

Book Notices

Robert B Aird, *Foundations of modern neurology: a century of progress*, New York, Raven Press, 1994, pp. xv, 299, \$107.50 (0-7817-0112-0).

The title of this book promises a survey of neurology in the twentieth century. But not so. Professor Aird, a respected American, clinical and research neurologist and nonagenarian, has decided that "the flowering period of neurology" was approximately 1935 to 1965. Others have proposed different dates for this supposed event, but many will agree that the invention of artificial historical epochs is unwise. However, Dr Aird supports his thesis with "essays" on 107 men who have created his "flowering", and he cites useful references to their writings. Sixty-nine worked or work in North America, and amongst the remaining are twenty British, ten Scandinavian, two French, and one German. This curious selection of representatives appears often to be based on whether the author knew the individual personally, but he admits that at times the choice was arbitrary (p. 98). As twenty-five are still alive, some being less than sixty, and as most of the deceased died in the last three decades, meaningful evaluations with adequate perspective must have been difficult to achieve in some cases. A few aspects of the history of neurology are discussed, but they relate predominantly to the States and to Dr Aird's career. Faith in his historical and factual accuracy is, however, diminished by frequent errors throughout the book, such as "the Regis Professor of Physic at Oxford" (p. 176), "Sir Thomas Willis" (p. 241), and "the village of Huntingdonshire, near Cambridge" (p. 273).

First-hand biographical data are always of value, for they supplement more formal accounts. Moreover, the author's chatty style and autobiographical additions provide pleasant reading, which is in keeping with the author's aim of arousing "the browsing interests of neurologists and others" (p. xiii).

Unfortunately the book's price is likely to limit its audience.

Walter I Wardwell, *Chiropractic: history and evolution of a new profession*, St Louis, Mosby Year Book Inc., 1992, pp. xv, 358, £36.00 (0-8016-6883-2).

Anyone familiar with the history and sociology of chiropractic will know the work of Walter Wardwell, who was the first social scientist to explore systematically the marginal position of chiropractors in the United States. This book represents the culmination of his research over the past forty years. It offers a descriptive history of chiropractic covering a wide range of topics including: the influence of D D and B J Palmer (the founding fathers), the early leaders, schools and associations; the struggle for licensure; the push for educational standards and recruitment; organized medicine's campaign against chiropractic; and past and present debates within chiropractic over philosophy, art and science. For readers who want an encyclopedic introduction to chiropractic, this book provides a useful compendium of facts and a comprehensive bibliography. In addition, Wardwell presents an even-handed view of the conflicts between chiropractic and allopathic medicine and between straight and mixer chiropractors.

But the strengths of this book are also its weaknesses. While long on description, which makes for dull and tedious reading, it is short on analysis. Wardwell tangentially refers to sociological concepts but they are poorly integrated into the text. Moreover, he does not adequately explain the recent prosperity of chiropractic, the straight-mixer conflict, and the hostility between allopathic medicine and chiropractic. Although Wardwell is aware that these issues are essentially political, he believes that reason, science and logic are necessary for chiropractic's continued success and full acceptance into the health care

system. In taking this positivist stand, Wardwell misses the opportunity to provide insight into the meaning of these epistemological conflicts.

Marco Beretta, *A history of non-printed science: a select catalogue of the Waller collection*, Acta Bibliothecae R Universitatis Upsaliensis vol. XXXI, Uppsala University, 1993, pp. 199, illus., SEK 178.00 (91–554–3070–8).

The collection of printed books presented by Erik Waller to the University of Uppsala is well known by repute, thanks to the two-volume catalogue published in 1955, which has been a standard reference work ever since. (The books themselves have, sadly, been less used than they deserve.)

The present oddly-titled volume is intended to draw attention to areas of the collection not covered by the published catalogue: 30,000 autograph letters, 300 manuscripts (including diplomas and an impressive collection of *alba amicorum*), 3,000 iconographic items, 200 bookplates, 600 medals, 4,000 modern pamphlets and offprints, to say nothing of Waller's own correspondence. Only the medals are at present adequately catalogued. A committee has been established to assess the practicality of a published catalogue of the whole collection. Apart from introductory essays on the collection and its history, the volume contains full descriptions of 70 items. This tiny sample is amplified by notes of other related material. The result is a cornucopia of great names in medicine and science from Rhazes to Einstein by way of Newton, Baglivi, Lamarck and Darwin, proof enough (if proof were needed) of the value of a complete catalogue. Unfortunately the present "select catalogue" has neither index nor table of contents, so that its use as a work of reference is limited, which is a pity since it is attractively produced and lavishly illustrated and is clearly a labour of love. It also draws attention to the amount of bibliographical information on such matters as provenance,

which was excluded from the published catalogue of printed books.

