

Book Notices

Michael D Calabria and Janet A Macrae, (eds), *Suggestions for thought by Florence Nightingale: selections and commentaries*, Studies in Health, Illness, and Caregiving, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994, pp. xl, 176, £32.95 (hardback 0-8122-3174-0), £15.95 (paperback 0-8122-1501-X).

This compendium of *Suggestions for thought to the searchers after truth among the artizans of England* (c. 1852-1860) contains perhaps one tenth of its woolly, repetitive, strident three volume, 829 page original. The editors have extracted from that and rearranged into a kind of order what they call Florence Nightingale's "spiritual philosophy". Their brief excerpts eschew the rhetoric of the three volumes and give a misleadingly coherent sense of Nightingale's lucubrations. Students of Nightingale's life will still have to struggle through the rare original. But I imagine that students of the turmoil in British theology at mid-century and the emergence of mystical scepticism in the Church of England and Unitarianism will find this collection illuminating.

The editors, however, seem to intend their selection for student nurses. It is hard to see what they will get out of it. The processes of Nightingale's dismissal of orthodox faith in the Trinity, Atonement and the eternity of punishment, and their replacement by some sort of internalized divine moral law remains obscure in this simplified version. Nightingale's strange private conversations with God are barely mentioned here.

The *Suggestions* are pretentious. Even in the bits they have chosen, the editors have gently to correct major errors, as J S Mill had tried to do before them, about David Hume, P S Laplace and René Descartes. It appears that Nightingale invoked their writings without having read them. While they have amended

these errors, the editors have introduced some of their own. Sidney Herbert is misquoted at p. xvii; there were three Contagious Diseases Acts, not one (p. 162); "secularise" is a misleading description of Nightingale's changes in rules about denominational allegiance at the Harley Street Institution (p. xxvi). They allow other dubious Nightingale assertions to pass unremarked. Her claim that "the very elements of nursing [were] all but unknown" in the early 1850s is false: the editors seem unaware of Anne Summers's *Angels and citizens* (1988). Indeed, the editors' hagiographical approach is resolutely innocent of recent revisionary writing about Nightingale.

Paul B Wood, *The Aberdeen enlightenment: the arts curriculum in the eighteenth century*, Quincentennial Studies series, Aberdeen University Press, 1993, pp. xvi, 240, illus., £8.95 (1-85772-200-1).

Beneath this unassuming title lies a superb study. The book will never be a best seller but it holds much wider interest for historians than might be imagined. Aberdeen, over-shadowed in the Enlightenment and in modern historiography by Edinburgh, was a vibrant, if small, intellectual community in the eighteenth century. This is a subject of particular interest since a great deal of vibrancy devolved from Aberdeen's two universities, King's College and Marischal College. Since so much intellectual innovation in the eighteenth century occurred outside of universities, Wood's study merits attention from this perspective alone. There are other features of general interest. Wood has, where possible, carefully reconstructed the arts curriculum of these universities. Arts, of course, comprised a great deal of mathematics and natural philosophy as well as the regular subjects such

as rhetoric and logic. Thus Wood's study is a valuable contribution to the picture of the uptake of, say, Newton's work, or the introduction of subjects such as geology into the curriculum. Aberdeen in fact was remarkably quick to innovate. This was, of course, mostly marked at mid-century when the common-sense circle, including Thomas Reid, James Beattie and Alexander Gerard flourished. Wood provides a particularly detailed account of the teaching and relations of these men, including a re-evaluation of the place of one of the early Aberdeen intellectual innovators George Turnbull. Thoroughly researched, well written, this is a model study of local and general interest.

Andreas-Holger Maehle, *Kritik und Verteidigung des Tierversuchs: die Anfänge der Diskussion im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992, pp. 207, illus., DM 54.00 (3-515-05828-1).

Dr Maehle's 'Critique and defence of experiments on animals presents the results of a study undertaken between 1984 and 1990 at the Göttingen Institute for History of Medicine. It was accepted as "Habilitationsschrift" in summer 1990 and subsequently published with only minor amendments. His study undertakes a broad review of medico-scientific, theological, philosophical and legal literature between 1600 and 1800 concerning the scientific value and moral justification of animal experimentation and vivisection. Thus the book is a welcome addition to the literature on the subject, which has so far almost exclusively dealt with the nineteenth century. The study can be divided into three parts. The first concerns itself with the examination of philosophical and ethical evaluations of animal experimentation by contemporary natural philosophers, while the second part examines the theological and legal arguments. The sources referred to are partly identified as the

"fore-runners" of nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionist literature. The third part looks at the reception of animal experimentation in literature and art, mainly in England. Here it transpires that around 1750 animal experimentation for the first time caused wide public concern and popular misgivings about the violation of animal rights. Already around 1800 the suggestion emerged that scientists should exercise discipline in order to avoid meaningless waste and restrict themselves only to animal experimentation with utmost care and consideration.

Paul Ridder, *Chirurgie und Anästhesie: Vom Handwerk zur Wissenschaft*, Edition Universitas, Stuttgart, S Hirzel, 1993, pp. 162, illus., DM 38.00, Frs 38.00 (3-8047-1256-8).

At the beginning of his book Ridder declares that he wants to use the treatment of pain in the management of wounds as a "probe" to examine and reconstruct the social history of surgery. What follows, however, is little more than a collection of material from the history of pharmacotherapy, of the surgical profession, and anaesthesia, chiefly based on medico-historical secondary literature. Despite his ambitious conceptual aim, this material is hardly organized by a coherent line of interpretation, often being presented virtually in the style of a catalogue of pieces of historical knowledge ranging from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. This, and a lot of going backwards and forwards in chronology, make the book cumbersome reading. It is furthermore irritating that numerous references, given only in short form (author and year) in the notes, have been omitted from the bibliography.

The strongest part of the book is a chapter on the discovery and dissemination of local anaesthesia with cocaine, drawing upon the original medical publications of the late nineteenth century. The final sections,

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sometimes more obscured than enlightened by sociological jargon, basically lead to the (hardly surprising) conclusion that local anaesthesia was important for the development of new operative special disciplines, such as ophthalmology and dental surgery, and that it contributed to the emancipation of anaesthesiology from surgery. All in all a well intended effort with a rather disappointing result.

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.)

Susan Budd and Ursula Sharma (eds), *The healing bond: the patient-practitioner relationship and therapeutic responsibility*, London and New York, Routledge, 1994, £40.00 (hardback 0-415-09051-2), £13.99 (paperback 0-415-09052-0).

Neal R Cutler, Carl G Gottfries, Klaudius Siegfried (eds), *Alzheimer's disease: clinical and treatment perspectives*, Chichester and New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1995, pp. ix, 186, £35.00 (0-471-94039-4).

Miguel A Faria, Jr, *Vandals at the gates of medicine: historic perspectives on the battle over health care reform*, Macon, Georgia,

Hacienda Publishing, 1994, pp. xvii, 399, illus., \$41.95 (0-9641077-0-8).

Walter P Herz, *The lengthened shadow: the lives of M. J. Lewi, M.D.*, New York, Vantage Press, 1994, pp. xvii, 130, illus., \$15.95 (0-533-11050-5).

Arthur E Imhof and Rita Weinknecht (eds), *Erfüllt leben—in Gelassenheit sterben Geschichte und Gegenwart: Beiträge eines interdisziplinären Symposiums vom 23.–25. November 1993 an der Freien Universität Berlin*, Berliner Historische Studien, vol. 19, Berlin, Duncker & Humblot, 1994, DM 148.00 (3-428-07872-1).

Michael A LaCombe (ed.), *On being a doctor*, Philadelphia, American College of Physicians, 1995, pp. x, 179, \$29.00 (ACP members), \$38.00 (ACP non-members) (0-943126-39-8).

Michael J Newstead, *Cumulative index to the Quekett journals of microscopy, volumes 1 to 36, 1868–1992*, The Quekett Microscopical Club, 1994, pp. ix, 243, £18.00 (0-9514441-2-3) (distributed by Savona Books, 9 Wilton Road, Hornsea, N. Humberside HU18 1QU, UK).

Gail Vines, *Raging hormones: do they rule our lives?*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1994, pp. viii, 184, \$25.00 (hardback 0-520-08776-3), \$13.00 (paperback 0-520-08777-1).