

Book Reviews

the discovery of antitoxins (von Behring and Kitasato), the standardization of toxins and anti-toxins, the distinction between active and passive immunization (Ehrlich), bacteriolysis (Pfeiffer), haemolysis, agglutination of blood corpuscles as a diagnostic test, the opsonic index, and prophylaxis and treatment of many diseases by vaccines. In certain diseases, for example, cerebro-spinal meningitis and tuberculosis, vaccines have been superseded by the triumphs of chemotherapy. In others immunization still reigns supreme, as in the prevention of diphtheria and epidemic poliomyelitis.

Such are some of the features of the history which Dr. Parish has to tell. The book is well documented, well produced, and its interest is enhanced by portraits of the great exponents of immunization, past and present.

ARTHUR S. MACNALTY

Claude Bernard, Cahier de Notes 1850–1860, Présenté et commenté par M. D.

GRMEK, Preface de R. Courrier, Paris, Ed. Gallimard, 1965, pp. 315, Fr. 18.

The 'cahier rouge' by Claude Bernard has been finally published in its complete text, drawings included. The paleography, headings to the notes, and the introduction have been the conscientious work of Dr. Grmek. The self-questioning of Bernard while proceeding with his experimental work is of permanent interest to the scholar and the student of biological sciences, because it indicates a pattern of scientific thinking. A selection of a scientist's work is unfair both to him and to the reader, because the editor always tends to select the accomplishments and to hide the failures of his idol. We are grateful to Dr. Grmek for offering us a Claude Bernard of flesh and blood, not only with his theoretical working hypothesis, his experimental tests and practical achievements, but also for his philosophical disquisitions. There are in the notes many ideas to be followed, some fancies to be avoided, and a whole book of interesting and stimulating reading.

F. GUERRA

Epidemic Disease in Ghana 1901–1960, by DAVID SCOTT, London, Oxford University Press, 1965, pp. 208, 18 fig., 3 pl., 35s.

During the first half of the twentieth century much of West Africa came into contact with western medicine for the first time. From the simplest beginnings the transition to established medical services has therefore been rapid. This epidemiological study covers the history of seven epidemic diseases in Ghana over the last sixty years. It is based on all the available local information and provides a fascinating commentary on this rapid transition, especially in the realm of rural health. During the period much original research was going on in tropical medicine and the influence of this on the evolution of control methods is well brought out, particularly in measures against yellow fever, cerebrospinal meningitis, and trypanosomiasis. Ghana, too, will always be remembered as the country from which the Rockefeller Yellow Fever Commission isolated the original Asibi strain, from which 17D was later developed and used for making a safe and effective vaccine.