

### *Book Reviews*

provided sixteen or twenty major limb fractures, several of them compound, several cases of obstruction, and cases of joint disease and deformity, all in addition to the enormous general medical and surgical practice. There were some eighty surgery patients daily and as many home visits, and all were treated by Thomas himself. Sunday was the famous free clinic day when hundreds of patients from all over the countryside besieged Nelson Street in the morning, filling the house to overflowing and the surrounding streets with carriages and invalid chairs. On one occasion 146 patients were seen in the surgery and 16 visited in their homes. It was a great scene, with something of the atmosphere of a religious pilgrimage, and surgeons who were present never ceased talking of what they had witnessed, for Thomas was years ahead of his time and the results he could show in his treatment of fractures and tuberculous arthritis seemed little less than miraculous. He believed in always making patients pay something, however small, to preserve their self-respect and value their treatment; but his wife would sometimes send them home in a cab at his expense and maintain them afterwards from his own pocket.

This is a first-rate biography of a remarkable man who may well be called the founder of modern orthopaedic surgery. It is unusually well illustrated. It should be read by all the modern generation of orthopaedic surgeons and will greatly interest a far wider field.

WILLIAM BROCKBANK

*Sir John Bland-Sutton, 1855-1936.* W. R. BETT, M.R.C.S. (Eng.). With a foreword by Lord Webb-Johnson. Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone Ltd., 1956. Pp. 100+viii. 6 plates. 20s.

Sir John Bland-Sutton is one of the outstanding characters of medical history. Following the tradition of John Hunter, whose work he greatly admired, he built up his knowledge on his own personal observations. A man of prodigious industry, whose knowledge of comparative anatomy and pathology was unrivalled, he was, equally, a master surgeon, teacher, writer and traveller. A man of acute intelligence, he was a natural historian of disease.

Dr. Bett has done a very valuable service to the profession in producing this book outlining his life and the different aspects of his character. Middlesex men, in particular, will be grateful, as they owe so much to Bland-Sutton, who taught them with such care and whose generosity and foresight provided them with their Institute of Pathology, believing, as he did, that 'in surgery the high road lies through the pathological institute'.

Those who knew Sir John Bland-Sutton assure us that this is a true likeness of the man, and those who did not will feel their loss and be led, as

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the author of this biography obviously intended, to seek further and find out more of the man and his works.

PHILIP CLARK

*The Boke of Chyldren.* THOMAS PHAIRE. Edited by Prof. A. V. Neale, F.R.C.P., and H. R. E. Wallis, M.D. Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone, 1955. Pp. 76. 7s. 6d.

The purpose of Phaire's book on diseases of children was 'To doo theym good that haue moste nede, that is to saye, children', and to put forward remedies 'Whyche oughte not to be secrete for lucre of a fewe'.

The charm of his writing will be enjoyed by doctors and laymen alike, and the light he throws on social problems of the day will be valued by historians. The present-day children suffer from many of the disorders described by Phaire, and the advice on the management of measles, 'The best and moste sure helpe in this case, is not to meddle with anye kynde of medicines, but to let nature worke her operacio', might well be taken to heart in the age when patients demand antibiotics for trivialities. The choice of a wet-nurse must have presented a most difficult problem for the mother whose lactation failed, for she must be 'No dronkarde, vicious nor sluttysshe, for suche corrupteth the nature of the chyld', but she must be honest and chaste, 'Such as had a man childe last afore'. It is surprising that all mothers did not try to breast-feed their own babies since such catastrophes might result from a bad choice of wet-nurse.

George Frederick Still (1868–1941) published his famous *History of Paediatrics* in 1931, and in it he showed great interest in the first English book of Paediatrics which was written by Thomas Phaire (d. 1560), whose preface ends with the words 'Thus fare ye well gentyll readers.'

All interested in children, medicine and social history will be grateful to Professor Neale and Dr. Wallis for giving us Phaire's *Boke of Chyldren*.

URSULA JAMES

*English Historical Documents, 1833–1874.* Edited by G. M. YOUNG, M.A., D.LITT., and W. D. HANDCOCK, M.A., B.LITT. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1956. Pp. xxiii+1017. 95s.

This is vol. XII (1) in the series of *English Historical Documents* now in course of publication under the general editorship of Professor David Douglas. The purpose of the series is to make generally accessible a wide selection of the fundamental sources of English history. Nearly all the volumes published to date contain material of medical interest, but the present volume is of exceptional importance from this point of view because a great