

Book Reviews

the author of this biography obviously intended, to seek further and find out more of the man and his works.

PHILIP CLARK

The Boke of Chyldren. THOMAS PHAIRE. Edited by Prof. A. V. Neale, F.R.C.P., and H. R. E. Wallis, M.D. Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone, 1955. Pp. 76. 7s. 6d.

The purpose of Phaire's book on diseases of children was 'To doo theym good that haue moste nede, that is to saye, children', and to put forward remedies 'Whyche oughte not to be secrete for lucre of a fewe'.

The charm of his writing will be enjoyed by doctors and laymen alike, and the light he throws on social problems of the day will be valued by historians. The present-day children suffer from many of the disorders described by Phaire, and the advice on the management of measles, 'The best and moste sure helpe in this case, is not to meddle with anye kynde of medicines, but to let nature worke her operacio', might well be taken to heart in the age when patients demand antibiotics for trivialities. The choice of a wet-nurse must have presented a most difficult problem for the mother whose lactation failed, for she must be 'No dronkarde, vicious nor sluttysse, for suche corrupteth the nature of the chyld', but she must be honest and chaste, 'Such as had a man childe last afore'. It is surprising that all mothers did not try to breast-feed their own babies since such catastrophes might result from a bad choice of wet-nurse.

George Frederick Still (1868–1941) published his famous *History of Paediatrics* in 1931, and in it he showed great interest in the first English book of Paediatrics which was written by Thomas Phaire (d. 1560), whose preface ends with the words 'Thus fare ye well gentyll readers.'

All interested in children, medicine and social history will be grateful to Professor Neale and Dr. Wallis for giving us Phaire's *Boke of Chyldren*.

URSULA JAMES

English Historical Documents, 1833–1874. Edited by G. M. YOUNG, M.A., D.LITT., and W. D. HANDCOCK, M.A., B.LITT. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1956. Pp. xxiii+1017. 95s.

This is vol. XII (1) in the series of *English Historical Documents* now in course of publication under the general editorship of Professor David Douglas. The purpose of the series is to make generally accessible a wide selection of the fundamental sources of English history. Nearly all the volumes published to date contain material of medical interest, but the present volume is of exceptional importance from this point of view because a great