

## Book Reviews

recent trip overseas of the historic places he had visited in Africa, Italy, Great Britain and the United States of America. Particular attention was given to those places associated with two men whose lives Dr. Kelly had studied extensively, Sir James Mackenzie and Benjamin Franklin.

M. L. VERSO

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*A Short History of Medicine*, by F. N. L. POYNTER, PH.D., F.R.S.L., F.L.A. and K. D. KEELE, M.D., F.R.C.P. (*Science in Society*, vol. II). London: Mills & Boon, 1962, pp. 146. 17s. 6d.

There is a growing appreciation that some knowledge of science and its methods are indispensable to a general education designed to prepare the younger generation for the responsibilities of the society in which they will live. If there be two cultures, and no one familiar with the current curricula at, and in preparation for, our Universities could deny the trend, then the earlier it is corrected the better.

The series of volumes entitled *Science in Society* is designed to ensure that *all* students, whether destined for the arts or science, in sixth forms in Grammar Schools shall have texts which will make available to them the broader implications of science.

*A Short History of Medicine* by F. N. L. Poynter and K. D. Keele, two of the most distinguished of contemporary medical historians, is the second volume in this series. It covers the story of medicine from its earliest origins in the East, Egypt and Babylon, to the latest discoveries and victories over disease.

The contributions of the Greeks from Hippocrates, Herophilus, Erasistratus and Asclepiades to Galen, are told to illustrate the rational approach to the understanding of disease. Then come the Dark Ages, to be followed in the fifteenth century by the anatomical researches of Leonardo da Vinci (whose works merit and are here described in greater detail than in many larger texts) and in the sixteenth by the crowning masterpiece of Vesalius. There follows an admirably balanced chapter on the antecedents of Harvey, which reaches its climax with the publication of *De Motu Cordis* in 1628.

The use of the microscope in the discovery of the capillaries by Malpighi, the unsurpassed clinical descriptions of disease by Sydenham, the researches of John Hunter, the discovery of vaccination, the beginnings of clinico-pathological correlations by Morgagni, the use of percussion and auscultation, and many other peaks of medical history in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, are described without undue resort to technical terms; and then follow the dramatic revelations of the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries due to the application of the methods and instruments of physics and chemistry to the study of vital phenomena. A surprising omission here is reference to Wöhler's synthesis, in 1828, of urea from ammonium cyanate, the first convincing evidence of a transformation of inorganic into organic matter, which blurred the distinction between 'living' and 'non-living' and thus gave the major impetus to the application of physics and chemistry to biology. There is a brief but admirable chapter on the evolution of our knowledge of mental disease.

The picture of the conquest of disease is drawn with striking detail. Chadwick's 'Sanitary Idea' is fully discussed; the victories over disease achieved by drugs and chemotherapy, by vaccines and sera, by surgery and anaesthesia, are dramatically

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described, and there are three excellent chapters on the history of 'Hospitals', 'The Medical Profession and the State', and 'Towards World Health'.

The only criticism which might be levelled at this work is that it is perhaps over-weighted with names, many of which are of minor importance, whilst others, such as Sherrington—'the greatest philosopher of the nervous system', Gregor Mendel—whose discoveries laid the foundation of the increasingly important topic of human genetics (to which no reference is made in the text), A. E. Garrod and Gowland Hopkins—amongst the founders of the modern biochemical concepts of disease, and many others, are omitted.

Yet this is carping criticism of a first-rate *Short History of Medicine* which should be compulsory reading not only for the sixth form of Grammar Schools, but also for every medical student and teacher.

COHEN OF BIRKENHEAD

*A Directory of English Country Physicians 1603–43*, by JOHN H. RAACH, PH.D., M.D., London, Dawsons, 1962, pp. 128, 215.

Those of us who know Dr. Raach's work on early seventeenth-century physicians have awaited this book with some eagerness. Written in the form of an alphabetical directory, it provides a handy check-list of physicians who were practising outside London between 1603 and 1643; it thus supplements the small list of physicians to be found in *Munk* for that period. Unlike *Medical Practitioners . . . in the Diocese of London* by Bloom and James, this book does not include surgeons, for the author believes there is a clear-cut division in function between physician and surgeon. As the present reviewer argues elsewhere, this may be an arbitrary distinction in practice, and this list includes men such as Annoot and Belke who were surgeon and apothecary, respectively, by training; in any case the author is quite wrong in saying (p. 11) that the licensing Act of 1512 'regulated only the men of physic'; there was attached to the original bill a 'Memorandum that surgeons be comprised in this Act like as Physicians'. The introduction to the *Directory* is generally inadequate and it is a pity that Dr. Raach did not give us a more general survey of the field rather than a mere list that must stand or fall by its accuracy. If we look at the index for Exeter (p. 99–100), for example, we find that there are signs of faulty work. Richard Spicer mentioned there cannot be found in the body of the book at all (he was, in fact, M.D. (OXON) 1622 and F.R.C.P. in 1624). John Gostlin is to be found (p. 50), although with a slightly different spelling, but the biography is defective; the tentative dates for his practice at Exeter are clearly given as 1607–19 in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and Venn, neither of which are cited; the dates given by the author, of Gostlin's practice at Cambridge, are meaningless in that they contradict his own earlier dates and give Gostlin nine extra years of life; it is misleading to show Gostlin as 'B.A., M.D. (OXON)' for he was educated at Cambridge where he took his M.D. in 1602 and merely incorporated it at Oxford ten years later; the Harley manuscript cited tells us nothing to the point and Foster is here unreliable. Thomas Edwards (p. 43) is given forty-one years' extra life for the author misquotes the authority he cites which gave 1665 as the date of the death, not of Edwards, but of his grandson. John Norris (p. 69) raises a question wider than that of accuracy, that of method. The author quotes Norris's will as authority for his being a physician but does not mention that he called himself 'Dr. of Physic' and is presumably the man who took B.M. at Oxford 1587 and married in Exeter in 1596. The two Thomas Marwoods (p. 65) similarly here lack the Padua M.D.'s they were reputed to have. Are these omissions deliberate, because the