

Ancient Egypt, in India, in Greece, Rome, and Alexandria, and extracts are given from the writings of Hippocrates, Celsus, Galen, and Paulus Aegineta, and from the Indian *Sushruta Samhita*. We wish that the extracts from Galen might have been supplemented by some autobiographical passages from his 'Prognostics' or 'Passions'. The second section discusses Arabian surgery and gives passages from the writings of Albucasis. The third section exhibits the 'Early Stirrings' in the general lethargy of the 'Dark Ages' and we are told about Salerno and its influence, about Mundinus and the revival of dissection, and about the sound but at that time heretical views held on the treatment of wounds by Theodoric and Henri de Mondeville. The last-mentioned gives a most unusual reason for his remaining a bachelor—'out of fear that the perversity of a woman and the necessity of paying her expenses and furnishing her a home would divert my spirit from the composition of this book'.

Next follows the section headed 'Surgery becomes respectable' which begins with an account of Guy de Chauliac, includes John Arderne, Benevieni, and Paracelsus, and finishes up with Pierre Franco and Ambroise Paré—an interesting but non-descript group, with many stimulating extracts from their varied writings.

The fifth section contains several German surgeons, some well known and some of minor importance, and two Italians of note. The account of Caspar Stromayr is particularly well illustrated. The Italians are Tagliocozzi and Fabricius ab Aquapendente. There is a discrepancy between the length of life, and the dates of birth and death of Fabricius (pp. 230 and 233). In the sixth section the authors describe six British surgeons of note, starting with William Clowes in Elizabethan times and continuing with Peter Lowe, Richard Wiseman, William Cheselden, Percival Pott, and John Hunter—an excellent group.

With them is included that remarkable man, Lorenz Heister, who perhaps might have been more appropriately included in the previous section.

The last three sections are devoted respectively to the great pre-Listerian surgeons, Lister himself, and the group of great men who immediately followed Lister. Marion Sims is included among the pre-Listerians but he certainly adopted antiseptic methods towards the end of his career. Lister is rightly given a section to himself but this might with advantage have been a little longer. The authors underestimate the number of years that Lister used the antiseptic spray; he was already using it in 1871 (see *Brit. med. J.*, 1871, i, 30). The 'great ideas' of the last fifty years are not included. They may need another volume.

The book is well illustrated and well produced and, unfortunately, good production costs more. It is the kind of book, however, which should be available in general as well as medical libraries.

ZACHARY COPE

*The Natural History of Quackery*, by ERIC JAMESON, London, Michael Joseph, 1961, 224 pp., 25s.

The history of unorthodox medicine is one which has yet to be told. Many have touched on the subject, chiefly using illustrative stories of famous quacks to enliven their descriptions of medical practice. These often make intriguing reading, as those acquainted with Jeaffreson's *Book about Doctors*, Everitt's *Doctors and Doctors*, and the more recent work by E. S. Turner *Call the Doctor*, will readily agree. But what was a quack? How much influence did he really wield? Did he not fill a need when no regular practitioner was to be had?

## *Book Reviews*

The work under review is packed with information and anecdotes of famous quacks written in a 'racy' but inelegant style, presumably to entice the supposedly undiscerning reading public into buying it. The medical historians will find little new here and will be irritated by the lack of references and sometimes of dates. The illustrations are of fair quality but would be of more interest if information on their sources were given.

The whole book is devoted to the bizzare in medical quackery. There is no mention of any of those 'quacks' who, though unorthodox, contributed greatly to medical practice—such men as the Thomases of Liverpool—nor of that more dangerous breed, the qualified 'quack' whose fads and fancies often did great harm. It is strange that in a book of this nature, after all that has gone before, the title of the penultimate chapter should be 'Odd Cures'.

R. M. S. MCCONAGHEY

### CONTRIBUTORS

- AKERT, K., M.D., Department of Anatomy, Bardeen Medical Laboratories, The University of Wisconsin, Madison 6, Wisconsin, U.S.A.
- AYNSLEY, E. E., Ph.D., F.R.I.C., Department of Chemistry, King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne 1.
- BERNARD, PROFESSOR L., Department of History, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana, U.S.A.
- BESWICK, T. S. L., M.D., M.R.C.P., Medical Research Council, Holly Hill, London N.W.3.
- CAMPBELL, W. A., M.Sc., F.R.I.C., Department of Chemistry, King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne 1.
- COHEN, R. A., L.D.S., F.S.A., 2 Old Square, Warwick.
- COPE, SIR ZACHARY, M.D., M.S., F.R.C.S., 170 Chiltern Court, Baker Street, London N.W.1.
- DODDS, SIR CHARLES, M.V.O., M.D., P.R.C.P., F.R.S., Royal College of Physicians, Pall Mall East, London S.W.1.
- GASKELL, E., B.A., A.L.A., Wellcome Historical Medical Library, Wellcome Building, 183 Euston Road, London, N.W.1.
- GRANGE, MISS K. M., Ph.D., 2215 6th Street, Santa Monica, California, U.S.A.
- HAMMOND, MICHAEL P., Department of Physiology, University of Wisconsin Medical School, Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A.
- LEWIS, SIR AUBREY, M.D., F.R.C.P., Institute of Psychiatry, The Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London S.E.5.
- LIBRACH, I. M., M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H., D.C.H., Chadwell Heath Hospital, Romford, Essex.
- MCCONAGHEY, R. M. S., M.D., Prospect House, Dartmouth, Devon.
- MACKINNEY, PROFESSOR L. C., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, U.S.A.
- OSBORNE, E. A., Dawsons of Pall Mall, 16 Pall Mall, London S.W.1.
- PAGEL, WALTER, M.D., 58 Millway, London N.W.7.
- PECK, MISS P., M.A., Librarian, University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City 12, Kansas, U.S.A.
- PORTER, I. H., M.B., B.S.Lond., Department of Medicine, The Postgraduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, Du Cane Road, London W.12.
- SIMPSON, J., M.D., D.P.H., Department of Public Health and Social Medicine, Queen's College, University of St. Andrews, Dundee.
- WELLS, PROFESSOR L. H., University of Cape Town Medical School, Observatory, Cape Town, South Africa.