

### Book Reviews

A Professional Services Division had existed since 1925 in the Surgeon General's office, but its functions were chiefly administrative. The main portion of this book is devoted to describing how the consultant system was organized from 1942 onwards through the appointment of civilian physicians, how difficulties and errors arose, and how gradually these were overcome by co-operation between the medical administrators and clinicians both at home and overseas. The result was that by the end of the war the United States Army had a comprehensive and thoroughly efficient Consultant Service in medicine. Many lessons were learnt, and many recommendations are offered by consultants for the future as the result of experience. Interesting observations are made on the clinical nature of the wartime diseases encountered. Of special interest to neurologists is the account of Japanese B encephalitis in the Central Pacific area (pp. 673-7). Included among the illustrations are portraits of the chief army consultants, and pleasing reference is made to the help and information they received from their British colleagues. Editors and contributors alike are to be congratulated upon this informative volume in the series.

ARTHUR S. MACNALTY

*Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England, being a collection of documents, for the most part never before printed, illustrate the history of science in this country before the Norman Conquest*, collected and edited by the REV. THOMAS OSWALD COCKAYNE, with a new Introduction by Charles Singer, 3 vols, London, The Holland Press, 1961, £16 16s.

This important work, which contains almost the entire corpus of scientific writings from the Anglo-Saxon period of English history, was first published in the Rolls Series in the years 1864-6. Since that time it has gone out of print and become a scarce book, so that the Holland Press has done a service to many kinds of scholarship by republishing it. A great deal of research has been done in the language and the history of the period during the century since its first publication and Charles Singer came to the conclusion that both Cockayne's original introduction and the index-glossaries were too misleading in the present state of knowledge to merit reprinting. His own new introduction analyses the contents and traces the influences which are to be seen in them, paramount among them being the Apuleius Herbal, Dioscorides, and Sextus Placitus. In addition the local leechdoms show the influence of Roman and Teutonic magic, the former by way of versions of Pliny's *Natural History*, as well as vestiges of Byzantine astrology and theurgy. Compared with other expressions of our early culture such as the work of Alfred and the Venerable Bede, these writings show the darker side, representing, as Singer claims, not the 'earliest phase of modern medicine but the last fading traces of Greek medicine in the west before the scholastic revival'. Nevertheless, we do not turn to these volumes for scientific enlightenment but for the primary sources in the history of science in England. For this reason alone they are indispensable in every library with a claim to learning.

F. N. L. P.

*Louisiana Swamp Doctor; The Life and Writings of Henry Clay Lewis*, edited by JOHN Q. ANDERSON, Louisiana State University Press, 1962, pp. 296, 8 illus., \$5.00. During the decade 1840-50 readers of the weekly New York newspaper entitled, *Spirit of the Times* were entertained by a series of comical sketches which purported to be the work of Madison Tensas, M.D., the Louisiana Swamp Doctor. In 1850 the collected essays were published in book form, with the title, *Odd Leaves from the Life*