John Fulton in 1955 predicted that "Uppsala will now become a Mecca for students of the history of medicine and science". Let us hope that this tantalising *bonne bouche* will bring his prediction closer to fulfilment.

José M López Piñero (ed.), *El Vanquete de nobles caballeros (1530), de Luis Lobera de Ávila y la higiene individual del siglo XVI*, Madrid, Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo, 1991, pp. 216, no price given (84–7670–308–2).

This book offers a thirty-page historical introduction and a facsimile reproduction of the first Spanish edition of Lobera de Ávila's *Vanquete de nobles caballeros*, published in Augsburg in 1530 by Heinrich Steiner. Lobera de Ávila (c. 1480–1551) studied medicine at the University of Salamanca, and after some time of further study in France and clinical practice in Aragon, was awarded the position of physician and surgeon of the Spanish royal house in 1520. From then until his death, he lived and travelled with king Charles I's cortège. Working at the court and, being nobly born himself, he devoted his medical writing to the aim of preserving an individual's health and advising certain norms and practices to cure and prevent specific diseases which were of concern to a courtier. Responding to an educational goal, he intended a lay audience for the *Vanquete*, following the medieval tradition of the *regimina sanitatis*, a medical genre devoted to counselling individuals on how to keep their health. However, the text specifically distinguishes the cases for which a professional is needed from those in which "everyone is so discrete that he can be his own physician" (p. 24). The *Vanquete* is specifically addressed to men, and the specificities of female health are only incidentally mentioned (pp. 24, 46, 50). Based on Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq's interpretation of the Galenic theory of the six non-naturals, Lobera uses the scholastic method of quoting classical

and medieval Latin and Arabic *auktoritates*, for which an Appendix of citations is provided in López Piñero's introduction. The language and book format of the *Vanquete* responds to its educational aim and to Lobera's conception of what was medical or lay. Written in Spanish, each page contains a variable space in which the authors and texts considered are specified, and medical theories or relevant cases further explained in Latin for a learned audience. A revised version of the text was published in Alcalá in 1542; a German translation of the *Vanquete* was published in 1531 and reissued in 1551 and 1556.

José M López Piñero, José Luis Fresquet Febrer, María Luz López Terrada, and José Pardo Tomás, *Medicinas, drogas y alimentos vegetales del nuevo mundo: textos e imágenes españolas que los introdujeron en Europa*, Madrid, Ministerio de Sanidad y Consumo, 1992, pp. 388, no price given (84-7670-326-0).

This book offers some of the first results of an ongoing research team project on the introduction to Europe of American *materia medica* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a study currently being carried out at the Unidad de Historia de la Ciencia, Instituto de Estudios Documentales e Históricos sobre la Ciencia, University of Valencia (Spain). Intended as a half-way house between a work of synthesis and a textbook addressed to the general public, it provides an analysis of the earliest Spanish representations of American drugs and vegetable food, making available to present day readers of Spanish a selection of sixteenth-century descriptions of a vegetable kingdom which Western European conquerors, botanists and physicians perceived as new.

Western reorganization of the new learning was based on European observations of American peoples' knowledge and practical uses of their natural world. European selection and understanding of the resources offered by

the American lands was developed through the depiction and naming of those products according to how they fitted into and served previous European knowledge of drugs and vegetable nutrient. The emphasis was placed on how this new world could be economically profitable to Europeans by replacing expensive products imported from the East. Authors and texts considered include: the so-called Colombian sources (contemporary descriptions of Christopher Columbus' trips, 1492–1504), Pedro Mártir de Anglería (1457–1526), Hernán Cortés (1485–1547), Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo (1478–1557), Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (1507–1559), Francisco López de Gómara (1511–c. 1565), Pedro Cieza de León (1520–1554), Nicolás Monardes (1507–1588), Francisco Hernández (1517–1587), Andrés Laguna (c. 1510–1559), Pedro Arias de Benavides (b. c. 1530), Juan Fragoso (1530–1597) and Juan Calvo (1536–1599). The inclusion of a subject index would have helped scholars to use the book also as a reference tool.

