

## Book Reviews

copy, complete or interpret drawings. (Both innovations reflect a new appreciation for visual communication, but their use cannot leave intact the innocence of the compulsion to draw or construct: the art of the insane may be headed for extinction.) The field of "discovery" was left clear for expressionistically-oriented psychoanalysts, and artists. MacGregor makes a good case for psychotic art's importance to the history of twentieth-century "insider" art, especially that of the German Expressionists, and the Surrealist painters (the "God-aren't-we-crazy" Dadaists get short shrift here).

This is a long and rather angry book, one filled with radical, and refreshing, conclusions. Historians of institutional psychiatry, and of twentieth-century art and aesthetics will, in future, all have to address the discovery of the art of the insane.

Christine Stevenson, Wellcome Institute

DEREK A. DOW and KENNETH C. CALMAN (eds.), *The Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society of Glasgow: a history, 1814–1989*, Glasgow, The Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society of Glasgow, 1989, 8vo, pp. vi, 153, £12.00 (correspondence to The Secretary, The Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society of Glasgow, c/o The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, 234–242 St Vincent St, Glasgow G2 5RJ).

S. D. SLATER and D. A. DOW (eds.), *The Victoria Infirmary of Glasgow 1890–1990: a centenary history*, Glasgow, Victoria Infirmary Centenary Committee, 1990, 4to, pp. xvii, 325, illus., £14.40 (plus £3.00 p&p UK; £4.50 p&p overseas from Dr S. D. Slater, Medical Division, Victoria Infirmary, Glasgow G42 9TY: cheques payable to "Victoria Infirmary Centenary Book Fund").

The first volume is a commemorative history written in anticipation of the 175th anniversary of the Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society of Glasgow. It is divided into two parts and has three appendices. The first eight chapters are by Derek Dow and deal with the history of the Society from its inception in 1814, when it was known as the Glasgow Medical Society, to 1956, the year when it launched the *Scottish Medical Journal*. In the second part, one chapter by Stuart McAlpine brings us up to date and there are a further seven contributors, most of whom discuss the role of the Society within the context of current issues facing the National Health Service. The appendices consist of lists of past and present members. In keeping with other local medical societies founded in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the original aim of the Glasgow Society was a bold one: medical improvement. The early members clearly believed their efforts could actually *add* something to medical science and practice. The vestiges of this confidence are still evident in a restatement of the Society's goals at the inception of the NHS: "to extend medical knowledge by occasional lectures from speakers of authority; and, perhaps of even more importance, to enable members of the Society to report and discuss clinical and pathological investigations carried out by themselves" (p. 77). However, faced with the Leviathan of modern medicine, today's members, understandably, have endorsed more modest aims. McAlpine summarizes them as follows: "to further postgraduate medical education, to promote friendship and good relations between the various medical disciplines, and to support and supervise the publication of the *Scottish Medical Journal*" (p. 111).

The history of the Victoria Infirmary of Glasgow is a well-illustrated and rather handsome volume. Although it is a centenary commemoration, the editors claim to have avoided the pitfalls usually associated with such productions. In particular, they aim to encourage a general and historically sensitive perspective in which the achievements of the past will also be set within the changing context of the present. All together, there are 14 chapters by 21 different contributors. Four deal with how the Victoria was founded and narrate its subsequent history to date. There are also historical cameos of the satellite and speciality hospitals which, over time, have become associated with it. Other chapters are devoted to medical and nursing developments, ancillary staffing, general practice, and the wider relationship between the hospital and the Glasgow South-side community it serves.

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Taking into account the limitations of the genre itself and inevitable problems of focus which stem from multiple authorship, this book has gone some way towards achieving the editors's objectives. For example, the chapters dealing with ancillary staff and the impact of recent managerial changes are welcome additions to the historical profile of the hospital. The close relationship with the community is also explored, with a particularly interesting account of 'General practice since 1890' by R. C. N. Douglas. Throughout, there is plenty of comment on present-day issues.

Established institutions rarely require an excuse to commemorate their achievements. In both of these volumes, however, the celebrations have an added dimension. There is a sense of batten-down the historical cargo of the past in preparation for a storm of change anticipated in the near future. As a result, they may prove to be historically significant publications for reasons other than their ostensible contents.

Michael Barfoot, Medical Archive Centre, Edinburgh University Library

PAULINE M. H. MAZUMDAR (ed.), *Immunology 1930–1980: essays on the history of immunology*, Toronto, Wall & Thompson, 1989, 8vo, pp. ix, 298, illus., \$39.95.

This book originated in a workshop on the history of immunology held during the 6th International Congress of Immunology (Toronto, 1986), by a historian of this discipline, Pauline Mazumdar. The participants in this workshop were, with the exception of Anne-Marie Moulin, another historian, scientists attending the Toronto congress. The book remains faithful to the original concept of the workshop: a partially accidental gathering of immunologists—some of them eminent, some less known—who were asked to recount the history of their speciality. Unsurprisingly, they did so in their own way. Most of the papers in this collection follow the "textbook introduction" or "review article" models of writing the history of science: a brief survey of the official history of a specific domain, complete with chronology and references, which often mentions (favourably) the author's own contribution to the evolution of the field. Such essays may (and do) contain useful data and insight, but are usually less rich sources of information for the historian than "discovery accounts"—the personal stories of discoveries. The latter form is adopted by only three participants in the workshop (Roitt, Lawrence, and Abelev), and it is perhaps not by chance that their subjects of study (thyroid auto-immunity, "transfer factor", and cancer antigens) are marginal to the mainstream of immunological research. The last point perhaps merits further discussion. Paradoxically, the chance selection of the participants in the workshop allowed, perhaps unintentionally, for one of the most interesting features of the book: in addition to debates on several major issues in immunology, it contains detailed descriptions of some of the less known and less understood aspects of immunology. Notwithstanding the attempts to link the studies of less fashionable research topics to the main direction of immunological research (such as Lawrence's efforts to lump his poorly-understood specific "transfer factor" together with much better understood non-specific interleukins), the book conveys the impression that immunology is a far more heterogenous and perhaps also a more interesting discipline that its stereotyped, "Whiggish" image allows for.

The historical essays that open and close the book attempt to provide a global theoretical framework for recent developments in immunology. Pauline Mazumdar—who besides her introductory essay also contributed a highly interesting study on the origins of instructive theories of antibody formation—believes that the clonal selection theory may constitute such a framework. The publication of this theory (Burnet, 1957) was, she claims, a turning point in the history of immunology. It may account for its separation from bacteriology and its rapid development as a distinct, major biomedical speciality. The information contained in the book does not entirely support Mazumdar's view. The clonal selection theory indeed made possible the reconciliation of theories of antibody formation with the new findings on the synthesis of proteins, and thus undoubtedly played an important role in the recent development of immunological knowledge. But Ada, Nossal, and Talmage, who discuss the clonal selection theory here, explain that it became universally accepted only in the 1970s. According to