

Book Reviews

JOHN C. ECCLES and WILLIAM C. GIBSON, *Sherrington. His life and thought*, Berlin, Heidelberg, and New York, Springer International, 1979, 8vo, pp. xv, 269, illus., \$18.70.

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Of twentieth-century physiologists, probably only Pavlov has been subjected to as much historical attention as Sir Charles Scott Sherrington (1857-1952). In addition to a large number of articles and obituaries, Lord Cohen of Birkenhead, Ragnar Granit, and Judith Swazey have written monographs on Sherrington, and E. G. T. Liddell's *Discovery of the reflexes* (1960) devoted a great deal of space to Sherrington's contribution to this central problem of modern neurophysiology. Anyone familiar with this literature might feel it superfluous to open yet another volume on the physiologist. Nevertheless, *Sherrington: his life and thought* is a pleasant read, affectionately written by two men who obviously revere the memory of their subject.

Gibson and Eccles have identified their respective contributions to the book: roughly, Gibson is concerned with the life and Eccles with the thought. Gibson chronicles Sherrington's Cambridge days, his years as Professor at Liverpool (1895-1913), and his first decade at Oxford. Eccles then uses Sherrington's last decade at Oxford (1925-35) as a vehicle for placing his later research into perspective. Gibson then examines some of Sherrington's personal and professional relationships as revealed in his private correspondence, much of it now preserved in the University of British Columbia. Correspondents include Sir William Osler, A. V. Hill, Lord Adrian, John F. Fulton, Howard Florey, and John Eccles. Eccles then turns to the philosophical and historical writings, particularly Sherrington's Gifford Lectures *Man On his Nature* (1940). Final short chapters consider Sherrington as a book collector, poet, and public servant. Seventeen appendices assemble some of Sherrington's general writings and a moving memoir by his son, Carr Sherrington.

This book will appeal primarily to those who share the authors' fascination with Sherrington's personality. They make relatively little attempt to place either Sherrington or his work into any broad historical context, and the absence of footnotes will irritate scholars. There are a few inaccuracies, e.g., Michael Foster, not J. N. Langley, founded *The Journal of Physiology* (p. 2); and A. V. Hill received his Nobel Prize in 1922, not 1926 (p. 81).

WESLEY D. SMITH, *The Hippocratic tradition*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1979, 8vo, pp. 264, £7.75.

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The name of Hippocrates has deeply influenced the whole Western tradition of medicine. In this detective story, Professor Smith looks for and locates an appropriate body, interrogates a crowd of witnesses, ancient and modern, and finally pronounces