

Book Notices

M. J. VAN LIEBURG, *Woman and depression. Impressions from the history of a connection*, Rotterdam, Erasmus Publishing, 1992, pp. 93, illus., Hfl. 27.50 (90-5235-025-6).

This elegantly produced and well-illustrated slim volume addresses the question of the perceived affinities between melancholy and femininity in our culture through a series of case studies. Ranging from Hildegard of Bingen in the twelfth century to Charlotte Perkins Gilman in the present, these reveal the changing theoretical explanations for such conditions, roughly the shift from Christian holiness to scientific psychopathology, while also displaying certain (often stigmatizing) enduring prejudices, not least the male-chauvinist assumption that too much learning causes psychosomatic sickness in women.

KENNETH CRAVEN, *Jonathan Swift and the millennium of madness: the information age in Swift's 'A Tale of a Tub'*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 30, Leiden and New York, E. J. Brill, 1992, pp. xvi, 238, Gld 120.00, \$68.75 (90-04-09524-1).

The psychopathology of Jonathan Swift has attracted attention ever since his death, and in the present century much has been written about him in the "madness and genius" genre, and, nearly twenty years ago, Michael DePorte produced a fine study of the cultural use of madness topoi by Swift himself (*Nightmares and hobby horses: Swift, Sterne, and Augustan ideas of madness* (San Marino, Calif., Huntingdon Library, 1974)). The development of Swift studies since then is manifest in Kenneth Craven's learned and engaged new study, which addresses itself primarily to Swift's perceptions of the "madness" of what Craven calls the "information age". The rise of the press and Grub Street, the blizzard of religious pamphleteering, the Scientific Revolution, the heady politics of the late Stuart and early Georgian period produced an age that veiled distinctions between authority and egoism, knowledge and delusion, sense and craziness. Through careful and erudite examinations of Swift's positions vis à vis many of the leading intellectuals of the recent past and present, from Harrington and Milton to Temple and Newton, Craven develops a subtler reading of Swift's perception of the madness of the moderns. Medical historians will find little here about Swift's life and illnesses, but much illumination on the cultural uses of the concept of madness within the Augustan age.

The picture of health: images of medicine and pharmacy from the William H. Helfand Collection, exhibition catalogue, commentaries by William H. Helfand, essays by Patricia Eckert Boyer, Judith Wechsler and Maurice Rickards, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991, pp. 144, illus., \$39.95 (0-8122-7962-X)

There has been a welcome growth in recent years in study of the visual as well as the verbal dimensions of the history of medicine. Photography has received attention, as in Daniel M. Fox and Christopher Lawrence's *Photographing medicine: images and power in Britain and America since 1840* (New York, Westport, Conn., and London, Greenwood Press, 1988). This volume, published to accompany an exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, focuses upon engravings, bills, and assorted ephemera. The illustrations, which range from eighteenth-century cartoons to modern quack advertisements, derive from William Helfand's remarkable personal collection and are stunningly well reproduced in brilliant colour. Explaining them are four essays: Helfand himself offers a general commentary, Patricia Eckbert Boyer writes on 'Posters', Judith Wechsler on 'Caricatures', and Maurice Richards on 'Ephemera'. Images and text are specially well integrated. This entertaining and illuminating volume is a timely reminder of the extraordinarily rich cultural penumbra of medicine in the emergent age of the mass media.

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J. A. DONALDSON, *The National Dental Hospital 1859–1914*, London, British Dental Journal, 1992, pp. x, 113, illus., UK £4.95, overseas £7.00 (0–904588–33–5).

Disturbed by the lack of organized dental education and the suffering caused by widespread dental quackery, Samuel Lee Rymer wrote a letter to the *Lancet* in 1855 which led to the formation of the College of Dentists in Cavendish Square, London. From this there arose the Metropolitan School of Dental Science and the National Dental Hospital. This book describes the development of this institution, the rapid growth of patient demand, the shortages of funds, the evolution of specialty departments and the expanding demands of the curriculum, for which the Royal College of Surgeons offered the LDS Diploma. There are also brief biographies of eminent men and accounts of fund raising events, gastronomic annual dinners and dental student society activities. Other dental institutions are mentioned, in particular, the Dental Hospital of London.

By the time the National Dental Hospital and College merged with University College Hospital and Medical School in 1914, all the basic requirements of a modern dental teaching hospital were in position. The success of preventive dentistry led to the closure of this dental hospital and school in 1991. In this slim account, the author has graphically captured the life and times and the founding struggles of its parent institution—the “National”.

ULRICH STOLL, *Das ‘Lorscher Arzneibuch’: ein Medizinisches Kompendium des 8. Jahrhunderts (Codex Bambergensis Medicinalis 1)*, Sudhoffs Archiv, Beiheft 28, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992, pp. 534, DM 198.00 (3–515–05676–9).