John Hostettler, *Thomas Wakley: an improbable radical*, Chichester, Barry Rose, 1993, pp. xi, 158, illus., £24.00 (£1.00 p&p) (1-872328-51-2).

There has been no critical biography of the founding editor of the *Lancet* since Squire Sprigge's eminently Victorian *Life and times of Thomas Wakley* appeared in 1899. The present slim mixture of hyperbole and syntactical howlers is by a lawyer and bears the imprint of a legal publishing house. Hostettler concentrates on Wakley's activities as a political radical and legal reformer, rather than on medical politics and publishing—though, unfortunately, without knowledge of Adrian Desmond's radical exploration of the age of reform in *The politics of evolution* (1989). While it restores Wakley to the legal pantheon, the book contains little of interest to the medical historian not to be found in either Sprigge or Desmond.

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Mirko D Grmek (ed.), *Storia del pensiero medico occidentale*, vol. 1, *Antichità e medioevo*, Rome and Bari, Editori Laterza, 1993, pp. 577 (88–420–4111–4).

For readers of Italian, this volume, the first of three covering the history of medicine from the Greeks to the present day, represents a bargain. The international cast of contributors not only provides an excellent synthesis of the research of others, but frequently offers new or unusual perspectives. The substantial amount of space allotted for the history of medicine before 1500 allows the authors not only to describe the general outlines, but also to choose telling examples and anecdotes to illustrate their own observations. The strength of this volume lies in its delineation of medical ideas—the social and epidemiological background is less well developed—and particularly in its discussions of medieval learned medicine and surgery. The few footnotes are supplemented by a large bibliography, but there are no maps or illustrations.

David Gardner-Medwin, Anne Hargreaves, and Elizabeth Lazenby (eds), *Medicine in Northumbria: essays in the history of medicine*, Newcastle upon Tyne, The Pybus Society for the History and Bibliography of Medicine (c/o The Children's Department, Newcastle General Hospital, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6BE), 1993, pp. xiv, 384, illus., £12.00 (0–9522097–0–5).

In *Medicine in Northumbria* the Pybus Society has put together a wholly admirable collection of essays about the growth of medicine in the north-east (though one might have wished for a contribution devoted to the activities and book collection of Frederick Charles Pybus himself). The chronological coverage takes us from 'Health care in the Roman north' (by Lindsay Allason-Jones) through to modern cardiology and a memorial essay for the late Anthony Spriggs, who

himself penned an essay for the volume on John Hutchinson, the inventor of the spirometer. And essays range from famous locals (John Clark, Thomas Trotter and John Snow)—and the somewhat less famous, like George Redmayne Murray, who developed the use of thyroid extract in the treatment of myxoedema—to surveys of medical education and institutions in the Northumbrian region. Proper historical attention to regional characteristics in British medicine is long overdue; this volume provides ample and illuminating materials for the study of an area falling within the force fields both of London and of Edinburgh but possessed of a fierce independence of its own.

BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED

(The inclusion of a title does not preclude the possibility of subsequent review. Items received, other than those assigned for review, are ultimately incorporated into the collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.)

Robert H Blank and Andrea L Bonnicksen (eds), *Medicine unbound: the human body and the limits of medical intervention*, Emerging Issues in Biomedical Policy series, New York and Chichester, Columbia University Press, 1994, pp. ix, 287, £33.00 (hardback 0–231–08148–0), £15.00 (paperback 0–231–08149–9).

John Duffy, *From humours to medical science: a history of American medicine*, revised and expanded edition of *The healers* (1976), Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1993, pp. xii, 418, \$42.50 (hardback 0–252–07136–6), \$14.95 (paperback 0–252–06300–7).

F P Dugo, *Fons aquae bonae*, reprint of 1662 edition; *Franciscus Prosper Dugo, Fons aquae bonae: Kommentar*, Freiburg, Deutscher Geschichtsforschender Verein des Kantons, 1993, pp. 113, and 69, illus. (no price given).