

Book Reviews

became a household word his Spanish name was an inspiration to many Latin American medical students in their clinical training. On several occasions and in countries quite far apart I have been asked if I knew the man and his work, the questioners being not only physicians but business men and housewives as well. Indeed I knew him, and enjoyed telling stories about gracious hostesses let down with 'Poulet à la Robbia' and 'Mousse au chocolat Gengis Khan' because of Dr. Alvarez's allergies to chicken and cocoa, and about his passion for ultra-sweet gipsy music. For those who want to know, and the rest who should know, here is the story, the life of a great clinician and experimental scientist, his loneliness and bitter moments, together with his warm and inspiring role as medical consultant.

The pages of his life reflect the great changes in the practice of medicine in the United States during half a century and we are offered glimpses of some of its great figures as seen by Dr. Alvarez. This autobiography has a special meaning for the young physician because it carries on the message of a courageous individualist who challenged the easy conformity of the mediocre, and scorned the common practice of a 'decerebrate' medicine. This term Alvarez applies to the current practice of drowning the patient in unnecessary tests when the traditional clinical approach based on common sense can produce better results.

At the end of his autobiography there are some complementary chapters, one devoted to his thoughts on evolution and his dislike of psychoanalysis and contemporary dependence on Freud's ideas; another to his religious beliefs, the faith of a physician, where with great respect and courage Dr. Alvarez discusses the inconsistencies of Christian tradition, not to destroy the faith of the believer, but to express the ethical values which constituted the guiding tenets through his life.

The style is plain, straightforward, and as clear as his personality; he avoids an affected literary form that glamorizes the sentence but weakens the message, an *envoi* for every one of us who looks upon him as a great physician, as a wonderful old man.

FRANCISCO GUERRA

Eugen Enderlen 1863-1963, ed. by W. WACHSMUTH, Berlin, Springer-Verlag, 1963, pp. 60, D.M. 9.00.

Let us now praise famous men! This small paperback of 60 pages consists of four tributes to his work as a surgeon, a researcher and a man, by former pupils and associates of the German surgeon, Eugen Enderlen, on the occasion of the centenary of his birth.

Like many continental surgeons and physicians, he seems to have received little notice here. However, perhaps the hierarchical system of hospital and university appointments has something to do with the German attitude to their professional elders, and the fact that commemoration of their accomplishments comes more naturally.

Enderlen was born in 1863 in Salzburg. From 1882 to 1887 he studied medicine at Munich and worked in the Institute of Hygiene there under the renowned Pettenkofer's successor, Buchner. As was then the custom, he began a series of moves to different centres.

In 1896 he went to Marburg, working in the anatomy department of Emil Gasser. In 1904, when aged forty-one years, he was called to Basle, where he remained for four years, before going on to Würzburg and Heidelberg. There he carried on the studies for which he is perhaps best known—organ transplantation and blood transfusion. Possibly his earlier researches in bacteriology led him on to this.

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The book ends with a list of some one hundred of his publications and contributions to the *Zentralblatt für Chirurgie*. They give some idea of the range of his surgical interests—pyloric resection for stomach cancer, indications for gallstone operation, extirpation of the stellate ganglion, denervation of the heart and its consequences. Sauerbruch was probably his most famous pupil.

This booklet is so brief that it makes an attractive introduction for younger surgeons to the work of one of their continental forebears.

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