

## Book Notices

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G. A. LINDEBOOM, *Dokter Lukas*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1988, 8vo, pp. 122, illus., Dfl. 19.50, (paperback).

The first edition of this brief but penetrating study of St Luke the doctor appeared in 1965. It was an appropriate theme for a man who was himself a Christian physician and historian, educated in biblical theology as much as in medicine. This reprint, in its turn, serves both academic piety and scholarship. Lindeboom's cautious assessment of St Luke's medical knowledge and interests is balanced by Professor Van Lieburg's brief biography of the author. The illustrations, however, give a somewhat old-fashioned appearance to a book whose learning and enthusiasm are still valuable today.

JANET SMITH and THEA RANDALL (eds.), *Kill or cure: medical remedies of the 16th and 17th centuries from the Staffordshire Record Office*, Staffordshire Record Office, 1987, 8vo, pp. vi, 68, illus., £3.00 + p & p from the Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate St., Stafford ST16 2LZ, (paperback).

Manifestly targeted at a vaguely historically-inclined general public rather than at specialist scholars, this rather slight booklet consists in the main of a sample of remedies transcribed from four manuscripts in the Record Office's collection. They give a good general idea of the kind of preparations in use in well-to-do households during the period in question, but the fact that practices at lower levels of society may have been quite different ought to have been stressed. A helpful glossary of medicinal terms is provided, and readers are carefully warned that the title was chosen advisedly.

CHARLES WHITE, *A treatise on the management of pregnant and lying-in women*, with an Introduction by Lawrence D. Longo, Resources in Medical History, Canton, MA, Science History Publications USA, 1988, 8vo, pp. liii, 147, illus., \$15.00.

Charles White's *Treatise* has long been looked upon as a classic by obstetricians. Customarily they relate White's strictures on cleanliness before and after labour in a linear manner to the work of Semmelweis. This is the approach adopted by Lawrence Longo in his thorough and bibliographically helpful introduction. This welcome reissue might also encourage new readers to ponder rather more synchronously on White's polemical representation of his enemies and how far his account is an accurate one. Similarly, the book should provoke reflection on the authors White invokes to justify his views. Men such as Pringle, Lind, and Macbride recurrently appear in the text but are absent from the introduction.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS and JEFFREY B. MALICK (eds.) *Drug discovery and development*, Contemporary Biomedicine, Clifton, N.J., Humana Press, 1987, 8vo. pp. xviii, 447, illus., £65.80.

This book consists of twelve chapters, written by authors in the American pharmaceutical industry, on methods used for the discovery and development of drugs, and three chapters which contain case histories of discovery of particular groups of drugs. The major part of the book is unlikely to interest medical historians, unless they are concerned with modern technical procedures: references to publications earlier than 1970 are rare. The case histories deal with H<sub>2</sub> receptor antagonists such as cimetidine, the psychotropic drugs trazodone and buspirone, and calcium channel antagonists. Again the approach is largely technical, and gives little idea of the context in which discoveries were made or the human factors which prompted particular activities to be undertaken or abandoned. Except in the well-written chapter on cimetidine, the style is heavy, and loaded with abstract nouns which blur the mind rather than make the subject clear.