

## Book Reviews

just as modern pharmaceutical firms now do to popularize their ethical preparations. Not all the patent medicine vendors were rogues and some put their profits to philanthropic use. Some undoubtedly had faith in their so-called cures and this was often supported by genuine testimonials. The discovery of the 'placebo-reactor' by modern pharmacologists gives us the explanation for most of these. The remainder were, no doubt, due to spontaneous remissions.

In the early days of patent medicines there was some excuse for their use as the preparations differed little from those of orthodox medicine but with advancing knowledge of physiology, pathology, medicine, and pharmacology the evils of self-medication with empirical nostrums became more apparent. Despite this some ingenious promoters began to use pseudo-scientific jargon to make their preparations more impressive. Thus Radam exploited Pasteur's discoveries in his *Universal Microbe Killer* and this was undoubtedly a commercial success although its only ingredients were 99.38 per cent of water with traces of red wine and hydrochloric and sulphuric acids. Unfortunately we are still not free from this type of pernicious exploitation as a glance at the patent medicine advertisements of many newspapers and magazines will show.

On the whole the medical and pharmaceutical professions emerge from the story with credit although there were occasional 'black sheep' in both folds. It was appropriate that the first person to expose the fraud of the *Microbe Killer*, R. G. Eccles, was both physician and pharmacist and the author states that physicians and pharmacists led the campaign to curb the evil and, when they were later joined by journalists and civil servants, it became possible for legislation to be enacted to control the sale and promotion of medicine to the public.

The book is confidently recommended as an interesting, amusing and instructive account of a social evil which, although now curtailed, is not yet fully repressed.

T. D. WHITTET

*A Bibliography of the Honourable Robert Boyle, Fellow of the Royal Society.* JOHN F. FULTON. Second edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961: pp. xxvi+218, port., front., 26 illus. £2 10s.

Robert Boyle was not a physician, but his fundamental chemical and physical discoveries have had a fruitful influence on physiology and medicine. He also dabbled in therapeutics, taking a hypochondriac's interest in his own poor health. As he was busy with intellectual pursuits for some forty years, there is much to interest and intrigue the medical historian in this complete record of his versatile and voluminous writings.

The late Professor John Fulton's *Bibliography* of Boyle was published in the *Papers of the Oxford Bibliographical Society* thirty years ago, followed by two supplements (1933 and 1947), and in consequence has not been readily accessible. Since it is the only thorough critique of Boyle's work, its appearance as an independent book is very welcome. Fulton himself completed this revision of the *Bibliography* before his untimely death. He seems to have found little to correct, but a good deal of new knowledge to incorporate and a few youthful judgments to redraft. He gives pride of place to one notable addition: Dr. Margaret Rowbottom's brilliant identification in 1950 of Boyle's anonymous first publication, *An Invitation to a free and generous Communication of Secrets and Receipts in Physick*.

Fulton wrote a critical preface for each section of his descriptions of Boyle's books and minor writings. For this second edition he revised less than a dozen of the fifty

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prefaces, and of these 'second thoughts' only that for *Certain Physiological Essays* is of medical interest. Four of Boyle's books, all written rather late in life, are wholly on medical topics, but Fulton's survey and analysis of the rest of his writings disclose the quantity of medical observation and opinion in the physical and chemical tracts. Elsewhere he drew attention in detail to the basic importance of Boyle's discoveries about compression and decompression towards the physiological conquest of flight.

The medical reader of this *Bibliography* will find such likely topics discussed as respiration, blood transfusion, 'vitiating sight', and 'salubrity of the air'. He ought also to study Boyle on 'The vulgarly receiv'd Notion of Nature', and 'The Usefulness of experimental Philosophy', should mark his thermometers, watch him observing air-bubbles in water, read his description of snow-blindness, consider his atomic explanation of odours, and taste his sea-water sweetened. On all such subjects Boyle's curiosity was insatiable, and his interpretations very seldom at fault.

W. R. LE FANU

*Orthopaedia*. NICHOLAS ANDRY. Facsimile Reproduction of the First Edition in English, London 1743. 2 vols. Philadelphia and Montreal: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1961.

*L'Orthopédie ou L'Art de Prévenir et de Corriger dans les Enfants les Difformités du Corps* was published in Paris in 1741 when its author was eighty-three years old. A further edition in French, often confused with the first, was published in Brussels in 1743, and in this year an English translation was published in London. The volumes under review are a facsimile of this translation, with a brief introduction.

The work gave Orthopaedics its name. Andry—mindful of Scévole de Sainte-Marthe's *Paedotrophia* of 1584 and Claude Quillet's *Callipaedia*, first published under a different name in 1656—compounded the Greek *Orthos* and *Paedion* 'to express in one Term the Design I propose, which is to teach the different Methods of preventing and correcting the Deformities of Children'.

Although in spite of his keen clinical perception Andry's pathology and pharmacy were those of the Middle Ages, he had an entirely fresh outlook upon the prevention and correction of deformities by principles that have since become fully established. In particular he understood active correction, which remains the keystone of physical treatment. He applied to this the remarkable observations of Leonardo da Vinci on equilibrium.

With the main work, was published Andry's thesis on *Whether moderate Exercise is not the best Preserver of Health*, advising such things as walking, riding, handball, football and tennis, and particularly dancing. He ascribed the benefits of taking the water chiefly to exercise. He abhorred corpulence, for which he advised not too much sleep, plenty of tea and coffee, abstention from chocolate and beer, moderation in food and drink, a great deal of walking and finally a most unappetizing concoction. He did not neglect the mind, and his psychological observations are sane, sound and sexless.

In the past, this classic of a prolific writer and contentious old man has been hard to come by. The publishers and prompters of the present facsimile have done a great service in making it available to all.

H. JACKSON BURROWS

*A History of Thoracic Surgery*. R. MEADE. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1961; pp. 933. £11.

Dr. Richard Meade is to be congratulated both on his imagination which stimulated him to write this book, and on the result. Thoracic Surgery, as a complete specialty, is