

Book Reviews

Gaub's two essays have a fascination in their own right. The first of them is practically unobtainable in English, and the second is for the first time translated. This however, does not complete the debt we owe to Dr. Rather for he has embedded in the text of these essays copious notes, some of which are themselves short essays full of information and cogent comment. The result is therefore, a rich study, not only transmitting to us an original version of eighteenth century psychosomatic thought, but embellishing it by a commentary placing this thought in its context. This amplifies its significance immensely.

The work will be found illuminating and useful by all interested in medicine of the psyche, soma, or both. As an effective way of presenting medical history it well deserves the flattery of imitation.

KENNETH D. KEELE

The Autobiographical Ana of Robley Dunglison, M.D., ed. by S. X. RADBILL, (*Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series Vol. 53, pt. 8), Philadelphia, 1963, pp. 212, \$5.

When John Morgan of Philadelphia graduated at Edinburgh in 1763 'with such reputation as few, if any, have ever obtained' he was already pondering on ways to transplant European standards of medical education onto American soil. In his day only a handful of physicians in Virginia could lay claim to a degree and to the formal training which went with it. By 1825 (when Robley Dunglison arrived to take up the first full-time medical professorship in the United States, at Jefferson's new University of Virginia) medical education was on its feet, but not yet of age; and it was during Dunglison's lifetime that American medicine and surgery showed the first real signs of maturity in the shape of fundamental discoveries made by American medical men. Dunglison himself played a significant part in one of these, viz. Beaumont's experiments on the gastric system, which he describes in his *Ana* (admirably edited and annotated) by personal comment and reproduction of correspondence.

The holograph volumes from which this book is transcribed have been lying in the Philadelphia College of Physicians, relatively unknown, for the last sixty years. They give an unrivalled, though intensely personal view, of nineteenth century medicine and its practitioners. The writer was born and apprenticed in Keswick; from where he went to London, Paris, Edinburgh, finally graduating M.D. at Erlangen, and afterwards adding the M.R.C.S., and L.S.A. He decided to specialize in diseases of women and children, but his early years in London were more notable for his literary excursions. He edited two periodicals, translated Magendie and Baron Larrey, and wrote articles on belladonna and malaria. It is a little disappointing not to have more details of his education in Paris and Edinburgh; but, as a diarist, he is always inclined to dilate on his literary labours to the exclusion of other things. Not surprisingly, the intensely practical bent of the American character often ran counter to the strong theoretical streak in his own, and his comments on this subject make interesting reading.

In Virginia Dunglison taught the theory and history of medicine, anatomy, physiology, medical jurisprudence (often to a mingled audience of medical students and public men), materia medica and pharmacy. Private medical practice never really

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claimed his attentions (although he was personal physician to Jefferson, Madison and Monroe), and he was really the ideal person to direct a medical school which was intended by Jefferson to impart fundamentals of medicine to students who would later proceed to hospitals further north for their clinical experience.

From Virginia, Dunglison went by invitation to Baltimore in 1833 (his reputation was such that he was always 'invited'); but, in his own words, 'the tide set so strongly towards Philadelphia' that he was soon tempted to move to Philadelphia, the birth-place of American medical education. The controversies, feuds and quarrels in which Dunglison was involved as a member of one of the two rival medical schools in Philadelphia are described in a series of character sketches of the participants. Dunglison was always essentially the peacemaker, however, and he played a large part in establishing Jefferson Medical College on firm foundations. Three years after his arrival the number of students had jumped from 163 to 341.

Dunglison continued to write prodigiously, and it was his books rather than his medical accomplishments which formed the basis of his reputation. Textbooks of physiology, hygiene and medicine earned him the plaudits, and the money, of the medical public. They also won for him in certain quarters the epithet of 'plagiarist'—for they comprised information culled from a variety of sources, rather than experimental observations of his own. His *Dictionary* was exceptionally successful and went through five editions. As to his medical credo, Dunglison became more of a sceptic the longer he lived. Towards the end of his diary he says, in words which might come from Hippocrates or Sydenham; 'The well-informed physician . . . becomes less and less satisfied of the curative powers of his "remedial agents"; and more and more satisfied of the benefit to be produced by placing the system . . . in the most favourable circumstances for curing itself.'

E. GASKELL

Vom Leben der Gewebe, by REMBERT WATERMANN, Cologne University Press, 1964, pp. 113, no price stated.

This is a short paper-back of 113 pages from Cologne University Press. The author was an assistant in the department of anatomy at Cairo University. It was this experience together with his historical interest in cellular morphology that prompted the writing of what is really a long essay on the subject.

He begins with the cell theory of Schwann, tracing the concept of the cell-unit back in time to Galen and Democritus and then forward to the Renaissance.

He discusses the influence of the discovery of the microscope and its relationship to the work of Leclerc Buffon on 'les molécules organiques', passing on to the concept of the cell-membrane as enunciated by Purkinje and Valentin. Like all good Germans, he ends with a quasi-philosophical analysis of the relationship of the cell-theory to a materialistic or idealistic view of the world! There then follows ten pages of portraiture and illustrations from the work of the main authors quoted in the text.

Germans rank with Americans in circumlocution and verbosity. This pamphlet is no exception. For those with patience, it may prove interesting and even rewarding.

I. M. LIBRACH