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medical school west of the Alleghenies, and the sixth in the United States. He deals at some length with the stormy arguments and controversies which so frequently marked, but never seriously marred, Drake's career as professor at Lexington, at Louisville and above all at Cincinnati, the city so closely associated with his name. A small town when he first entered it in 1800, it was still known then as Fort Washington, since it began as a military outpost against the Indians, but it later became an important centre of commerce and culture, having owed much to the labours of Daniel Drake.

It was Drake who established a museum in the city, having as his assistant in art and taxidermy no less a person than John James Audubon, then unknown and penniless, but destined to be America's most famous ornithologist. Drake also founded the college now called the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, and established the first hospital in the United States offering medical instruction with a full medical faculty, now the Cincinnati General Hospital. At the time of his death, which occurred on 5 November 1852, he was Cincinnati's most noted citizen, with a national reputation, although, strangely enough, he never visited Europe. Yet he rose to the head of his profession, and became the most highly respected physician in the United States.

Dr. Horine well epitomizes this fine biography in the three closing chapters, on 'Visitors to Cincinnati', 'Drake's Versatility' and 'Drake's Personal Appearance', and does so especially in the final paragraph, which is worth quoting—'Drake was a man who inevitably left his mark on his times. Indeed, today, his influence is alive, important, and imperishable.'

References appear as footnotes on nearly every page, and there is a good index, while the illustrations, thirty-five in number, include five portraits of Drake, which convey his tall, stately build, his dignified manner and his attractive demeanour.

This is indeed a biography to study and to treasure, a fine memorial to a great American physician which will certainly guide and inspire many of his followers.

DOUGLAS GUTHRIE

The Toadstool Millionaires. JAMES HARVEY-YOUNG, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1961, pp. 282.

This volume, which has the sub-title of *A Social History of Patent Medicines in America before Federal Legislation*, derives its name from the statement of Oliver Wendell Holmes: 'Somebody buys all the quack medicines that build palaces for the mushroom, say rather, the toadstool millionaires.' It is a fascinating story of the ingenuity and avarice (and occasionally sincerity) of the manufacturers and of the pathetic credulity and ignorance of the sick.

The earliest patent medicines were imported from Great Britain but enterprising Americans soon built up a trade which eventually far outpassed that of this country.

Patent medicine vendors were among the first to realize the importance of advertising and of pretentious premises. Thus there were huge signs erected in many places, such as at the Niagara Falls and on the Rockies, the latter bringing complaints that travellers could not see the mountains for the signs. One enterprising salesman offered to pay for the base of the Statue of Liberty if he could use it for his advertisements and another opened an ostentatious 'Temple of Pharmacy'. Almanacks advocating the use of nostrums became so popular that they were used as textbooks in some circles and one publisher claimed that his was second in circulation only to the Bible.

In the heyday of this trade some of the firms employed detail-men to visit physicians

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just as modern pharmaceutical firms now do to popularize their ethical preparations. Not all the patent medicine vendors were rogues and some put their profits to philanthropic use. Some undoubtedly had faith in their so-called cures and this was often supported by genuine testimonials. The discovery of the 'placebo-reactor' by modern pharmacologists gives us the explanation for most of these. The remainder were, no doubt, due to spontaneous remissions.

In the early days of patent medicines there was some excuse for their use as the preparations differed little from those of orthodox medicine but with advancing knowledge of physiology, pathology, medicine, and pharmacology the evils of self-medication with empirical nostrums became more apparent. Despite this some ingenious promoters began to use pseudo-scientific jargon to make their preparations more impressive. Thus Radam exploited Pasteur's discoveries in his *Universal Microbe Killer* and this was undoubtedly a commercial success although its only ingredients were 99.38 per cent of water with traces of red wine and hydrochloric and sulphuric acids. Unfortunately we are still not free from this type of pernicious exploitation as a glance at the patent medicine advertisements of many newspapers and magazines will show.

On the whole the medical and pharmaceutical professions emerge from the story with credit although there were occasional 'black sheep' in both folds. It was appropriate that the first person to expose the fraud of the *Microbe Killer*, R. G. Eccles, was both physician and pharmacist and the author states that physicians and pharmacists led the campaign to curb the evil and, when they were later joined by journalists and civil servants, it became possible for legislation to be enacted to control the sale and promotion of medicine to the public.

The book is confidently recommended as an interesting, amusing and instructive account of a social evil which, although now curtailed, is not yet fully repressed.

T. D. WHITTET

A Bibliography of the Honourable Robert Boyle, Fellow of the Royal Society. JOHN F. FULTON. Second edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961: pp. xxvi+218, port., front., 26 illus. £2 10s.

Robert Boyle was not a physician, but his fundamental chemical and physical discoveries have had a fruitful influence on physiology and medicine. He also dabbled in therapeutics, taking a hypochondriac's interest in his own poor health. As he was busy with intellectual pursuits for some forty years, there is much to interest and intrigue the medical historian in this complete record of his versatile and voluminous writings.

The late Professor John Fulton's *Bibliography* of Boyle was published in the *Papers of the Oxford Bibliographical Society* thirty years ago, followed by two supplements (1933 and 1947), and in consequence has not been readily accessible. Since it is the only thorough critique of Boyle's work, its appearance as an independent book is very welcome. Fulton himself completed this revision of the *Bibliography* before his untimely death. He seems to have found little to correct, but a good deal of new knowledge to incorporate and a few youthful judgments to redraft. He gives pride of place to one notable addition: Dr. Margaret Rowbottom's brilliant identification in 1950 of Boyle's anonymous first publication, *An Invitation to a free and generous Communication of Secrets and Receipts in Physick*.

Fulton wrote a critical preface for each section of his descriptions of Boyle's books and minor writings. For this second edition he revised less than a dozen of the fifty