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the king, the queen, and the royal children were often made; and some of the larger baronial establishments imitated the appointments made at court. The major part of the book treats of individual royal apothecaries in chronological order and at the end of every chapter are valuable references and copious notes.

The author has marshalled his many facts in an interesting way and the book is easy to read. It appears almost completely free from typographical errors and has a good index. Like other Wellcome publications the book is attractively produced at a very reasonable price. It can be recommended to all medical and pharmaceutical historians.

G. E. TREASE

Sword of Pestilence. The New Orleans Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1853, by JOHN DUFFY, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1966, pp. xiv, 191, illus., \$5.00.

During the last years of the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century many American cities, including Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, Baltimore, Galveston and New Orleans, were affected by severe epidemics of yellow fever. A considerable number of their contemporary medical accounts have survived, filling several chapters in the history of epidemic diseases and public health. Duffy has been able to recreate the events of that New Orleans summer of 1853, during which more than eleven thousand people died of yellow fever, by resorting to the exclusive use of contemporary sources. The reader, indeed, is offered not only the medical reports, but can also follow newspaper accounts of night entertainment, the quarrels of the city council on sanitation and the arguments between opposite medical opinions while the city discovered with horror the existence of the epidemic. The use of the quoted material faithfully reproduces the environment and the events, but at the same time makes the reader a prisoner of the slow pace of the crisis and the anguish of a city decimated by disease while a powerless medical profession compensated in charitable devotion what it lacked in scientific knowledge. It would not be entirely correct to assume from this book that yellow fever first appeared in New Orleans in 1793 or that the 1853 New Orleans epidemic was unique in mortality figures. The use of non-contemporary sources would have enlarged the perspective with references to the now classic work by Carter (1931) or Smith's Galveston epidemic of 1839 published by Leake (1951).

F. GUERRA

Theorie von der Generation in zwei Abhandlungen erklärt und bewiesen Theoria Generationis, by C. F. WOLFF, reprint with an introduction by R. Herrlinger, Hildesheim, G. Olms, 1966, pp. 148, illus., DM.66,80.

This reprint of Caspar Friedrich Wolff's Latin dissertation of 1759, second edition of 1774, and German work on the same subject is still eminently readable because of its witty and acute observations on scientific method. As Professor Herrlinger's excellent introduction remarks, Wolff gives in its pages a history of embryology seen through eighteenth-century eyes. The main subject is the controversy between representatives of evolution and those of epigenesis as an explanation of generation in

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plants and animals. 'Evolution' should not be understood in the modern sense because an assumption of evolution included the idea of pre-delineation, i.e. that all that was going to evolve had already an invisible existence in the beginning. Wolff comes down on the side of epigenesis, maintaining that new entities can be generated and, indeed, new forms come into being, without any previous existence. The introduction gives a short sketch of Wolff's life and the main problems discussed in these treatises. It shows Wolff's relations with his contemporaries whose views he fearlessly opposed, even those of the mighty Haller. Wolff opposed not only the 'theological' view still represented by Haller, e.g. that all future embryos were contained in Eve's ovaries, but also that of 'mechanical medicine' which regards the body as a machine. He tried to explain changes in organisms, including generation, by assuming a *vis essentialis*, a force performing what was needed. Professor Herrlinger's introduction continues by describing the influence of Wolff's theory on posterity and concludes that though much in it is 'wrong' when compared with the present state of modern embryology, its acquainting us with the spirit of the time and its problems, makes this book well worth printing.

MARIANNE WINDER

Geschichte der Fusspflege, by BRUNO VALENTIN, Stuttgart, Georg Thieme, 1966, pp. 103, illus., DM. 19.80.

Unlike dentistry, chiropody has been ignored by medical historians. This is surprising as both developed because of medical disinterest, and until the 1850s on the same lines. Chiropodists have done some work, and now this short history by an orthopaedist indicates chiropody's place in medical history.

There is a well documented account of skin and nail diseases, particularly of corns. The emergence of chiropodists in France, Germany, Britain, and America, is outlined. The important practitioners, Rousselot, Laforest, Lion, Guthery, Durlacher, and Runting are dealt with in detail. All wrote books and several contributed to medical literature—Laforest (1782) an account of hallux valgus, and Durlacher (1845) first described plantar digital neuritis. But others, as Low (who coined 'chiropodist' in 1785) and Zacharie (Lincoln's chiropodist), pirated books, made false claims, and generally misbehaved. The chapter on the chiropodist in art and literature is fascinating and well illustrated. There are 191 references but no index.

Based on printed sources (Seelig's scholarly work is largely unpublished) the book is not definitive. It sometimes fails to distinguish between legitimate, if medically unrecognized, practitioners and the charlatans. This is not always easy, Durlacher's book is in Garrison and Morton, Eisenberg's book (1845) is rubbish. Organization and education began over fifty years ago and are mentioned, but the continuing problems created by quacks (as in dentistry before 1921) are not. This book will interest dermatologists and orthopaedists, and chiropodists will be grateful to the author for introducing their history to his colleagues.

J. C. DAGNALL