

Book Reviews

introspective cast of mind. These were the mark of the Dissenter. As such a person he could never resist a sermon, and there were many in the course of a month: nor could he stay away from scientific lectures. He attended, for instance, discourses on optics, mechanics, mathematics, ophthalmology (by the Chevalier Taylor), and travelled to Manchester to see the anatomical models newly invented by Abraham Chovet. In all this Kay was a child of his time and class, for it was the educated, questing nonconformists who were to make some of the most significant contributions to eighteenth-century science—witness the Warrington Academy.

All this activity still left Kay time to cover enormous distances on his rounds. He unflinchingly talks about his patients in sympathetic and conscientious tones, almost as if he were their pastor. Whilst his therapeutics are no better and no worse than one might expect from a man in his situation, what does impress is his amazing persistence in helping patients who were seriously ill. Two years in the diary deserve special mention. In one of them Kay attended lectures (Smellie, Sharp, Belcher) at Guy's Hospital. In the other (1745) he reports the gradual progress, and precipitate retreat, of the Scottish rebels as they moved through Manchester towards London and then back to Carlisle.

Kay rarely goes into detail about anything, which is a pity. Unfortunately his failure to provide us with a solid meal is in no way made up by his generosity with religious and moral supplications. Here is where the editors could and should have used their pruning knife. Space would then have been liberated for a longer introduction and fuller notes. As these stand they are gravely deficient. They make little attempt either to place Kay in his medical and social background or to elucidate references to people, apart from dissenting ministers.

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Botanico-Periodicum-Huntianum, ed. by G. H. M. LAWRENCE, *et al.*, Pittsburgh, Hunt Botanical Library, 1968, pp. 1063, \$30.00.

This massive compendium—a kind of World List of Botanical Periodicals—is an outgrowth of the Hunt Library's project to index all the books and articles on botanical topics from the period 1730 to 1840. It gives about 12,000 titles and includes lay periodicals such as the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Titles are accompanied by 'non-ambiguous abbreviations' and the reader is referred to these, when necessary, from variant-abbreviations used in other sources. The compilers have thus established a new set of standards, which combine clarity with brevity. What is more, they have arrived at these standards from an investigation of the numerous and often deficient forms which abbreviations now take. Just how misleading these can be is shown by a comparison of some commonly used ones with those newly advocated by the Hunt Library. The compilers promise to publish a larger study of the rationale behind this investigation. Historians, however, will probably look forward with greater anticipation to the exceedingly ambitious botanical-index out of which this periodical-list has sprung.

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