

(individualizing) and the modern (ontological) concepts of disease, the part played by Harvey concerning tissue irritability, and the fundamental new ideas and leanings towards mysticism and *magia naturalis* in Helmont. We have also noted the absence of Paracelsus and the Victorines under *lumen naturale* (cols. 547–552), of *Picatrix* and the “prohibited arts”, the spectacular controversy on magnetic effects in medicine under ‘Magic’, and concepts of *Panaugia* (Patrizzi, Marcus Marci, Helmont) under ