

Book Reviews

buted to the corpus of medical knowledge his own highly original ideas and experimental data. As is the case elsewhere in this book the author makes use here of unreliable and occasionally out-of-date secondary sources. Thus Sarton's small book on Galen is well-recognized as treacherously untrustworthy.

Dr. Phillips' book can be strongly recommended to those who seek a reliable and competent account of Hippocratic medicine, but an adequate assessment in English of Galen and his works is still awaited.

JOHN KOBLER, *Ardent spirits. The rise and fall of prohibition*, London, Michael Joseph, 1973, 8vo, pp. 386, illus., £5.00.

A great deal has been written on the remarkable American experiment of prohibition (1920–1934), but less on events that led up to it. Mr. Kobler begins by surveying temperance, 1609 to 1860 (pp. 23–91), and temperance groups 1869–1919 (pp. 95–218). The rest of the book deals with “the Noble Experiment” itself. The latter when seen in the context of its historical background of excessive drinking makes better sense, and it should not be dismissed as a curious aberration doomed to failure. It can almost be claimed that in its early days the nation was built with the aid of alcohol, when its abuse amongst the Indians is added to its widespread use amongst the white men. But there was always a strong force against this evil influence and out of it in the second half of the nineteenth century grew the prohibition movement, and by World War I two-thirds of the states were “dry”. Religion, militant women and fanatical individuals helped to create the Women's Christian Temperance Union (1874), the Anti-Saloon League and similar crusading bodies. Their campaign was crowned with success on 17 January 1920.

Naturally, the events of the period ending in the imposition of prohibition and of the “dry” years themselves make a good story, teaming with anecdotes, which Mr. Kobler draws on liberally and with very good effect. His book is an important contribution to social history and although the text is not annotated there is a good bibliography at the end.

NOEL G. COLEY, *From animal chemistry to biochemistry*, Amersham, Bucks, Hulton Education Publishing, 1973, 8vo, pp. 272, illus., £2.20 (paperback).

The author's object is “. . . to trace the development of those parts of biochemistry which have grown from the study of animal matter and functions . . .” and to neglect plant chemistry. In so doing he hopes to place in perspective some of the main biochemical problems of today and to emphasize the importance of historical perspective.

He deals first with early studies in the chemistry of life, beginning with the seventeenth century, and then with founders of animal chemistry and its involvement in physiology and medicine, with vitalism, the contribution of physical chemistry and then again chemistry, with special attention to Liebig, and with Claude Bernard. He gives a well written and competent account of the way in which biochemistry has evolved from an empirical, applied science to a complex, theoretical study embedded in physical and organic chemistry, the main motive force being the demands of physiology and clinical medicine. There are no notes to the text, although there is a useful terminal bibliography.