

### Book Reviews

considered. In general the book is a study of the development of the chemical profession, c. 1800 to 1976, and in it there is a skilful blending of the technical content of chemistry and the social factors operating on it from without, together with dissension and rivalry from within. Education, chemical techniques, and the effects of two world wars, industrial depression and the E.E.C. are also dealt with.

This book will be of special attraction to practising chemists, but also to pharmacists and medical personnel who are increasingly in contact with chemical concepts and techniques. In addition it will provide historians of science and medicine with a valuable survey of nineteenth-century British chemistry.

*Journal for the History of Arabic Science*, vol. 1, 1977, 2 issues per annum (spring and autumn), \$6.00 per annum.

*Reviewed by A. Z. Iskandar, D.Phil., Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BP.*

The inaugural volume of an international *Journal for the History of Arabic Science* was launched in May 1977, being the official organ of the Institute for the History of Arabic Science founded in Aleppo, Syria, in 1976 (see *Med. Hist.*, 1976, 20: p. 439). The need for this unique journal has long been felt: it is unique in that it is entirely devoted to the history of Arabic science and prints papers in Arabic as well as English and French. Historians of Arabic science will no longer have to publish the Arabic text and commentary of one paper in an oriental periodical, and to print elsewhere a version in an occidental language. Alternatively, if the Arabic texts with a translation and commentary are published together in a periodical of a general nature, however prestigious, they may not become known to most historians of science.

The Managing Editors, all of whom contributed scholarly papers to this volume, are Professor A. Y. al-Hassan and Professor E. S. Kennedy, who jointly deal with papers on mathematics, technology, and astronomy, and Professor S. K. Hamarneh, being in charge of contributions in the fields of medicine, pharmacy, and allied sciences. The Editors and an international Board of Editors are among the leading historians of Arabic science.

In his lucid editorial, Hamarneh outlines the purpose of this journal and explains successfully the connotation of the expression "Arabic-Islamic" science. This term is frequently used to embrace the great efforts of men of different religious creeds who flourished under Muslim rulers and wrote in Arabic, the language of the Koran, the holy book of Islam. They preserved part of the Greek heritage from extinction and made their own contributions. The Arabic tongue, Hamarneh writes, "has a remarkable proficiency, clarity, elegance and facility to embrace and articulate all the developing scientific and technical knowledge."

Present-day Iranians prefer to use the expression *Ṭibb sunnat-i Irān* "traditional medicine of Iran", rather than "Arabic-Islamic medicine". Their ancestors, to name only Ḥunayn, al-Rāzī, and Ibn Sīnā, made the greatest contributions to what should be called "traditional Irano-Arabic-Islamic medicine (or science)" or, probably in a modern short title, "traditional medicine (or science) of the Middle East", which would encompass Arabic, Persian and Turkish contributions, as well as those of

### Book Reviews

Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. So eminent and authoritative is the stature of the Arabic-Islamic world that no credit is sought to be gained by bestowing the title "Arabic-Islamic" on the "traditional medicine (or science) of the Middle East".

The Editors have spent lavishly on printing this volume, which is richly enhanced by photographic plates, some of which are in colour. These appear in a paper by al-Hassan, being a representative section of his forthcoming edition (based on four Arabic manuscripts) of al-Jazari's book *al-Jāmi' bayn al-ilm wa' l-amal al-nāfi ft šinā'at al-ḥiyal* (A compendium on the theory and practice of the mechanical arts). Other photographic plates on medicine and pharmacy appear in Hamarneh's paper on 'Arabic manuscripts of the National Library of Medicine, Washington, D.C.'. An edition of the Arabic text of Ibn al-Haytham's 'Treatise on the marks seen on the surface of the moon' is published by Professor A. I. Sabra from the hitherto unique manuscript of the City Library of Alexandria. Summaries are provided in English at the end of three Arabic papers, and of the fourth an abstract is given in French, in order to acquaint Western scholars with current research in Arabic science.

It is hoped that the *JHAS* will supply each contributor with the usual two sets of galley and page-proofs for revision. When in 1961 I published al-Rāzi's book *The guide or aphorisms in Revue de l'Institut des manuscrits arabes* (vol. 7, no. 1) the convention was not to print any pages unless they were approved and signed by the contributor. It was surprising indeed when in 1977 the same periodical (vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 24–56) confronted me with the printed text of the Arabic version of my paper 'An attempted reconstruction of the late Alexandrian medical curriculum' (see *Med. Hist.* 1976, 20: 235–258), without sending any proofs in spite of my repeated requests for revision. Two proper names "Wellcome" and "Chester Beatty" are printed wrongly, in addition to a few misprints in the Arabic text and two omissions of page references, all of which could have been avoided with proper revision procedures.

The English and Arabic sections of this volume are separated by 'Book Reviews' which, one hopes, will occupy a larger space in future, 'Notes on Contributors', 'Suggestions for Contributors' and a list of 'Publications of the Institute for the History of Arabic Science.'

To the Editors of *JHAS* we offer our hearty congratulations for a successful academic achievement and look forward to equally high standards of the forthcoming issues.

SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR, *Islamic science. An illustrated study*, [London], World of Islam Festival Publishing Co. (distributors: Thorsons, Northants), 1976, 4to, pp. xiv, 273, illus., £12.50.

As part of the Festival of the World of Islam, held in London in 1977, this elegant book complements the remarkable exhibition mounted at the Science Museum. It is the first work on Islamic science to combine the study and analysis of texts with illustrations, of which there are 135 in colour and 94 in black and white. The illustrations are beautifully produced, and make the book unique. After a general account of the rise of Islamic sciences and of the Islamic educational system, there are chapters dealing in turn with mathematics, the pure and the applied sciences. There is a chapter on 'Medicine and pharmacology' (pp. 153–192), which unfortunately contains a