

Book Reviews

development of the study of the history of science and technology, compared with that of the history of medicine, and a short note on the present situation with special reference to Germany. Lists of the research and university institutes in science and technology and of the institutes of the history of medicine in the Federal Republic are included.

The second part – chapters 5 and 6 – contains the bibliography, beginning with a list of guides to institutions, libraries, and museums, bibliographies and reference books, biographical dictionaries and general introductions to the subject. The main part is organized in a similar way to the classification used in the *Isis* Critical Bibliographies: general works on the history of science, the history of science from special points of view, the history of science in different periods, the history of the special sciences classified first by period and then by the different branches of the subject, followed by a similar arrangement for the history of technology. The order of the sciences is somewhat unusual, pharmacy and medicine figuring between the physical sciences and the life sciences, which are followed by geography and meteorology. References from the general to the special sections are on the whole adequate, although I have noted some omissions. Chapter 6 provides a useful (international) list of periodicals on the subject in alphabetical order. The book ends with a short glossary of German library and bibliographical terms and an author index.

Magda Whitrow

FREDERICK B. WAGNER, jun., *The twilight years of Lady Osler: letters of a doctor's wife*, Nantucket, Mass., Science History Publications (USA), 1985, 8vo, pp. xiii, 144, illus., \$20.00

The surviving letters of the later years of Lady Osler are presented in three sections: first, 1914–17, the period covering her son Revere's last years until his death in Flanders (Lady Osler was sixty-three when Revere was killed); second, 1917–19, the last three years of Sir William Osler, until his death from pneumonia in 1919; third, 1919–28, the period of Lady Osler's widowhood, until her death from a stroke in 1928 – most of the letters have been selected from this time.

The picture emerges of the former Boston belle who, during her first marriage to the surgeon, Samuel Gross, jun., developed as a successful Philadelphia society hostess and then, in her second marriage to William Osler, became “the great Victorian lady” and “ideal physician's wife”, playing her part both in Baltimore and then in Oxford, at “The Open Arms”. The deaths of Revere and then of William Osler shattered her, and her last years were of increasing loneliness.

The flavour of the letters – both gossipy and shrewd – is exemplified by the following:

Oxford, July 15, 1923. We have had a strange luncheon party. The Garrods came over to meet the Allbutts. I felt I could scarcely keep from shrieking aloud at not seeing the real and *only* Regius Professor come in the room . . . I also have Dr. Banting (insulin) . . . I like him so much – He is very shy . . . he has a heart – I assure you and an artistic sense and feeling.

Dr Frederick Wagner, who himself held the Grace Revere Osler Chair of Surgery at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, is to be commended on his brilliant selection and editing of these letters, which will be of special interest to all Osler *aficionados*.

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