustrated. 17s 6d.

An epidemic of smallpox struck Hong Kong in the winter of 1937. In one week of March 1938 there were 236 cases with 192 deaths. Dr. Wilkinson's painstaking clinical account fills forty pages of text and thirty-five pages of photographs. The text, a tapestry of carefully chosen words, gives a more striking picture than the illustrations, good and occasionally gruesome as these are. The reader can also discern a portrait of the Author, the clinician-observer after the style of Louis, human and humane in outlook, sceptical and powerless in treatment, in his hand a volume of Sydenham's works while he watches his patients suffer, recover or die and confirms the observations of the Master.

A light thread of bantering humour runs through Dr. Wilkinson's picture. At first this seems out of place. But perhaps a little levity was needed for the Author's (and the Reader's) peace of mind in the face of this anachronistic tragedy. Treatment in the book does not include prevention. In 1937 the theme for smallpox might have been, not by Sydenham, but by Jenner. And then there might have been no chance to read this most attractive book.

ALFRED WHITE FRANKLIN

Havelock Ellis, a Biography. A. CALDER-MARSHALL. London: (Rupert Hart-Davis), 1959; pp. 292. Illustrated. 30s.

To record a faithful and effective account of the life and activities of an individual is never as easy as it seems. In the first place there is either too much or too little material from which to erect the monument. Thus, a man who has published more than fifty books on a wide variety of subjects, including an autobiography and *An Open Letter to Biographers*, as well as leaving voluminous unpublished works and letters, and about whom five biographical records have already appeared, presents a formidable problem to anyone who wishes to commemorate the centenary of his birth by an appreciative volume. If in addition the subject selected possessed an incredibly complex and introspective personality, and if during the majority of his eighty years he dealt with a controversial subject, such as sex, the task of a prospective biographer is seen to be immense indeed. Such is the case with Havelock Ellis. That Mr. Calder-Marshall has been successful is an indication of the excellence of his book.