

Book Reviews

The courses of many epidemic diseases reflect the social and economic changes in any nation. They are so often closely influenced by such problems as migrant labour, improving communications, movement of population, and rapid urbanisation. Ghana is no exception; the pattern of disease in that country is closely bound up with the history of its development—as this book well shows.

Dr. Scott's own unrivalled experience of rural health problems in Ghana lends particular weight to his interpretation of some of the findings and his deductions regarding future trends. It is to be hoped that the excellent pattern of this study will be copied by workers in other developing countries before so many of the early and manuscript records, of such historical and epidemiological value, cease to be available.

M. P. HUTCHINSON

Gideon Delaune and his Family Circle (The Gideon Delaune Lecture for 1964), by F. N. L. POYNTER, London, Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1965, pp.30, illus., 3s. 6d.

This is the seventh Gideon Delaune Lecture of the Society of Apothecaries (Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy). 'Who was Gideon Delaune?' is a question often asked. Dr. Poynter by careful research has now answered it.

Gideon Delaune (1565–1659) was the son of a Huguenot refugee, physician and preacher who settled in Blackfriars. Gideon became an apothecary and set up business on the Blackfriars Friary Estate. Two of his brothers were physicians. He married Judith Chamberlen, cousin of the Peter Chamberlen who invented the obstetric forceps. They had several children. Gideon prospered like his father, and by 1610 was apothecary to Anne of Denmark, wife of King James I. In conjunction with Francis Bacon and Sir Theodore de Mayerne he helped in the planning of the Society of Apothecaries which was founded by Royal Charter in 1617. Delaune was twice Master of the Society, namely in 1628–29 and 1637–38. He died a nonagenarian, a great age for those days. Dr. Poynter has further enriched the history of medicine by this Lecture.

ARTHUR S. MACNALTY

English Medical Humanists: Thomas Linacre and John Caius, by C. D. O'MALLEY, Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1965, pp. 54, \$2.

All readers will enjoy the Logan Clendening Lectures on Linacre and Caius delivered by Professor O'Malley at the University of Kansas. These two humanists after studying Latin and Greek in Italy received their medical education in the famous University of Padua, when the Renaissance was bringing into being an enlightened approach to medicine through the revival of Greek philosophy and wisdom. Each returned to England with a mind well endowed and applied his knowledge to improving the status and dignity of English medicine. Linacre persuaded Henry VIII to found the College of Physicians; and, at a later date, Caius extended the College's influence and authority. Both were presidents of the College. Linacre translated

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several of Galen's works into Latin from the original Greek, a gift to medical lore which earned him an encomium from Erasmus. Caius promoted the study of anatomy in Cambridge and London, wrote an admirable account of the English epidemic of sweating sickness of 1551, and other works including one of the natural history of the dog, written for the Swiss naturalist, Conrad Gesner.

Galen's name was venerated in England as well as on the Continent, for his teaching was imbedded in medieval texts. Chaucer's doctor of phisike, 'a veray parfite practisour,' well knew 'Gallien' with other classical authors, and both Linacre and Caius were staunch Galenists. Professor O'Malley observes that Linacre advocated Greek medicine because in his day it was genuinely superior. It was otherwise with Caius for in his time classical medicine, in some areas, notably at Padua, was being criticised and surpassed. Caius was unwilling to build upon and to progress beyond Galen as some continental physicians were doing. The book is well produced, well indexed and Professor O'Malley's erudite notes add to its interest.

ARTHUR S. MACNALT

Albrecht von Haller–Ignazio Somis. Briefwechsel 1754–1777, herausgegeben und erläutert von ERICH HINTZSCHE, Bern, Hans Huber Verlag, 1965, pp. 147. Haller (1708–77) is known to the general public in German speaking countries only through his epic poem *Die Alpen*, with its descriptions of scenery, an early precursor of German Romanticism. In his correspondence with Ignazio Somis (1718–93), a clinical physician from Turin, we meet Haller as the medical savant and naturalist. The reader becomes participant in the ups and downs, the doubts and triumphs accompanying his experiments on the sensitivity and 'irritability' of tissues, his successes and failures in inoculation, and countless other personal experiences. We hear his opinion on current medical questions and on the books of his contemporaries. Somis is instrumental in providing for him books and specimens of plants to help him with his botanical studies.

The letters have been collected from private and public sources in Italy. As Somis knew no German, Haller wrote in French while Somis replied in Italian. Somis' letters are going to be published separately. Here their main contents are given in German. The annotations are meticulous and there is a name index, but regrettably no subject index.

Accounts of personal life are restricted to those of medical interest, so that, for instance, Haller's last illness and its treatment by himself and others are described in great detail. Somis writes apprehensive warnings about Haller's constant use of opium but though it may have speeded his death we may be grateful as the findings were immortalised in his *Dissertation on the Effects of Opium in the Body* published by the editor of the present Correspondence. Current politics are mentioned in most letters, and it is comforting to read in a letter of 1761: 'Je crois . . . que plus elle [la guerre] durera, et plus long sera le repos qui la suivra, parceque les principales puissances seront épuisées. Tel fut le repos, en general, de l'Europe apres 1713, il dura vingt ans.'

MARIANNE WINDER