

Book Reviews

there was no meeting of the Apothecaries with the Privy Council in February 1640, could have been avoided by consulting the Council's Register. There are also numerous slips that need correcting if there is another edition; the episcopal licensing act was 1512 (not 1511 as on p. 108), the inspeximus of the Grocers Charter was 1606 (not 1607 as in p. 17), there was no House of Commons sitting in 1619 (p. 35), and the candle cup (p. 66) is presumably a misprint for caudle cup.

Nevertheless the internal history of the Society is an exciting story to tell, and the text does this well and succeeds in relating the development of the Society with the general background of events in a way that the older histories certainly failed to do. It is now possible to see more clearly why the company of humble apothecary-tradesmen of London of 1617 should two centuries later have become the first real licensing body for general practitioners of medicine throughout England and Wales; as the editor says, the wheel had gone the full circle; and one awaits now with impatience Dr. Underwood's next volume which will show the gradual decline of the Society in the late nineteenth century, when at last all medical men were given a proper professional organization.

R. S. ROBERTS

The Journal of James Yonge, Plymouth Surgeon, edited by F. N. L. POYNTER, London, Longmans, 1963, pp. 247, 8 plates, 35s.

The keeping of a diary or journal is an arduous task, but when well done furnishes a perpetual pleasure to future generations, provided, that is, that it be rendered available to the public. Everyone will therefore thank Dr. Poynter for so carefully editing James Yonge's *Journal of all the Memorable Occurrences of my Life* which spans the period 1650–1708, years full of exciting events. Though the writer was a surgeon in a provincial city, his journal is for every man and every woman, for he travelled widely and saw many important persons, and this book will be in its proper place alongside Pepys and Evelyn.

James Yonge lived a hard life. Born in Plymouth on 27 February 1647 he could read and write well at the age of nine and before he was eleven knew a useful amount of Latin. He was then apprenticed to Silvester Richmond, Surgeon to the *Constant Warwick*, a ship carrying a hundred and fifty men and thirty-one guns. For twelve years, interrupted by a few turns on shore and a term of imprisonment in Amsterdam, he lived a rough life at sea, crossing the Atlantic in all weathers to look after the men in the Newfoundland fisheries, sailing the North Sea and the English Channel amid the perils of warfare, and all the time writing notes which give one a vivid picture of life on board those small yet venturesome craft. When twenty-three he married and settled down to surgical practice in Plymouth where he acted as surgeon to the war hospital. He prospered, brought up a large family and became Mayor of Plymouth and a noted man. From time to time he visited London, Oxford, and other places, always recording his impressions of men and things, though he always had an eye to business. Passing through London at the end of February 1667 he saw the ruin caused by the Great Fire and commented, 'but what sorrow possessed my soul and heart when I saw that once glorious city lie in ruins and ashes, divers of the heaps of rubble yet smoking'. (That was six months after the fire.) At Oxford in 1681 he saw All Souls 'where the beer was the best and cheapest in the world', and on visiting Christ Church said he could stand in the dimensions of Great Tom which, he added, cost £3,000 to cast. He came from the West and naturally said that Exeter College was 'eminent for the stateliest hall of any house in the University'.

Book Reviews

He met many famous people. Butler of *Hudibras* fame he described as 'an old paralytic claret drinker, a morose surly man except when elevated by claret'; of Robert Hooke he wrote, 'a very knowing man of great learning, very communicative, and extreme civil, from whom I collected many things'. Robert Boyle entertained him 'with free discourse above an hour in his chamber'.

James Yonge was made free of the Barber-Surgeons Company and he was persuaded to be examined for the Diploma of the College of Physicians; his detailed account of this examination is a historical gem of great price. His surgical and scientific reputation gained for him the Fellowship of the Royal Society. Altogether this human document penned three hundred years ago is interesting from cover to cover, and we commend it cordially. The production is excellent.

ZACHARY COPE

Das Medizinische Weltbild des Paracelsus—Seine Zusammenhänge mit Neuplatonismus und Gnosis, by WALTER PAGEL, Band I of *Kosmosophie*, with a brief account of the purpose of this series by the editor, KURT GOLDAMMER, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1962, pp. xii, 136, illus., DM. 29.20.

'Mehr will ich richten nach meinem Tod wider Euch; der Theophrastus wird mit Euch kriegen ohne den Leib.' How astonishingly have these prophetic words been fulfilled! Four centuries after his death, the battle-cries of the *Lutherus Medicorum*—physician, seer, vagabond—have been taken up by scores of devoted partisans, among whom Dr. Pagel is already distinguished for his *Paracelsus* (Basel, 1958) in which, well this side of idolatry, he set this protean man against the background of the tumultuous age in which he lived. Now, in the present work, he has explored much more deeply the relations between the complex and not wholly consistent *Weltanschauung* of Paracelsus with that of the Gnostics, Stoics and Neoplatonists, both in their classical exposition and in the renaissance revival by such Christian humanists as Marsilio Ficino—translator of Plato, author of sober plague tracts and celebrant of mystical musical rites.

The first part (pp. 1–32) of Dr. Pagel's book provides a lucid and critical estimate of the place of Paracelsus in the history and present state of medicine. At this stage he restricts himself mainly to the techniques and insights that have proved of lasting value, entering into a discussion of Paracelsus's esoteric terminology only in so far as it is necessary to emphasize the latter's belief that it is the *unseen* world that exercises the power whether for good or evil, the material agents—even the stars—being only as it were vehicles. This section by itself provides an admirable introduction into the labyrinth of Paracelsus's thought, and as such can be strongly recommended even to those readers who might feel unable to devote the time and thought necessary to follow the author into the fascinating hinterland. Such a critical and balanced study is all the more important if the real significance of Paracelsus for the philosophy of medicine is not to be perverted by unhistorical claims for a modernity of approach quite foreign to his nature.

The second and much longer part of the work is concerned with the relation of the Paracelsian concepts of *iliastrum*, *astralleib*, *cagastrium*, and the like, to the *daimon*, *logos*, *pneuma*, etc., of the earlier 'cosmosophies'; thus emerges a picture in which the Renaissance world of occult powers and their 'signatures' becomes coherent and highly suggestive. Space does not permit of more than this hint of the richness of this lavishly documented and deeply learned study. Moreover, English-speaking readers