

## Book Reviews

review of Haller's work set in a Newtonian context: an invaluable *aperçu*. William Coleman considers the early French demographer Auget de Montyon; his *étatist* programme for population expansion involved a strong preference for the rural life (1778):

In the cities man produces less, he is more inclined to debauchery, he is more exposed to luxury, and consequently he fears having a large family. Experience has shown that the focus of these vices which destroy a population is located in the great cities and that from the cities they expand into the countryside.

An unusual paper, far more interesting than its title promises, is by Stanley Joel Reiser: 'Creating form out of mass: the development of the medical record' [in the USA]. In question are hospital records, the period is c.1900–25. At stake is the sincerity and efficacy of treatment. Everett Mendelsohn comes within the present decade in his account of the public politics of recombinant DNA research, an account necessarily inconclusive, deliberately parochial, and pervasively depressing. The high-minded appear not very sensible and the sensible not very high-minded. Finally, I would draw attention to the very last essay in the volume, by Nathan Sivin, on the non-occurrence of the Scientific Revolution in China – an essay possessing real interest, historiographical depth, and not a little wit. These qualities are not evenly distributed throughout the book. Sivin's piece even has some relation to the history of medicine: it points to the significance of Japanese medical men in the westernization of their country, absent in China. With astronomy the case was reversed.

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ARNDT FLEISCHER, *Patentgesetzgebung und Chemisch-Pharmazeutische Industrie im Deutschen Kaiserreich (1871–1918)*, Stuttgart, Deutscher Apotheker Verlag, 1984, 8vo, pp.xix, 440, illus., DM.46.00.

The German pharmaceutical industry was central to the development of the new therapeutics that dramatically changed public health practices and the use of drugs generally around the turn of the century. The factors which came into play to stimulate an upsurge in pharmacology and experimental therapeutics in and around the German industry are being studied from a number of different angles. Arndt Fleischer provides a most careful and broadminded analysis of what has been suggested as one key factor, the use of patents. Patents stimulated the industry in a number of ways in the period when research and development were being looked to for the first time systematically to provide profitable new products. By monopolizing the processes by which new drugs were made, and deftly using foreign patents to protect product markets elsewhere, the German industry was able to charge to the forefront of the world medical market in new therapeutics and, by the 1890s, dominate a number of key markets.

This is a published doctoral thesis in which the medical history of the drugs industry is only half of the intended story. Much emphasis is placed on the history of German patenting and on the formation of an industrial policy in which patents were to play a central role. Fleischer divides his account into a large number of short sections, making for impressively broad coverage at the expense of a smooth argument. This we can forgive, since the range of important issues considered is most valuable. He is sensitive to the influences of lobbying and interest groups and uses the debates surrounding the early legislation to raise questions about the politics of industrial innovation. He is particularly good at looking at key cases in pharmaceuticals and organic drug development, taking first aniline red, alizarin, and salicylic acid. With synthetic organic chemicals increasingly important to the industry, the debates leading up to the patent reforms of 1891 reveal especially interesting material about attitudes towards patenting and the use of patents in building a business strategy. Historians of medicine will be particularly interested in the short reviews of developments leading to the patenting and marketing of antipyretics, analgesics, antiseptics, and the new galenicals. Other sections deal briefly with vaccines and sera, hormones and natural extracts, and chemo-therapeutics.

Although there is a distinct thesis-like tone to the book, it is well researched and documented, using archival company sources from at least three companies, as well as

## Book Reviews

technical literature and records of the patent office. I hope Dr Fleischer will now pursue some of the issues he deals with so briefly and contribute further studies to history of medicine and pharmacy journals.

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LEWIS THOMAS, *The youngest science*, Oxford University Press, 1983, 8vo, pp. viii, 276, £3.95 (paperback).

Now in paperback, these are the reminiscences of the career of a successful, kindly, drily humorous, medical scientist. His most attractive trait is that of enjoyment. The son of a Flushing general practitioner, he moves through life, to Harvard, various residencies, Guam and Okinawa during the Second World War, Baltimore, Tulane, Minnesota, NYU and Bellevue, Yale, and the Sloan-Kettering, finding new ideas and new friends at each. That journey spans in time a transformation in medicine, both in therapeutic efficacy and in rational scientific understanding. Thomas himself got sold on modern immunology; he even likes (speculatively) to relate it to individual pheromones or to individuation of thought.

You can read these essays as a record of the success of modern medicine, and they certainly give the flavour of research-oriented practice. Is it a shade pleased with itself and its achievements? There is a bit more. He is candid about two sets of experiments, in each of which there was a promising lead which evaporated for reasons he could never pin down. Many a research worker will recognize that teasing, humiliating waste of time.

Better still, he gives an account, quite early in his career, of the admission of a young black musician, with a history of severe chills, now drowsy and apathetic. A blood test revealed first severe anaemia and then blood loaded with malaria parasites (he was a drug addict). Malaria was rare in Boston, and the staff and students spent that day seeing this novel case. During the early evening, the patient died, still untreated, when early quinine might have saved him. The house physician later read to the staff the first sentence in Osler's chapter on malaria: in effect, that any doctor who allows a case of malaria to die without quinine is guilty of malpractice. One respects Lewis Thomas for reminding us that there is a harder edge to medicine than just genial reminiscence.

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PIERRE PICHOT, *A century of psychiatry*, Paris, Dacosta, 1984, 8vo, pp. 189, illus., [no price stated] (paperback).

Emil Kraepelin's *Hundert Jahre Psychiatrie* appeared in 1918. It was a personal, occasionally idiosyncratic account of the shaping influences of nineteenth-century "Gesittung" on the management of insanity. One cannot help thinking that the publication, six decades later, of Pichot's book (and even its title) owe much to that earlier idea of asking a well-known psychiatrist to look back and then tell everyone, reassuringly, that things are not too bad in the present. The French professor has done just that in a book whose coverage of the crucial period between the 1880s to the Great War overlaps with that of Kraepelin.

In all fairness, however, the books are also different: whilst Kraepelin understandably concentrated on German views and wrote a book almost without references, Pichot is scholarly in his technique and tries to offer a balanced account of psychiatry in the three main countries, although, inevitably, the richest morsels are to be found in the chapter on French psychiatry.

This book will be differently reviewed by historians and by psychiatrists. For the former, a central question is, in what way does it throw light on the evolution of psychiatric ideas? For the latter, it is, does it reflect the present well? Pichot declares that there are several good works delineating the entire development of psychiatry (which does he have in mind, one wonders?) and rightly wants to produce one which concentrates on the nineteenth century and may