The Lorsch *Book of Medicine*, written around 795, is one of the most important of early medieval medical texts. As well as a long collection of recipes, it includes a glossary and an important defence of medicine primarily on the basis of biblical and patristic texts. Its wider implications were discussed in the proceedings of a conference devoted to this book and held at Lorsch in 1989 (noted in this journal 1992, 36: 486), and Dr Stoll has now published an edition of the complete text and a German translation. Compared with Köpp’s 1980 edition of a similar medical handbook from the next century, St Gall 217+Fr. 1369, Stoll’s work is philologically far more accurate, has excellent and very full indexes, and makes better use of modern scholarship on the medical history of the Early Middle Ages. But it is curious that neither here nor in the published conference proceedings are we given any photograph of even one side of the manuscript by which the accuracy of the transcription can be checked.

CATRIEN SANTING, *Geneeskunde en humanisme. Een intellectuele biografie van Theodericus Ulsenius (c. 1460–1508)*, (Medicine and humanism. An intellectual biography of Theodericus Ulsenius), Rotterdam, Erasmus Publishing, 1992, pp. 312, illus., Hfl. 79.50 (90–5235–034–5).

The life of the Dutch physician Dirk van Ulsen, poet and humanist, is of considerable interest. As well as one of the earliest writers on syphilis, he was a keen student of Hippocrates, translating the famous correspondence between Hippocrates and Democritus, the laughing philosopher. His edition of the *Aphorisms* rearranged them to give an order more suited to the teaching of medicine and to medical practice. As town doctor in Nuremberg from 1495 to 1501, he was at the very centre of the new Latin humanism, writing poetry as well as justifying the medical profession with texts from ancient law codes. He defended medical astrology, and in a poem, the *Speculator*, he reproduced a hundred of the questions and answers that had once circulated in twelfth-century Salerno. But Ulsen was a difficult man to deal with; rarely staying anywhere for long, quarrelsome, and ever on the edge of bankruptcy. This useful dissertation prompts a whole series of questions about medical practice in Northern Europe in the Early Renaissance, and, not least, about the impact of the new Latin humanism on medical ideas.

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ENRICO VALSANGIACOMO (ed.), *Zum Wohle der Kranken. Das Schweizerische Rote Kreuz und die Geschichte der Krankenpflege*, Basel, Schwabe & Co., 1991, pp. 460, illus., SFr 50.00, DM 60.00 (3-7965-0927-4).

In 1976 the cantons of Switzerland delegated regulation, control and promotion of the training schemes for the nursing and the technical and therapeutical assistant professions to the Swiss Red Cross (SRC). This step meant that state responsibilities were transferred to an organization which is subject to private law, and it thus reflected the leading role that the Red Cross had acquired in the training of Swiss nursing personnel during the preceding one hundred years. This latter development is the topic of the present volume, which is a team effort of experienced teaching nurses and members of the SRC with a historical background. Starting with the foundation of the Swiss Central Society of the Red Cross in 1882, the book describes the history of the training of nurses by the Swiss Red Cross in its institutional and professional aspects until the present day. Particular attention is paid to the activities of Dr Walter Sahli, Central Secretary of the SRC from 1898 to 1916, who is seen as "one of the most important sponsors of modern nursing" in Switzerland, and to the "Lindenhof" Red Cross School in Berne, which was founded in 1899 as the first of its kind and became a model for later nursing schools. On the whole, the strength of this volume lies in its broad and detailed documentation (supplemented by numerous historical photographs) rather than in historical analysis and interpretation.

A. R. DAVID and E. TAPP (eds), *The mummy's tale: the scientific and medical investigation of Natsef-Amun, priest in the Temple at Karnak*, London, Michael O'Mara, 1992, pp. 176, illus., £15.99 (1-85479-135-4).

The Theban priest Natsef-Amun lived during the late Twentieth Dynasty (1200-1085 BC). The correct form of his name is Esamun, but, as Dr David explains, the older reading has been retained here in deference to long-established usage in Leeds. His mummy was presented to the Philosophical Society in that city, where an autopsy was performed in 1828. This book presents the results of a re-examination undertaken by Drs David and Tapp and their collaborators in 1989, using largely non-destructive techniques including radiology, endoscopy and CT-scans. The first half of the volume offers succinct accounts, illustrated by photographs, of some of the main sites, of the geography, history, and civilization of Egypt, together with discussions of the history of mummification and the collection at Leeds.

The core of the book consists of chapters 8-13 in which Dr Tapp and his medical and scientific colleagues discuss the various techniques employed and the results obtained thereby. Noteworthy is Tapp's lucid account in chapter 10 of the methods of examining mummified tissues, and the discussion in chapter 9 by Judith Miller and Catherine Asher-McDade of the dental evidence. They offer some interesting speculations on the possible reasons why, exceptionally, Natsef-Amun was apparently mummified with his mouth open and tongue protruding.

As in the case of their earlier work on mummies, the authors doubtless envisage in due course a detailed scientific report. In the meantime this volume provides a useful and readily digestible account for a wider readership.

BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED

(The inclusion of a title does not preclude the possibility of subsequent review. Items received, other than those assigned for review, are ultimately incorporated into the collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.)

JACQUES CHAZAUD, *F.-J.-V. Broussais: de l'irritation à la folie: un tournant méthodologique de la médecine au XIX^e siècle*, Toulouse, Editions Érés, 1992, pp. 188, FFr. 130 (2-86586-196-1).