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everyone and in consequence it can be recommended most strongly to all doctors be they service or civilian.

(4) When I was asked to review this volume (on Medical Supply) I could hardly imagine a more dreary subject to deal with. I could scarcely have been more wrong as the whole topic is dealt with in so interesting and so intelligent a manner that it becomes alive and absorbing and anything but dreary.

The whole field of Medical Supply is considered—procurement, distribution, transportation, storage and so on. As the story unfolds it is one of many problems energetically grappled with and successfully overcome.

It is a most honest account with mistakes as well as successes recorded. It came as a surprise to learn how very late in the day the Army Medical Department recognized the need for the soldier to be provided, where required, with spectacles from Service sources and not at his own expense.

The Medical Supply in each major theatre of military activity is dealt with in separate sections which adds much to the value of the volume as it is a matter of a few moments to look up and check any particular point one wishes to refer to.

Excellent illustrations help to make this volume alive and interesting. In particular the inclusion of the portraits of many of the officers mentioned is a happy and human touch which adds much to the appeal of this book.

This then is a record of success but a success only achieved by much planning and hard work. It is a record which contains many lessons which can be studied with profit.

On both of the above grounds this is a book which can be recommended to all who have administrative problems to tackle and not just to those who deal with medical supplies.

(5) The title of this volume, *Crisis Fleeting*, I found puzzling, until I opened it and discovered its source: 'Life is short, Art is long: Crisis fleeting, Experiment risky, Decision difficult'— Hippocratic Aphorism.

This particular volume benefits particularly from the editors' policy of supplying photographs and personal details of individuals mentioned in the text, as it is a collection of five personal accounts of military medical experiences on the Burma front. I have no intention of spoiling this volume for others by giving details of its contents, but will merely say that the personal accounts range from 'Chinese Liaison Detail', by Walter S. Jones, M.D., to 'With Wingate's Chindits: A Record of Heedless Valor', by Major-General W. J. Offir. I found it an intensely interesting and stimulating volume, and, in common with all the books in this series, the printing, format, and production are superlative.

A. MACLENNAN

Chinesische Heilkunst, by STEPHAN PÁLOS, Munich, Delp'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1966, pp. 206, illus.

The original text of this work appeared under the Hungarian title *A hagyományos kínai gyógyítás* in 1963 and was written in a lively and lucid style by Dr. Stephan Pálos. It has been carefully translated into German by Dr. Wilhelm Kronfuss who resolved the problem of Chinese transcription with the help of Dr. Rolf Trauzettel

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of the University of Munich. It is by far the most comprehensive book on Chinese traditional medicine for the ordinary reader that I have read in a Western language. Here within the compass of one volume, practically all the actual problems of Chinese medicine are exposed.

PART I: THE GROUNDWORK OF CHINESE MEDICINE

Chapter 1: The history of Chinese medicine is given in plain facts (pp. 17–27) and the writer explains painstakingly China's revival of pride in Chinese traditional medicine (pp. 27–32). This chapter has been divided into five epochs: (1) Beginning of the Empire; (2) the formation of ideas (theory); (3) the process of gaining knowledge (experience); (4) divergence between practice and theory; (5) the restoring of Chinese order combined with Western medicine (reconstruction and synthesis).

Chapter 2: (pp. 33–44) Dr. Pálos, as a historian makes no attempt to relate the events and experiences of the past to our own time. But for the reader it is hard to ignore the obvious similarities between '*Man and Nature*' (pp. 33–34). Man is a little world; something that is considered as representing (on a small scale) mankind or the universe, as well as the indubitable dissimilarities between *yin* and *yang* symbol (generally speaking *yin* stands for cold, darkness, femaleness etc. while *yang* denotes heat, light, maleness etc.). The state of perfect balance meant health and lack of balance was regarded as cause of disease. The theory of the five elements (i.e. fire, earth, metal, water and wood) is completed by a study on '*man and climate*' (pp. 41–44).

