

idiom. Following this, Otis devotes the bulk of her study to tracing the elaboration of the organic memory theory in the novels of Émile Zola, Pío Baroja, Thomas Mann, Miguel de Unamuno, Emilia Pardo Bazán and Thomas Hardy (it is welcome to see writers in Spanish represented). These case studies are intended to demonstrate the widespread cultural diffusion of the organic memory theory, and the uses to which it was put.

Otis concludes with a section on Freud and Jung, in which she demonstrates how they drew upon the organic memory theory, and were in part responsible for its continued cultural legitimacy. A few unfortunate errors creep into this section. For example, Otis states that “In 1913 he [Jung] broke not only with Freud and the Psychoanalytic Association but with Bleuler and the Bürgholzli” (p. 208). However, Jung left the Bürgholzli in 1909, a move which was allied with his increasing institutional affiliation with psychoanalysis.

In conclusion, Otis’ study represents a welcome reconstitution of hitherto neglected aspects of the scientific study of memory and its cultural diffusion at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.

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Danielle Gourevitch (ed.), *Histoire de la médecine: leçons méthodologiques*, Paris, Ellipses-Edition Marketing, 1995, pp. 192, FFr 110.00 (2-7298-9568-X).

How does one become a medical historian? Some of us, like the reviewer, drifted into the subject from other areas of historical research; others, mainly clinicians, may have become interested in the past of their speciality or in responses to the eternal challenge of the sick patient. Some have had formal training, others have gained their knowledge from conferences and meetings, others are autodidacts. This book, unusually, is aimed at those who want to go further and carry out their own investigations, to move from passive recipient to active

participant in the making of medical history. It does not therefore set out to be a history of medicine as such, although many periods and specialities are covered, but rather to suggest a variety of strategies that might be employed.

The 27 chapters (or lectures) by 24 scholars fall into three groups: how to find out information—in a library or museum, from archives, papyri, palaeopathology, paintings, literature, previous historians, and even hospital nomenclature; how changes over time have altered words, diseases, concepts, and even the transmitted texts themselves; and how one might then use the material to write the history of a disease, a theory, or a speciality, or compare western and non-western medicine. The lectures themselves both provide examples of possible topics—a succinct history of the Library of the Académie de Médecine—and are themselves examples of how these topics might be approached. Each section concludes with a brief bibliography.

The deliberate selectivity and the relative brevity of each contribution makes a review difficult. Certainly, while particular insights are often salutary, there is not the overall coverage and solidity that distinguish Samaran’s *L’Histoire et ses méthodes* of a generation ago or Bynum and Porter’s *Companion encyclopedia of the history of medicine*. One might contrast the philological acumen of many chapters with the relative absence of awareness of historical developments outside France—no Camporesi, no Porter, no Rosenberg, and almost nothing on demography and social history, let alone on sociological interpretations of science and medicine. One might wonder whether a beginner would not have been better served by a review of some major trends in medical history since 1945 than by a judicious assessment of the value of general histories of medicine from Daniel Le Clerc to Julius Pagel, useful though this is (but, *pace* p. 4, the Jacobite John Freind was never knighted). In the European, and even international, world of today the choice of examples might at times appear even parochial.

But such criticism is to miss what I take to be the point of these essays. By being

exemplificatory, and by concentrating on what is available close at hand, they are inviting others in France to follow them. "Go and do thou likewise" could well be the book's motto, and it will be interesting to see how many adopt it. Even those who consider themselves already sufficiently expert not to require basic instruction should not neglect some of its admonitions, and the traveller to Paris who has read this book will arrive with a heightened appreciation of what might be found in some of its institutions, whether hospitals, libraries, or picture galleries.

Vivian Nutton, Wellcome Institute

Desmond King-Hele, *A concordance to Erasmus Darwin's poem 'The Botanic Garden'*, London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1994, pp. ix, 148, £8.00 (1-869835-50-6). Orders to Ms Tracy Tillotson, The Library, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE.

It is curious that concordances are so little sung in the history of medicine, since they are often the first thing we turn to when technical or stylistic difficulties become a problem. Shakespeare, Milton and Dickens have been available in this format for decades; and more recently, selected texts of Charles Darwin's too. Only through these means can we start making substantive remarks about earlier usage of (say) the verb evolve or the noun science; and provide firm evidence for any verbal echoes bouncing from one writer through the work of others. Moreover, the rearrangement can be riveting. An author's mental range—or lack of it—is sharply revealed. Linguistic preferences and peccadilloes are ruthlessly exposed. In an odd sort of way, the writer's real bones emerge more clearly when stripped of the textual coherence which normally clothes them.

Desmond King-Hele gives us a fine example of this kind of dedicated scholarly dissection

with his exemplary concordance to Erasmus Darwin's *Botanic garden* (1791). One of the most famous of Enlightenment poems, Dr Darwin's double-hander comprised both *The loves of the plants* ("the most delicious poem on earth" breathed Horace Walpole), in which Linnaeus' classification scheme for plants was jauntily personified and a great deal was said about the sexual behaviour of humans, and the *Economy of vegetation*, a rousing evolutionary epic, trumpeting end-of-the-century advances in science, technology, medicine and human culture, with a central message of self-development and progress for all.

Over the years, King-Hele has fully demonstrated the significance of this larger-than-life figure in the context of the industrializing, progressive, innovative Midlands; and has moved from Darwin's developmental, evolutionary and medical ideas to discuss the influence of his poems on figures as diverse as Coleridge, Wordsworth and Shelley in *Erasmus Darwin and the Romantic poets*. The concordance emerges out of a wish to show that many of the Romantic poets were as indebted to Darwin's actual words as to his ideas. Yet the aim has expanded to reveal Darwin's deft touch with then contemporary science and medicine; his considerable verbal ingenuity; and the large number of words or usages that he coined. Every entry is therefore linked back to any relevant citation in the *OED*. Some 65 words from the *Botanic garden* are marked as the earliest known example cited in the *OED* (e.g., glow-fly, inemulous, lazuli, placental, plastic). A further 85 predate anything in the *OED* (e.g., diamond-beetle, gauzy, gigantic, insurgent, iridescent, myriad, phosphoric, promiscuous, scintillating). Darwin was apparently one of the first to use "oxygene" from French chemistry, admittedly only once compared to four phlogistons in the *Economy of vegetation*, though twice more in his lengthy non-poetic, explanatory footnotes. King-Hele suggests that the poem did a great deal to popularize the term. He was also the first to use the expression "nitrous gas" (*Economy of vegetation* IV, 171), and "tissue" in the biomedical sense.