

### Book Reviews

'Plasmochin', made as 'pamaquin'. These effective substitutes for quinine, especially mepacrine, controlled malaria in the Allied Forces.

In addition there were two outstanding developments in the prophylaxis and treatment of malaria. The first was the application of D.D.T. and of new insect repellents in dealing with the mosquito vectors of the disease. The second was the preparation of a series of biguanide compounds as anti-malarial agents of completely new type. One of these compounds, 'Paludrine' (or 'Proguanil'), proved most efficient, since it is a true causal prophylactic in malignant tertian malaria and a partial prophylactic in benign tertian. It was not available for field use until nearly the end of hostilities.

Certain of the previous volumes of this *History* have dealt with malaria and these achievements in prevention and treatment. This volume, written by a number of experts, collates the experience of malaria among the American troops in the various theatres of war in which they served. There is some overlapping in the narratives, but they record the anti-malarial war work from different points of view. A most valuable volume in this important series.

ARTHUR S. MAGNALTY

*The Development of Medical Societies and Medical Periodicals in India, 1780 to 1920*, by A. NEELAMEGHAN, Calcutta, Oxford Book Co., 1963, pp. 120, Rs. 12.00, \$4.00, 24s.

This booklet of 120 pages deals with the early history of medical journalism and medical societies in India, over a period which has not yet been fully chronicled.

Sir William Jones, a Judge of the High Court at Calcutta who did much for science and medicine in India, laid stress on the importance of investigating the Indian art of medicine.

In 1783, along with Sir Charles Wilkins, he founded the Asiatic Society, which gave a lead to so much pioneer scientific and medical work. At about the same time, William Carey emphasized the importance of botany and agriculture, and eventually founded the Agri-Horticultural Society of India in 1820. Important contributions to science and medicine were made by various medical officers of the East India Company, notably by Peter Wade, whose enthusiasm led to the founding of the Medical and Physical Society of Calcutta in 1823. The *Indian Medical Record*, first published in 1890, still survived in 1920. This periodical enjoys a reputation for longevity equalled only by the *Indian Medical Gazette*, founded in 1866.

There is an interesting chapter on 'Problems of Early Medical Journalism in India', and a classified list of all the societies and periodicals of the period 1780 to 1920. The book should form a valuable guide to anyone who desires to explore the vast medical background of Medicine in India, but the printing leaves much to be desired, and fades out entirely on the lower part of pages 34, 35, 46 and 47.

Nevertheless the author is to be congratulated on this useful little work which fills a gap in the story of Indian Medicine.

DOUGLAS GUTHRIE

*The Regency Crisis and the Whigs, 1788-9*, by JOHN W. DERRY, London, Cambridge University Press, 1963, pp. 244, 30s.

It is perhaps not generally appreciated how greatly psychiatric theories and therapeutics are determined by the impact of mental illness on society rather than by medical considerations. Even the major classification into psychosis and neurosis

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reflects as much degree of social incapacity and disturbance as extent of psychopathological derangement. And through the ages the aim of physical treatments or restraint has been to remove socially unacceptable states or behaviour.

Nothing shows this better than the breakdown of George III in 1788–9, the critical influence of which on the English political scene Dr. Derry examines in this book. He shows how the constitutional issues raised led to the break-up of the old Whig party although supported by the talent of Burke, Fox and Sheridan among others equally famous. That the Government emerged triumphant against the demand for a Regency was no less due to Pitt's political astuteness and the therapeutic confidence of the Reverend Dr. Francis Willis than to the remitting nature of the King's illness. Among the other royal physicians Dr. Richard Warren stands out for his adherence to the party of the Prince of Wales; the author suggests that his Whiggish views may have overshadowed his otherwise admirable prognostic acumen. But the diagnosis of manic-depressive insanity, arrived at only on the history of recovery and recurrence, and by ignoring many interesting and unexplained clinical features, will no longer do: the illness of America's last king deserves to be brought into line with modern psychiatric concepts.

RICHARD HUNTER

*Anthimi de Observatione Ciborum ad Theodoricum Regem Francorum Epistula*, edited and translated by Eduard Liechtenhan, Berlin, Academy of Sciences, 1963, pp. 86, D.M. 33 or 39.

Anthimus was a fifth to sixth-century Greek physician, and when he was ambassador to Theodoric, king of the Franks, he initiated a custom that was to become popular in the Renaissance. He wrote for him, in Latin, a book of advice concerning dietetics and cookery. Various foods, both animal and vegetable, are dealt with in turn and, together with methods of preparation, the therapeutic values are indicated. Cautions and simple common-sense advice are also included: 'But if oysters smell, and anyone eat of them, he has need of no other poison' (49); 'Kidneys of no animal should be eaten' (16); 'Apples, well ripened on the tree, and sweet, are good, but sour ones are not agreeable' (84). He summarizes the object of his work as follows: 'How all foods should be eaten that they may be well digested, and produce a healthy condition and not weakness of the stomach, nor distress in the human body.'

This edition of the text is based upon the manuscripts and there is a detailed analysis of it, together with a translation into German, and an index of grammar and words used. In addition to its medical content the text is of great linguistic importance for it was written in the period of transition from Latin to the Romance languages and is full of barbarisms and Greek words. It is said to be the last specimen of vulgar Latin.

This is a further contribution to the great German *Corpus Medicorum Latinorum* series and the precise philological scholarship of its predecessors is maintained. The only criticism concerns the Latin preface. Now that translations of the texts into the vernacular are appearing in the series, the value of this book, as well as its public, would have been increased if the Preface had received the same linguistic liberation.

EDWIN CLARKE

*Incurable Physician. An autobiography*, by WALTER C. ALVAREZ, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1963, pp. xiii, 274, \$4.95.

To millions of daily readers in America the syndicated newspaper column on medicine by W. C. Alvarez has been a 'must' every morning at breakfast. Long before it