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practised in Derby, then in Stafford and in 1656 he moved to London for the better education of his children. One of his sons helped him in his practice and one of his daughters became a midwife, attending her own cases and also working with her father.

This book is first and foremost a practical work for the midwife. Willughby starts by admitting that he has no new practice of midwifery, he intends 'to inform the ignorant common midwives with such wayes as I have used with good successe. My thoughts bee onely for a publick good, and chiefly to benefit my own nation, and the midwives inhabiting England'. He was concerned to see the results of bad, rough and ready midwifery and taught that midwives must be discreet in what they said to the patient, to be gentle in their handling of the woman in labour and to let nature alone—'The womb is a place locked up. Let midwives so deale with their travailing women, so will the birth be more easy, and the child not pulled to pieces, or destroyed, nor the woman torn, or ruined by the midwife's struglings, or stretching of their bodies. In fitting time, nature will open the womb.'

In this volume the *Observations in Midwifery* comprises some three hundred pages with an index. There follows, also by Percivall Willughby, forty-five pages of an opusculum (or little work) for the Countrey Midwife which is in some respects of greater interest than the main work for it is packed full of intensely practical advice 'shewing the wayes how to deliver any difficult birth bee it naturall or unnaturall' and ending with a condemnation of Caesarean Section.

The book is printed and bound most admirably and is cheap at £3.50. It would make an ideal gift for any medical man or midwife. Congratulations to all concerned in its production.

J. S. TOMKINSON

The Falling Sickness: A History of Epilepsy from the Greeks to the Beginnings of Modern Neurology, by OWSEI TEMKIN, 2nd ed. rev., Baltimore and London, Johns Hopkins Press, 1971, pp. xv, 467, illus., £7.15.

A satisfying way of becoming familiar with the changing concepts of medicine is to study the history of a single disease, written by a master. Then all the thoughts and theories which often seem so disembodied in general textbooks of medical history, take on a reality in having to relate them to the subject in hand. Apart from its undoubted value to the specialist in the history of neurology and psychiatry, Owsei Temkin's classic on *The Falling Sickness* provides such a background for the more general student.

Originally written some twenty-five years ago, Professor Temkin has now produced a revised second edition. Epilepsy is a startling phenomenon, which has attracted attention since antiquity. The complexity of its history is daunting, but the student is guided through the concepts of the disease from the fourth century before to the end of the nineteenth century after Christ; from Hippocrates to Hughlings Jackson; from the Sacred Disease to the differential diagnosis of Idiopathic Epilepsy. The detail and the extensive references neither confuse nor intrude upon the easily read text. Not only are the theological, philosophical and social aspects fully discussed, but the clinician is delighted to find such practical, contemporary glimpses as Morel reporting in 1872

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that the nursing sisters of a French asylum recognized that a patient's behaviour seemed to be that of an epileptic, *but she does not fall*. 'Les religieuses me disent: "elle est méchante comme une épileptique, mais elle ne tombe pas."'

The revision has taken into account such concepts as psychomotor epilepsy and temporal lobe epilepsy, 'which were as yet rare or non-existent at the writing of the first edition'. This has added to the value of the book, without detracting from the author's aim 'to let the past speak for itself and to bring it near to the understanding of the modern reader'.

JOHN CULE

Medical History and Medical Care (a symposium of perspectives, arranged by the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust and the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation), ed. by G. McLACHLAN and T. McKEOWN, Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. xii, 244, £3.00.

In October 1970 a symposium under this title was held in London under the joint auspices of the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust and the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation. Except for the two Nuffield trustees, the twenty-four participants were medical men, each one distinguished in one or other branch of his profession. The papers submitted to the symposium are reproduced in full, after they had been revised by the contributors in the light of the context of the other papers and the discussion which followed their presentation. The result is a uniform and readable book: a feature which is not often achieved in similar reports. The first paper, which is an abridgement of Dr. McKeown's inaugural lecture to the Society for the Social History of Medicine, sets the tone for those which follow. Next comes a short, masterly, and necessary, statement by Dr. John Z. Bowers, president of the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation, of the changes which have taken place in the education of the doctor in the U.S.A. during this century. A second paper by Dr. McKeown outlines the historical appraisal of the tasks which lie ahead, and this theme is developed in the subsequent papers. Prof. George Rosen reviews the historical trends and future prospects in public health both in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. Sir John Brotherston gives a good, concise evaluation of medical practice, concentrating chiefly on family doctoring, and looking aslant into the future. Dr. Paul J. Sanazaro deals with and compares the development of the hospitals and health services in both countries. Prof. Bernard Towers, while admitting the glowing promise of the computer in the service of medicine, throws doubt on the value of the present dominance of technology over clinical medicine at the expense of care, *caritas*; a situation of which we are all aware but one which we seldom find stated in such forthright terms. Dr. Rasi Fein, professor of the economics of medicine at Harvard, in a closely argued paper deals with the economic benefits of health programmes. The summing up by Prof. Henry Miller is lively and controversial.

In his opening paper Dr. McKeown remarks that 'if social history is history with politics left out, the social history of medicine is medical history with the public interest put in'. This definition by analogy is good, but we still concentrate too much on how medical care is and has been handed out and too little on how it is and has been received. Dr. Towers throws doubt on the wisdom of many of the things that we do to our patients, but has it not always been so? The bleedings, purgings and sweatings of past ages would have been defended by their advocates quite as valiantly as the replacement therapists of today justify their ends.