

Book Reviews

BERTEL VON BONSDORFF, *The history of medicine in Finland 1828–1918*, Helsinki, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1975, 8vo, pp. 309, illus., [no price stated].

Finnish medicine, 1640–1827, has already been described (L. W. Fagerlund and R. Tigerstedt, *Medicens studium vid Åbo universitet*, Skrifter utg. af Svenska Litt. sällsk. i Finland XVI, Helsingfors, 1890) and like it, the present volume is part of a series; in this case the latter is, *The history of learning and science in Finland 1828–1918*. In 1828 the university moved from Turku to the new capital of Helsinki (Helsingfors), and it became Helsinki University in 1918 when Finland emerged as an independent republic.

The author is Emeritus Professor of Medicine, and in twenty-five chapters traces the history of each medical and para-medical subject, ranging from anatomy to veterinary medicine. On the whole these sections tend to be lists of contributions made by Finnish medical men and are rather like brief reviews of the literature. The detail makes reading tedious, and this is a book to refer to rather than to read completely.

However, it is important to have this record for we know little of medicine in nineteenth-century Finland, and of the various political factors that made advancement in medicine difficult to achieve. The documentation is excellent with a total of 695 references, and the book is well illustrated. It has been translated from Swedish and the style is stilted, but with few errors.

JACOB BAXA and GUNTWIN BRUHNS, *Zucker im Leben der Völker. Eine Kultur- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Berlin, Verlag Dr. A. Bartens, 1967, 4to, pp. [6 11.], 402, illus., [no price stated].

In this remarkably comprehensive treatise all aspects of the history of sugar are considered. Beginning with the honey of pre-history and early cultures it traces the use of the sugar cane through the centuries and in all parts of the world, dealing in detail with the evolution of the sugar cane industry especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Then the commercial and economic issues, the table sugar dispenser, the etymology of the word and finally the occurrences of sugar in poetry are discussed. Throughout, there are many excellent illustrations, some in colour, and the documentation is adequate. There is also a chronological table ranging from 15,000 to 8,000 B.C. when sugar is claimed to have been present in New Guinea, to 1966 when the world's sugar production exceeded seventy million tons.

No other foodstuff has been given this type of treatment before so that Baxa and Bruhns' book is a unique contribution to the history of nutrition. It will remain for some decades the most important reference work for information on the history of sugar. It should be in every medical library.

GIAN-PAOLO BIASIN, *Literary diseases. Theme and metaphor in the Italian novel*, Austin and London, University of Texas Press, 1975, 8vo, pp. [5 11.], 178, £6.55.

The author is a professor of Italian and he analyses here the metaphorical and symbolic representation of disease in twentieth-century Italian prose, as represented by the works of Giovanni Verga, Italo Svevo, Luigi Pirandello, Carlo Emilio Gadda; of these, the most extensive discussion centres on Svevo. Disease is a theme employed

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in novels to reflect sociological and historical happenings and influences, and to examine it closely, is not only to discover this but also to scrutinize fundamental factors, such as the writers themselves and the role of the novel in general. Both organic and psychological illness are encountered and the four scholarly essays discussing them are of excellent quality. It is, however, difficult to get at the discussions of the diseases themselves as the 'Index' does not help. On occasions the author indicates his lack of familiarity with medical events and terminology, and there is also rather too much reliance placed on psycho-analysis and Freudian theory. Nevertheless, as an exploratory work it can be praised, and it will now be necessary for its author and, or, others to extend the national scene to include the basic metaphors used by other modern European prose writers when representing types of illness. This presents a promising theme, but the best results would accrue from a collaborative project involving literary scholar and medical historian.

TERRY NICHOLAS CLARK, *Prophets and patrons; the French university and the emergence of the social sciences*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, Harvard University Press, 1973, 8vo, pp. x, 282, £8.15.

The author shows that the social sciences were institutionalized in French universities from 1880 to 1914, a crucial phase in the development of social thought in France during which the appointment of Durkheim in Paris in 1902 led to the emergence of social science as a true academic discipline. Systematization of the field and of the ideas being generated in it thus became possible.

The originality of Clark's book lies in these themes, but there is nothing new on the individual pioneers, such as Saint-Simon, Comte and Durkheim himself. It is a scholarly, well-written work, which makes an important contribution to the history of the social sciences. It is, therefore, of importance to scholars involved with social aspects of medical history. Just as significant, Professor Clark provides a model that could readily be applied to Britain or to other countries in the investigation of the same subject.

BERNARD LEWIS, *History remembered, recovered, invented*, Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1975, 8vo, pp. [5 11.], 111, £4.05.

The author is an eminent scholar of ancient history, and is Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton. He divides history into three kinds: remembered historical data which comprise a society's collective memory; material actively excluded from this memory but later restored to it, that is, recovered; history invented to correct or displace facts unacceptable to modern society. History can, therefore, be remodelled according to changing demands. Professor Lewis is concerned with the uses and abuses of history and with its functions and purposes in human societies. He is taking a broad view of the nature of history, together with the study and writing of it, and he uses as illustrations examples selected from his specialized area of knowledge. There are three chapters, dealing with his three varieties of history.

As a brilliant contribution to the fundamental understanding and evaluation of history this brief monograph can be recommended wholeheartedly. It should be read carefully by all historians.