

Book Reviews

the subjective perception of neurological deficit; and with the disorders of vision. Thus, one essay examines sociological aspects of aphasia, another the detection of minimal dysphasia, and others the evolution and possible future of language. His exploration of the relationship between the language of schizophrenics and that of aphasics is particularly fascinating. Other essays deal with misoplegia (the hatred of hemiplegia), corporeal awareness, central blindness, and photisms in the blind. Two rather playful contributions look at man's attitude towards his nose and at tattooing in both sexes.

Many of the above essays contain historical material, but they are interspersed with others which are overtly historical. In the latter category may be counted Critchley's witty history of neurology at King's College Hospital; his study of five illustrious neurologists (Heinrich Heine, Jules de Goncourt, Alphonse Daudet, Guy de Maupassant, and Dan Leno); and his reflections on phrenology and on the Broca-Dax controversy. The penetrating essay on Sir Gordon Holmes draws on Critchley's intimate knowledge of Holmes; taken in conjunction with his remarks on A. S. Kinnier Wilson in the King's College Hospital essay, it sketches a framework for understanding British neurology during the inter-war years. Critchley's principal excursion into art history is contained in his observations on self-portraiture, and his love of English and French literature is reflected on many pages of the volume. His Harveian Oration gives the present volume its title.

Dr. Critchley is always a pleasure to read, and the book is well produced and illustrated. It is a shame that the publishers saw fit to omit the footnotes; even the references to the original appearance of the essays fail to quote page numbers. This is particularly to be lamented since he quotes so liberally from a wealth of sources medical, historical, and literary. What, for instance, is the T. E. Dunville (1910) source where Dr. Critchley found the motto for his essay on tattooing: *Small adv. Personal. Tattooed lady – wishes to meet gentleman with similar views?*

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C. G. PHILLIPS (editor), *Selected papers of Gordon Holmes*, Oxford University Press, 1979, 4to, pp. xi, 488, illus., £20.00.

In 1956, to celebrate the eightieth birthday of the distinguished neurologist Sir Gordon Holmes, a selection of his papers was published with a short biographical appreciation by the man who had succeeded Holmes as the editor of *Brain*, F. M. R. Walshe. The current editor of *Brain*, C. G. Phillips, has overseen the present volume which bears the same title as the one of 1956 but is a new work of almost twice the size. It contains, in addition to the original selections dealing with the cerebellum and with vision and its cortical representation, further papers by Holmes on neuroanatomy, neuropathology, the adrenal cortex, and spinal injuries. In total, they comprise only a fraction (twenty-three) of the 174 items listed in the bibliography of Holmes's works appended to the volume, but the selection amply demonstrates the range of his contributions to our understanding of the functions and diseases of the nervous system. Holmes was an astute clinician and a gifted scientist: equally at home at the bedside and in the laboratory. Indeed, as many of these papers testify, his papers were rarely

Book Reviews

strictly clinical or strictly scientific. They were often a happy combination of the two as Holmes brought his knowledge of basic anatomy, microscopy, physiology, and pathology to bear on the problems presented by clinical neurology.

Like its predecessor, this volume reproduces Holmes's papers in facsimile, so the individual papers display a profusion of typefaces and layouts, although the original journal paginations have not been retained. The book is handsomely bound; photographs and drawings all are reproduced with little loss of detail. Readers without specialized knowledge of neurology would have benefited from a fuller assessment of Holmes's specific contribution to the neurosciences; but it is useful to have these papers collected into one stout volume.

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JOHN M. EYLER, *Victorian social medicine. The ideas and methods of William Farr*, Baltimore, Md., and London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979, 8vo, pp. x, 262, front, £11.75.

Until now William Farr's appearances in the history of medicine have been as the *deus ex machina* of the development of a modern state service. In this book John Eyler has brought him to the centre of the stage. Farr came from a poor Shropshire background, studied medicine in Paris, and attained but one qualification: the Licentiatehip of the Society of Apothecaries. Obviously not cut out to be a practitioner, Farr joined the office of the Registrar General unofficially in 1837 and soon became a permanent official, the Compiler of Abstracts. Though he seemingly coveted, and others thought he deserved, the highest position a serious-minded tabulator could wish for, he never attained it. The Registrar Generalship was as yet immune to the claims of that new Victorian class, the expert. He resigned in 1880, smarting from having been passed over once again. Farr was the driving force behind the compilation of the annual reports of the office and the censuses of 1851, 1861, and 1871. His studies on the patterns of illness, notably during cholera epidemics, established demography as a valuable tool for elucidating the modes of transmission of disease.

The biography of Farr, at least as Eyler presents it, is the history of the dedicated calculator of anything calculable: morbidity, mortality, insurance risks, taxes, the value of life itself. Eyler's achievement in this book is to lay out these projects in detail and show them to be not the product of an obsessional neurosis but an integral part of the rise of *statistics* in the sense of the science of *statism*. Farr is firmly and rightly placed among the new professional order with its alliances among the industrial bourgeoisie and utilitarians, and its commitment to the rationalization of government.

This book was intended, as the author admits, to be a complement to Royston Lambert's study of Sir John Simon and S. E. Finer's *Life and times of Sir Edwin Chadwick*. Yet it is not meant to be a "personal biography" but an analysis of Farr's ideas and methods in order to provide a window into Victorian social medicine (Preface). These are impressive goals to have aimed for, yet it is hard to see how they could both have been achieved however careful the execution. Finer's *Chadwick* and Lambert's *Simon* are truly memorable books, and important accounts of Victorian