Chapter 3: (pp. 45–95) The imaginative physiological functions and anatomical structures are summarized. The teaching concerning the '*meridians*', as of all the basic theory of acupuncture, goes back once more to ancient China and Huang-ti. According to traditional medicine there are twelve *ching* or '*meridians*' or simply 'blood-vessels'. The method of appreciation of the specific qualities of each pulse position is very important in China.

PART II: TRADITIONAL TREATMENTS

Chapter 4: Explains the art of acupuncture (insertion of very fine needles into definite '*points*' (*hsieh*) of the skin) (pp. 97–115). Acupuncture is a developing technique presenting two different aspects to the Western physician: undoubted effectiveness in certain disorders, but a disputed place within the framework of present-day scientific medicine.

Chapter 5: (pp. 116–19). *Moxabustion*. The idea of '*pricking*' the skin with *moxa* was developed in a very particular way in China (pp. 116–17). *Moxas* (*chiu*) have a local or long-distance effect. The pain and the subsequent scarring have restricted their use in the West. It is currently used in Japan where bonzes treat large numbers of patients.

Chapter 6: (pp. 120–41). Breathing therapy. The development of the study of the pulse and a theory of circulation as well as the two principles of *yin* and *yang* and of the vital air or breath (*ch'i*) is related to the taoist concept in a vascular system (*ching*). It is necessary to stress that breathing exercises have never been the only technique used by taoist doctors. They trained to stop taking in or sending out air (*ch'i*). It has been combined with such measures as diet, sexual hygiene, physical culture and gymnastics. Dr. Pálos considers the result as a reflex influence or a reflex action.

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Chapter 7: (pp. 142–51). Massage. Massage (*ngan-mo* or *t'uei-na*) was featured in the Classics. Chou Yu-fan (c. 1575) rediscovered and explained it in order to lessen pain (treating the body by rubbing, pressing with or between the fingers).

Chapter 8: (pp. 152–57). Gymnastic or bodily exercises were recommended with breathing exercises. The Chinese gymnastic exercises (*T'ai-chi ch'üan*) were discussed with fifteen positions.

Chapter 9: (pp. 158–62) offers other treatments (cupping glass).

Chapter 10: (pp. 162–75) introduces a classification for Chinese drugs.

Chapter 11: (pp. 176–83) foresees great possibilities in Chinese traditional medicine.

Summing up I must say that this volume is most welcome not only for the armchair reader interested in Chinese medicine but also for research workers. A pictorial record is provided by 40 plates and a bibliography gives detailed references to almost every section. The book is written to encompass the interests of both historians and practitioners of Chinese medicine.

M. WONG

The Book of Spices, by FREDERIC ROSENGARTEN, JR., Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, Livingston Publishing Company, 1969, pp. 489, 330 illus. (73 in colour), \$20.00.

This is a most unusual work—indeed, it is probably unique—for it offers us a well-researched and documented history of spices, followed by a botanical description of the individual spice plants, with special reference to the parts of the plant used, and an account of the spice trade. As if this were not enough we are regaled with a great array of culinary recipes in which spices are best employed. Before discovering this factual information on the contents of the book, our enthusiasm is aroused by the splendour of the production. The wealth of illustration, and particularly the superb colour plates, testify to the close collaboration of author and publisher in ensuring that no expense would be spared in making this the definitive work on the subject.

The importance of spices in the history of medical treatment is well known. From the time of ancient Egypt, when the labourers building the temples and pyramids were given onions and garlic to preserve their health, to the present day, they have entered into a great number of medicinal preparations. The apothecary began as the medieval spicer and many of the old household accounts of the sovereign reveal the vast sums that were often expended on the supply of spices. The fortunes to be made in the spice trade provided one of the incentives for the great voyages to the Indies which resulted in the discovery of America, and in succeeding centuries botanists and agriculturists vied with each other in efforts, often unsuccessful, to naturalize some of these exotic plants in their own country. The industry is still important today, and the author of this fascinating book has spent many years on the growing and processing of spices, his professional expertise being apparent on every page.

The book has an appendix, a glossary, a bibliography and an index of subjects, and can be warmly recommended. Although expensive, by present-day standards it is a great bargain and is a book to own rather than to borrow.

F. N. L. POYNTER