

Book Reviews

EDGAR M. BICK (editor), *Classics of orthopaedics*, first series, Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott, (Oxford, Blackwell), 1976, 8vo, pp. xviii, 541, illus., £22.00.

In 1963 the periodical, *Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research* began as a regular feature the publication in English of classic contributions to orthopaedics. Eighty of them are now gathered together in a sumptuously printed and bound volume. They are either complete or edited and derive from the late seventeenth to the twentieth century. Twenty-nine are by American authors, which suggests perhaps that selection has been somewhat biased; twenty-three are from British sources, eleven from German, nine from French, three from Scandinavian, two each from Dutch and Italian, and one from Russian. Following each piece there is a very brief biography of the author, a few words about his work, and in many instances a portrait.

No attempt has been made to group the selections either by subject or chronologically, which is a pity in view of the large number available for creating some type of classification. The titles are given in their original languages only in the contents lists, but there, and elsewhere in the book, the foreign ones teem with errors. The editorial material is quite inadequate and often one is not sure how a contribution fits into the advancement of orthopaedics or of medicine and surgery in general. There are no references to secondary sources and it is clear that the editor has a limited knowledge of the history of medicine. In the early pieces there are many errors.

As an anthology to be used by teacher-guided students so that errors can be pointed out and background provided, this book will be valuable, and for those who only wish to peruse a contribution without any wider implications. It is, however, a great pity that the opportunity of writing a history of orthopaedics based on primary sources has been missed. In addition, the errors, textual and factual, make the volume unreliable and for this reason not worth the high price. Perhaps more money should have been spent on editorial advice and proof-reading than on padded plastic covers.

S. T. BINDOFF and JAMES T. BOULTON (editors), *Research in progress in English and history in Britain, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand*, second edition, London, St. James Press, 1975, 8vo, pp. xii, 284, [no price stated].

This edition is nearly three times as large as the first of 1971 (see *Med. Hist.*, 1977, 21: 117) and in the section on "Science, technology, and medicine" (pp. 201–209) there are no fewer than sixty-eight research projects on medical history listed, as compared with six in 1971. The marked increase is in part due to the increasing volume of academic research being carried out in the history of medicine, but also, no doubt, to a closer search by the editors. Even so the list is by no means complete.

It is, of course, unlikely that all the topics cited will come to fruition, but nevertheless this book remains an essential source-book for those working in the areas of history of science, technology, or medicine. It also serves the useful purpose of alerting them of research in topics which may impinge on their own and of which they may otherwise remain ignorant. In addition to providing information on work in progress, its index gives addresses of workers, which is a most valuable service.

The editors are to be congratulated on the very promising start they have made in the first two editions of their work, and it is to be hoped that it will become a serial published at regular intervals.