

### Book Reviews

WALTER I. TRATTNER, *From Poor Law to welfare state; a history of social welfare in America*, London, Collier Macmillan, 1974, 8vo, pp. xii, 276, £4.50.

It is claimed that this is the first interpretative history of American social welfare, which is defined as “. . . those social security, social service, and health programs, activities, and organizations, public and private, the primary purpose of which [is] to promote the well-being of those individuals that society [feels need and deserve] help.” As well as supporting and improving the well-being of needy individuals and groups, the modern welfare system also improves community conditions and helps to solve social problems affecting all members of it. This book is not, however, a definitive account, but a brief review of the main American policies and practices from the colonial period to the present, representing the essence of social welfare history and its significance in the American experience.

Chapters deal with the background history of colonial and revolutionary America, indoor relief, scientific charity, child welfare, the public health settlement, house and mental movements, the renaissance of public welfare and the quest for professionalization in the early twentieth century, social work in the 1920s, the Depression and a New Deal, and finally the post-war decades.

Throughout, the book is well written, with substantial bibliographies after each chapter, and it is modestly priced. It can be warmly recommended.

JOHN D. THOMPSON and GRACE GOLDIN, *The hospital; a social and architectural history*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1975, 4to, pp. xxviii, 349, illus., £13.75.

The authors have produced a unique and important book. Dr. Thompson is Professor of Public Health and Nursing Administration in Yale University and Mrs. Goldin is an historian of hospitals. Together they deal with present-day thinking on hospital design and introduce it with a remarkable survey of its history. There are four sections: a history of hospital ward design in Europe and the United States, beginning with Graeco-Roman Antiquity; twentieth-century ward planning in the United States and Great Britain; the Yale Studies in Hospital Function and Design, organized by Professor Thompson and based on building axioms as embodied in the Memorial Unit of the Yale-New Haven Hospital, with the objective of establishing a methodology of evaluation applicable to the needs of any hospital; the structure and possible future applications of the concept of progressive patient care. Throughout, there is an abundance of excellent photographs and plans (263 in all), and the text is annotated, with a useful terminal bibliography.

Basically the book deals with the hospital ward and not with the hospital as an institution. It is of great interest to observe how at different periods different needs were felt which determined the planning of a ward, and to be reminded that until a century ago most patients were cared for at home, the hospital being primarily intended for the pauper sick. Social as well as medical factors and cultural values have obviously influenced hospital design and these are all dealt with fully and effectively.

The authors have four functional criteria, which represent their four elements of ward design: a healthy environment, the need for privacy, an efficient layout and provisions for adequate staff supervision. It is around these that the book is built,

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both from the historical and modern investigatory aspects. The ultimate ward design will be the one that achieves a judicious mixture of all four.

This monumental study is a very good example of how the technical expert can symbiose with an historian to produce a work, which if written by one of them alone would not have achieved half the present stature. Together, however, they have compiled one of the most significant books on the history of hospitals. Other parts of the history of medicine could well do with this type of collaboration.

L. R. LIND, *Studies in pre-Vesalian anatomy. Biography, translations, documents*, Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1975, 4to, pp. [ix], 344, illus., \$18.00.

Until the late 1950s much had been made of Vesalius and his contribution to anatomy, but little of the anatomists of the early sixteenth century who preceded him. Dr. Lind had published a translation of Vesalius' *Epitome* in 1949, then in 1959 his book on Berengario da Carpi's *Isagoge brevis*, together with the research of the late Professor Gernot Rath, began to redress the balance. It is now clear that although anatomical dissections before Vesalius were crude and usually aimed at verifying what was already known, they were by no means insignificant, thus somewhat diminishing Vesalius' previously unchallenged status.

The present book, Dr. Lind's third on the history of human anatomy, substantiates this slightly modified situation. He has selected for consideration eight pre-Vesalian anatomists: Achillini, Benedetti, Zerbi, Berengario da Carpi, Massa, de Laguna, Dryander, and Canano. There is a general introduction which considers the cultural background of pre-Vesalian anatomy, the earlier and then later pre-Vesalians, and finally pre-Vesalian anatomy in the light of Vesalius. The body of the work comprises in turn a discussion of the life and work of each anatomist selected, followed by a translation of all or part of the individual's most outstanding anatomical treatise; in view of the author's previous book on Berengario da Carpi, instead of a translation there is an analysis of his other famous book, *Commentary on Mundinus* (1521).

In each instance the biographical sketches contain or refer to all the known material; some however is presented here for the first time. Throughout, annotation is full and at times voluminous, and in the case of the ensuing translations terms from the *Nomina anatomica* (1956) have been employed. Occasionally a medical description or interpretation could be challenged, and in some instances more explanation could have been given for anatomical structures described.

Dr. Lind's scholarly work is an important contribution to the history of anatomy for it provides us with detailed information concerning a period about which not a lot was previously known. By means of his excellent translations we can assess the state of anatomy immediately prior to Vesalius' classic of 1543, and from the introductions we can learn much more about the pre-Vesalians and, what is equally important, about their non-anatomical writings. All in all this work can be enthusiastically recommended, and there is no doubt that it will remain the authoritative source-book of pre-Vesalian anatomy for years. At a time when reviewers vie with each other in bewailing the ever-escalating prices of books, it is a pleasure to draw attention to how reasonable this one is, especially in view of the quality of the goods being purchased.