

Book Reviews

marred by the fact that every page was unopened, and taxed my patience when I had to cut each page separately.

This volume should certainly provide much instructive and entertaining reading for those who like delving into little-known areas of medical history.

I. M. LIBRACH

Medicine in Medieval England, by C. H. TALBOT, London, Oldbourne, 1967, pp. 222, 35s. 0d.

The author of this book, Dr. Talbot, is medievalist at the Wellcome Institute of the History of Medicine. He has produced a book which will appeal to both expert and non-expert—medical or otherwise. The book is a hardback of 222 pages with a table of contents, an index and a bibliography, which lists books in English for further reading to supplement the text.

There are sixteen chapters beginning with general topics such as Anglo-Saxon Medicine, Arab Medicine, Salerno and Montpellier and the influence they had on each other. More specific matters such as medical education, anatomy, medical ethics, hygiene, epidemics and hospitals follow together with contributions on Gilbertus Anglicus and John Gaddesden. A separate chapter dealing with the ordinary medieval practitioner provides some comparison with his present-day counterpart, who may derive a certain satisfaction from the fact that the names of medieval doctors only appeared in official documents when the doctor was guilty of some misdemeanour or when falling into debt or claiming fees. More rarely his name would appear when a grateful patient rewarded his services.

The book also contains eight plates illustrating various aspects of medieval practice. It ends with an excellent commentary entitled 'The final phase' with faint echoes of a medieval brain-drain.

At 35s. 0d. this is a first-class work that can be wholeheartedly recommended as a gift to others or preferably to oneself.

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