

Book Reviews

subordinate to medical duties. It also gives rise to thoughts about medicine's need to venerate its own great men, and the biographical forms used in doing it. This edition is very easy to read thanks to the size of page and clear typography, but it is appreciably more expensive than secondhand copies of earlier editions that are readily available. This volume with its realistic introduction by Hugh Dudley is a credit to the Keynes imprint of the British Medical Association.

Howard's book illuminates the relationship between Osler and the Howard family. Palmer Howard acted as Osler's teacher and friend, a role that Osler himself performed for his godson, Campbell Howard, Palmer's son. The book contains much of interest to students of North American medicine, and to anyone finding out for himself about Osler's life.

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LORD MORAN, *The anatomy of courage*, with a foreword by Denis Williams, London, Keynes Press (British Medical Association), 1984, 8vo, pp. xxix, 159, £35.00.

This is a beautifully produced book, even though the choice of a predominantly yellow William Morris design for the cover made me wonder whether there was some hidden influence at work. It is almost worth reading purely for the introduction by Denis Williams, who delightfully bridges the transition from the somewhat rudimentary views of human psychology extant in 1914 to the greater state of awareness of 1939. This is essential, because Moran based his book on the diary he kept as a Medical Officer in the trenches, and of his experiences at a higher level in 1939 when he subsequently became Churchill's doctor. It is to his credit that he gives his diary, which was kept with meticulous care, without trying to re-interpret his emotions and assessment at the time, and it is fascinating to see over the four years of the most stultifying and bloody war of attrition in history, how he changed his views and learned to appreciate the forms and evidence of mental breakdown. The opening paragraph tells all.

One of the sergeants was "out of sorts". I found him sitting staring into the fire. He had not shaved and his trousers were half open. He seemed a morose fellow; I could get nothing out of him . . . , besides he did not appear to be ill . . . But next day when everyone had gone up the line he blew his head off. I thought little of this at the time; it seemed a silly thing to do.

This was in 1914, and by 1916 he was able to write:

"My dysentery is damned bad Doc", the colonel said, as he passed his hand through his thin hair as if brushing it back, and when I did not speak he went on, "I am afraid I'll have to go sick. It is a nuisance, isn't it." His long back bent forward, his head drooped. His eyes kept blinking. He looked old and troubled. For a quarter of a century he had been a soldier preparing no doubt for the real thing. It had come and this was the end.

His diary is full of important anecdotes of this sort, from which he constructs a much larger framework to bear his ideas on courage, cowardice, and all those factors which he felt were important. It is inevitable from the words he uses that there will be semantic difficulties, as in his statement that "Courage is a moral quality". Fortunately, not too much is lost in these difficulties, and his examination of those factors which particularly lead to breakdown were easily translated to the great effort in 1939 to remove quickly the frail from active service. Shell shock of 1914 became LMF (lacking moral fibre) in 1939, and the effort to preserve the morale of the sufferer and of his comrades then became an important consideration. For me, the generalizations are of less interest than the anecdotes since I have become rather more critical of some of the bases of his beliefs about human nature, and yet it is churlish of me to question his self-confidence since he rebuilt his Medical School by a process of his selection, of which I was one.

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