

Book Reviews

selected bibliography. Although all multi-authored books display some historiographical and stylistic differences as well as duplication, Porter's ode to medicine's past, warts and all, will appeal to physicians, students, and informed laypersons.

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Gwen Wilson (ed. Jeanette Thirwell Jones), *One grand chain: the history of anaesthesia in Australia, 1846–1962, Volume 1: 1846–1934*, Melbourne, The Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, 1995, pp. xxi, 657, illus., A\$75.00 (0646-264-87-7).

News that "painless surgery" under ether anaesthetic had been performed in America and Britain in late 1846 reached Australia within months, and just weeks later a Sydney dentist and a Tasmanian surgeon had prepared the basic technology and successfully repeated the procedure. Chloroform, too, was quickly adopted and soon displaced ether as the anaesthetic of choice; its comparative ease of administration made it more suited to conditions in these far-flung outposts of Empire.

Gwen Wilson's two-volume work details the development of anaesthesia in Australia from the 1846 news reports to 1962. The first volume, which concludes with the formation of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists in 1934, focuses not on technical progress but on those who worked towards this medical milestone. Thus dental anaesthesia, despite its germinal and continuing contribution, receives little attention. The volume is a tribute to doctors who laid the foundations for a hard-won recognition of anaesthesia as a specialty. It is rich in hagiographical and autobiographical comment. Supported by the Faculty and later College of Anaesthetists, the author, herself one of the earliest Australian women graduates to specialize in anaesthesia, weaves through the story an account of her long and ingenious research journey.

The work meticulously traces the evolution of a medical specialty against the backdrop of social and political events in Australia and within the context of changes in science, medicine, and the medical profession. Australia's contribution to anaesthesia is unique in that it was shaped by practitioners and their circumstances rather than by advances they made in the field. Edward Henry Embley's research input to the chloroform-ether debate and Australians' work in resuscitation are notable exceptions.

Rugged individualism and the sustained ascendancy of the general practitioner can be discerned as forces shaping Australia's contribution. General practitioners not only recognized the advantages of anaesthesia, but early asserted their control over its use. They dominated medical associations and education, influenced the appointment of anaesthetists to hospitals, resisted specialization and doggedly adhered to chloroform years after its lethal effects, particularly in the hands of the untrained, had been demonstrated. With specialization in surgery, the growth of hospitals and increasingly sophisticated technology, the need for specialist anaesthetists to replace GPs serving as surgeons' assistants became apparent. Australian women doctors played a leading and unique role in the development of anaesthesia as a specialty.

Such a detailed work draws heavily on primary sources. It is therefore unfortunate that no references, apart from those for direct quotations, are included in the text. The reader is directed to a companion publication, *A bibliography of references to anaesthesia in the Australian medical journals, 1846–1962*. This arrangement, and an index limited to chapter subheadings and names, seriously reduces the usefulness of the volume as a reference work. Each chapter covers a chronological period and concludes with illustrations of the key players for that period and the apparatus they used.

This exhaustive and enthusiastic account of the development of anaesthesia in Australia will appeal to far more than specialists in the field. It is a mine of information, despite the difficulties of access, for anyone interested in

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Australian medicine and in the history of western medicine.

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Ernst Falzeder and Eva Brabant (eds), *The correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Sándor Ferenczi, volume 2, 1914–1919*, transl. Peter T Hoffer, Cambridge, Mass., and London, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996, pp. xlvi, 397, £28.50 (0-674-17419-4).

The experience of World War I has long been understood as the truly definitive experience of that generation which took part in the war; what is clear from the second volume of the Freud-Ferenczi exchange is how greatly it impacted on the Father's generation. The experience of the Hungarian psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi as an almost combatant is well documented here; he was billeted as a physician all over the place to serve in the rear guard with all the boredom and stupidity of that sort of role. Freud, who had three sons and a son-in-law in uniform, is clearly of the Father's generation. His letters are of interest not only because they chronicle the scholarly exchanges, but because they reveal the anxiety of daily life and its small ameliorations.

From a scholarly point of view, the correspondence is rich in its discussions of the major anthropological texts which Freud worked on during the war as well as pragmatic questions of technique. Ferenczi's discussion of his own analytic work is such that this volume serves as a natural parallel to the published clinical diaries. And the deviations from "orthodox" approaches are noted by Freud.

For me the most fascinating part of the correspondence was its tone. Only in Freud's letters with Karl Abraham, who was very much more of his own generation, does one get the bantering quality which marks an exchange between equals, equals clearly not in their position in the psychoanalytic establishment, though Ferenczi during this time was obviously the "crown prince", but in a sense of

familiarity based on trust and a common experience. Given the differences and competitions between Budapest and Vienna, given the complex and subtle shifts in Ferenczi's life course, many of which Freud too greatly opposed or too strongly advocated, this banter turns around their Jewish experience. Over and over again in this volume, the Jewishness of both men is the space which they can occupy as equals.

Here "Jewishness" certainly has nothing to do with religion or politics (i.e., Zionism) but with what one can truly describe as a hyper-ethnicity. It is a hyper-ethnicity because it is determined in this setting by a set of parallels which are in point usually taken as absolute marks of ethnic difference. Both men speak different national languages, neither one a "Jewish" language such as Yiddish. Freud speaks German; Ferenczi, Hungarian. But their Jewish experience is that of a highly acculturated, secular minority in a society which clearly had doubts about their acculturation. Ferenczi thinks about himself as a Hungarian, a Jew, and a physician (according to his own account). When one of these identities shifts, as in the collapse of the pre-war Hungarian identity in 1919, he can (he states) rely on the others. This function of an ethnic identity which spans the generation of the Father and the Sons during World War I is an important insight provided by this correspondence.

As with the first volume, this volume is the final result of a project begun by Michael Balint in the 1950s. The editing and notes are impeccable and the translation fluid. It is imperative that we continue to get such exchanges to clarify and document Freud's life and world. They will also have a wide range of other readers. When is volume three going to appear?

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