

Book Notices

ALEX SAKULA, *The portraiture of Sir William Osler*, London and New York, Royal Society of Medicine, 1991, pp. xvii, 91, illus., £15.00 (1-85315-153-X).

Osler's sallow, scowling face, walrus moustache, and conventional dress did nothing to help his portraitists. Even Sargent said, "I don't know what to do with him." The interest of Osler's portraits lies less in their quality as works of art and more in their existence as evidence of the continuing Osler cult around the world. Of what other Victorian or Edwardian medical man are oil-paintings and sculptures still being commissioned? Dr Sakula's study reviews not only these but also the more elusive watercolours, drawings, plaques, medallions, and postage stamps which portray Osler and frequently include a written tribute to one aspect of his work (usually his role as a teacher). They date from 1882, when, as a professor at McGill University, he was included, but not prominently, in a large group portrait of people attending a conference, to 1985, when a monumental bust of him in splendid isolation was installed at Niigata Hospital in Japan, and they run the gamut of portrait genres from Sargent's Vandyckian 'The four doctors' in the Welch Medical Library, Baltimore, to a watercolour of 1952 showing the great man reading in bed. In fact bookishness figures prominently in Osler's portraiture, as a statement that his claim on our attention is not only his skill as a teacher, but also his proficiency in literature and medical history.

RICHARD J. BING (ed.), *Cardiology: the evolution of the science and the art*, Philadelphia, PA, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1992, pp. xxi, 319, illus., £12.00, \$16.00 (paperback 3-7186-0554-6).

This is the first history of cardiology to be relatively true to its title. It does not go back to the Greeks and trace a continuous history giving the customary prominence to Harvey, Laënnec, Latham and so forth. Quite properly most of the authors identify cardiology as a twentieth-century creation and devote themselves to that. Of the thirteen essays, eleven are co-authored by the editor, and one is written solely by him. The chapters are devoted to cardiac technologies, ideas, practices, and diseases, and cover such subjects as catheterization, transplantation, isotopes, myocardial failure and pacemakers. Institutions do not merit attention. The chapters are triumphalist and uncritical, but all contain excellent reviews of original literature, and all are fully referenced. This is a useful volume.

JAMES HARVEY YOUNG, *The medical messiahs: a social history of health quackery in twentieth-century America*, Princeton University Press, 1992, expanded paperback ed., pp. xiii, 498, \$13.95 (0-691-00579-6).

Alongside the author's *The toadstool millionaires: a social history of patent medicines in America before federal regulation* (Princeton University Press, 1961), this work, first published in 1967, has achieved classic status in the analysis (even exposure) of American quackery. With an infectious dry wit, Young revealed the high priests amongst the medical charlatans, laying bare the gadget boom, the cancer quacks, health by mail order, through radio and television, and the American susceptibility to hi-tech and showbiz modes of medical hucksterdom. Young has now added a new afterword, reflecting on the vitality of American health faddism over the last twenty-five years, including AIDS quackery—a generation whose thirst for pseudo-medicine has amply (in his view, and surely correctly) borne out his perception that the great American public has an insatiable craving, independent of objective medical needs, for medical sensationalism and a secularized health millennialism.

The points about mass gullibility are entertainingly made and ring true. One wishes, however, as with all his works, that Young were more prepared to be drawn as to how far his diagnoses might be applied no less to the regular medical profession and to the often dubious practices of the various science lobbies.

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STEPHANUS OF ATHENS, *Commentary on Hippocrates' Aphorisms*, Sections III–IV, text and translation by Leendert G. Westerink, *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum XI/1*, 3, 2, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1992, pp. 433, DM 298.00 (3–05–000742–7).

The second volume of the late Leendert Westerink's edition of Stephanus' commentary displays all the virtues of the first (reviewed in this journal, 1986, **30**: 228–9). It is based on the full version of the lectures preserved in an Escorial manuscript; the sections from the abbreviated recension of III.1–19 are given in smaller type at the foot of the relevant pages and are also translated. The brief introduction contains a useful summary of the Hippocratic and Galenic canonical books and the order in which they were studied as found in Stephanus. The slow progress of the volume through the press has inevitably meant that some recent discussions of relevance go unrecorded. S. Lucà *Schede medievali*, 1985, **8**: p. 74, showed that the Escorial manuscript was once in the library of S. Salvatore in Messina, and hence may have a (relatively rare) South Italian origin. Wanda Wolska-Conus in two long articles in the *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 1989, **47**: 5–89; and 1992, **50**: 5–86, has tried to link the author with theological and alchemical writings, and with some extant philosophical commentaries on Aristotle. Not all have agreed entirely with her speculations, e.g. M. Roueché, *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 1990, **40**: 108–28, and P. Lautner, *Classical Quarterly*, 1992, **42**: 510–22, but she has succeeded in putting more flesh onto some dry bones, and pointed to contemporary interests within Stephanus's exposition of a standard text.

CHRISTIANE GROEBEN and KLAUS WENIG (eds), *Anton Dohrn und Rudolf Virchow: Briefwechsel 1864–1902*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1992, pp. xii, 132, DM 56.00 (3–05–500720–4).

Anton Dohrn and Rudolf Virchow were not only distinguished for their respective contributions to the life sciences and medicine, they were also two outstanding statesmen of science. Dohrn's achievement was to found the Naples Zoological Station as an international venture in which academic institutions and states could rent research facilities. Virchow as a liberal politician supported efforts to promote state expenditure on science and education, while curbing the excesses of Prussian interventionism. Their fifty letters span the years 1864 until Virchow's death in 1902, and provide insight into a range of issues. Evolution and Darwinism form a continuous topic of concern, Dohrn's ardour being noticeably greater than Virchow's. Dohrn was a student of Ernst Haeckel at Jena and indeed Haeckel's vibrant personality and ideas make him a powerful presence throughout the correspondence. Haeckel later became bitterly opposed to Virchow's cautious scepticism concerning the Darwinian mechanisms of evolution; for his part, Virchow condemned Haeckel's evolutionary speculations, involving phylogenetic trees and theories of a crystal or plastidule soul. As a rift grew between Haeckel and Dohrn, initially over Haeckel's view that Dohrn was not suited to a career in biology and then over Haeckel's monistic *Weltanschauung*, Dohrn veered more towards Virchow's pragmatism. Virchow realized that Haeckel was impeding state legislation for the teaching of science in schools, and, for Dohrn, state funding for the Zoological Station was in jeopardy. Indeed Virchow's parliamentary activities helped to guarantee the budgets from which the Zoological Station's funding derived. The volume is well produced with a substantial critical introduction.

BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED

(The inclusion of a title does not preclude the possibility of subsequent review. Items received, other than those assigned for review, are ultimately incorporated into the collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.)

ADELOLA ADELOYLE, *African pioneers of modern medicine: Nigerian doctors of the nineteenth century*, Ibadan University Press, 1985, distrib. Oxford University Press, pp. xiii, 253, illus., £25.00 (hardback Nigeria, 978–154566–6, outside Nigeria, 0–18575691–6).

HANS C. BANGEN, *Geschichte der medikamentösen Therapie der Schizophrenie*, Berlin, Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 1992, pp. 128, DM 32.00 (3–927408–82–4).