

## Book Reviews

of medical literature of earlier centuries is also notable and represents a good working library of historical texts for the many physicians in the Manchester area who are interested in the history of medicine. It was deposited in Manchester University as long ago as 1870 although it was only in 1930 that it was definitely merged with the university's medical library. The plan for a bibliographical catalogue of the whole collection on modern lines was for long a dream of the late George Wilson, the librarian who was associated with it for more than fifty years, and it is pleasing to see that this first instalment of its realization is dedicated to his memory.

The catalogue is in every way an excellent achievement and Mrs. Parkinson is to be congratulated for seeing it through to a successful conclusion. It contains the carefully prepared descriptions of nearly 3,000 books printed before 1701, with all the requisite cross-references and analytical entries for composite works. To the indexes of printers and places now usually found in such a work is added a brief subject index which will be a boon to researchers. If some of the important 'firsts' are not to be found here (e.g. Harvey, Vesalius), there is a Geminus which is much rarer than either and many other unusual items, such as the very rare *Defense of Tobacco* (1602) illustrated in the frontispiece. In fact, the inclusion in this catalogue of the medical books in the John Rylands Library in Manchester would have supplied all the leading landmarks of early medicine and it is good to see that the Rylands holdings are to be incorporated in a subsequent volume. Together with the library of the neighbouring Liverpool Medical Institution, of which a catalogue was published in 1968, and the historical texts in the Liverpool University Library, these collections offer a wealth of primary sources for all those in the north-west who are interested in the history of medicine. These are now increasing in number and it is hoped that before long additional incentive will be given to their efforts by the establishment of a department in one of the university medical schools.

The production of this catalogue is a credit to the University Press and its modest price puts it within the reach of most medical libraries.

*Letter from G. Bidloo to Antony van Leeuwenhoek* (facsimile of the first Dutch edition, Delft, 1698), ed. by J. JANSEN, Nieuwkoop, B. De Graaf, 1972, pp. 61 + 34 (facsimile), Dfl. 56.

While the popular expression "good things come in small packages" could scarcely be proven statistically, it comes forcibly to mind when we see this latest in the series, Dutch Classics in History of Science. The editors of this series have now made available an important document, valuable in the history of biology, of medicine, and of scientific methodology. It can also serve as a contribution to the history of human error, a branch of knowledge that should take a significant place alongside all the others.

Govert Bidloo (1649–1713), anatomist and surgeon, had made microscopic observations on certain animalcules and ova found in the bile passages, and now identified as *F. hepatica*. He was not the first to note the parasites, for his study contains abundant references to the work of predecessors, but he made surprisingly accurate descriptions and references (along with many errors). He disclosed his findings and conclusions in a letter to Leeuwenhoek.

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The text, translated into English, is accompanied by a facsimile of the original Dutch, with the original drawings and illustrations. Bidloo describes and illustrates the morphology, and thus permits us to compare his findings with the more precise knowledge of modern biology. Bidloo made some erroneous statements and drew some erroneous conclusions, but error, when studied in its context, is perhaps the best way of tracing the progress of science. His speculations regarding the development of the parasite and the relationship of these and other worms to disease are extremely interesting and throw much light on basic concepts of seventeenth-century medicine. At the same time the text obliquely illuminates the personality of the author and the customs of the times, in regard to communications.

The translation is fluent. The text is prefaced by a detailed and excellent introduction in English, by Dr. J. Jansen, that adds greatly to the value of the whole.

*The Trade in Lunacy: a Study of Private Madhouses in England in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, by W. L. PARRY-JONES, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, pp. xviii, 361, illus., £4.75.

Every now and then a book appears which is clearly destined to serve as a source of reference for many years to come. This is one such. The history of institutions for the insane in England prior to the great expansion of the mid-nineteenth century, has up to now been fragmentary—even such an establishment as Bethlem has never received the attention it has merited. The sources were not easily available to the amateur historians, mainly medical men, who had been the only interested enquirers. At Bethlem the archives were grossly inadequate, much seemed to have disappeared for ever, even the case books themselves only extended as far back as the late eighteenth century. To concentrate on the history of psychiatry itself was far more profitable, for at least the books were relatively easily available. All the time, however, there existed voluminous records of a very large number of madhouses, only requiring industry and application from which to build up a picture of many aspects of psychiatric practice in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By studying the manuscripts in 142 record repositories in England and Wales, Dr. Parry-Jones has been able to trace the development of the madhouse system in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and at the same time, to supply us with a valuable source book of references. Until the establishment of the County and Borough Mental Asylums following the Act of 1845, the care of both pauper and private lunatics was the responsibility of a large number of private institutions scattered throughout the country. Even by 1848 half of the total lunatics confined in England and Wales were in private licensed houses, criminal lunatics and idiots also being included. The profit motive, and the abuse which occurred in some houses made the public suspicious and critical of the manner in which the insane were treated, and often obscured the real very benefits of the system. Both medical and lay proprietors existed, although medical men came to outnumber their lay colleagues as the eighteenth century progressed. Some, such as Arnold, Cox and Perfect, made lasting contributions to psychiatry. A detailed study of two particular establishments at Hook Norton, and at Witney in Oxfordshire, reveals that during the mid-nineteenth century patients stayed relatively short periods in the institution, that between one-quarter to one-third of patients were discharged