

Book Reviews

Rae's numerous quarrels with the naval establishment, with members of the Royal Geographical Society, with Lady Franklin, and with the British public through the press are related without interpretation. This is a biography without personalities, and can be recommended only for its bibliography and as a reference book for students of Arctic exploration.

The book is attractively produced, a tribute to the workmanship of a small specialist press.

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KARL E. ROTHSCUH, *Naturheilmovement, Reformmovement, Alternativebewegung*, Stuttgart, Hippokrates Verlag, 1983, 8vo, pp. 148, illus., DM.58.00.

This closely (sometimes microscopically) printed work is intended as popularization. Whatever its faults and risks, it can be placed first on the reading-lists of anyone seeking an initial framework for research into the movements and "great" names of medical and semi-medical heresies within German-speaking countries during the last 200 years or so.

The author, a veteran of medical historiography, is clearly unhappy at having to compress so much into 140 pages. His discussion begins with Rousseau, to whom he attributes most of the subsequent movements in Germany. His excursions into two millennia of European civilization prior to Rousseau force him into potted histories which are at best old-fashioned. Both before and after Jean-Jacques, the main method is to identify how various writers (all too appropriately, their names are italicized) transmitted a tradition. Any popular currents are mentioned only fleetingly, except when one of the italicized immortals is lowly-born. And dimensions both social and political are seldom tackled, except as part of the background to the real thing.

This procedure is particularly disquieting, given the author's plausible argument that present-day "alternative" movements are fundamentally similar to those he is tracing. For, by the decades around 1900, his often uncommented listing of beliefs and of men (very occasionally their wives, sisters, or models) begins to include racism and anti-semitism. This, one presumes, is hardly the author's fault but surely has something to do with the compression and conventionality of his work. In particular, to mention the Third Reich merely for having swallowed or crushed these movements (p.126) is somewhat one-sided—given, for example, that the "architect and artist" Paul Schultze-Naumburg was allied not merely with reformers of life-style (in particular, of female dress: p.121) but also with the likes of Julius Streicher.

Rothschuh is seeking to link pre- with post-1930s movements. But in his haste, he may encourage a revival of the political ambiguities in the movements he narrates.

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J. O. LEIBOWITZ and S. MARCUS (editors), *Sefer Hanisyonot. The book of medical experiences attributed to Abraham ibn Ezra*, Jerusalem, Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1984, 8vo, pp. 345, illus., \$28.00.

The publication for the first time of *Sefer Hanisyonot. The book of medical experiences*, edited, translated, and commented upon by two eminent scholars, has not only rescued the work from oblivion but also the name of the great Arabic medical author 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Haitham, of whom we know little. The sub-title of the book, *Medical theory. Rational and magical therapy. A study in medievalism* is appropriate, for it brings before the reader the whole spectrum of medieval medicine and its application. This twelfth-century medical treatise attributed to Abraham ibn Ezra and based on an earlier treatise of al-Haitham, no longer existing in its original Arabic, is an example of the synthesis of Islamic with Jewish culture which gave rise to the scientific and literary fame of the medieval Jewish-Arabic world.

The work begins with an introduction and evaluation of the philosophical basis of the first