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reproduced on pages 15–19, together with the answers received. We may add that this is a rare specimen of the acquisition of guided information so early as the eighteenth century; second, a passage on Astruc's share in forming a theory of reflex movement.

The last biography in the present volume, which much surpasses the preceding ones in bulk (137 pages) is that of Xavier Bichat; a posthumous publication of a work written by Maurice Genty (1961), whose earlier and smaller contributions to the *Biographies Médicales* (1927–1936) we have repeatedly used with profit.

Antoine Louis, the distinguished French mid-eighteenth-century surgeon, was strongly dissatisfied with his family name which could easily be mistaken for a forename. However, he would probably have derived delighted satisfaction from the elegant biography, included in the present volume some 180 years after his death. Of course, he should not be mistaken for his namesake Pierre-Charles-Alexandre Louis (1787–1872) who has achieved greater international renown through his introduction of statistical methods for the evaluation of therapeutic procedures.

The fourth biography is of Pierre Desault, who is here compared (pp. 147–51) with his contemporary John Hunter.

A pleasant feature of the book is the inclusion of detailed bibliographies following the voluminous references. They have been arranged as follows: manuscripts with exact guide to their location; printed books and papers; general bibliography of printed material on the subject; listed iconography.

The authors must be commended for their scholarly and readable work and the publishers for the beautiful and richly illustrated edition.

J. O. LEIBOWITZ

A History of the Nigerian Health Services, by RALPH SCHRAM, Nigeria, Ibadan University Press, 1971, pp. xxvi, 480, illus., £4.50 (£1.75 paperback).

This book fulfils admirably what its author set out to do. It is a comprehensive—even compendious—account of the development of health services in Nigeria from the earliest days until 1960, the year of Independence.

By virtue of his teaching appointments in Nigeria, Scotland and Uganda, Dr. Schram has had an unrivalled opportunity of studying his subject both on the field and in libraries in several countries, where he has had access to original documents and archives. A probing mind and an innate curiosity have led him into the fascinating byways of the earliest contacts between Western medicine and indigenous culture in Nigeria. He traces the story of the Niger expeditions, with their tragic trail of sickness and death, and the pioneer thrustings of the missionary doctors.

The colonial medical service is seen to grow from the modest beginnings of barrack medicine and the care of the isolated expatriate communities into attempts at extensive though thin medical coverage of the vast areas of this populous country. Malaria, leprosy, sleeping sickness, and yellow fever provide successive challenges to the doctors whose training fitted them more for curative medicine in the growing centres of population than for preventive medicine and mass treatment in the bush.

The saga of Ibadan is told, with the vision (and incomprehensible oversights) that eventually brought into being a first-class teaching centre, to be followed by Lagos,

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Ife, Enugu-Nsukka, Zaria and perhaps others. The long-forgotten needs of the predominantly rural population are at last brought into the picture as the new emphasis on preventive medicine, nutrition, and the attack on the widespread endemic diseases demand more attention.

Dr. Schram writes well and in great detail. In fact, the sheer weight of detail with which every page is packed makes of this the definitive history of the period considered. The photographs add to the value of the text. The tables, maps and graphs, and the appendices not only provide material from numerous sources—some of them almost inaccessible to most people—but illustrate and amplify the chapters. Sir Samuel Manuwa, formerly Inspector General of Medical Services and Chief Medical Adviser to the Government of the Federation of Nigeria, writes a most appreciative foreword, whose terms will be echoed by those who read this work from cover to cover as well as by those who will dip into it from time to time for some factual reference.

As an objective account of the development of the health services in Nigeria, with a happy collaboration between the official services and the voluntary agencies, this book will be for long the standard work. For his industry, for sharing with a wide circle of readers an abridged version (of 458 pages) of a Cambridge M.D. thesis, for his infectious enthusiasm for his subject—we are indebted to the author.

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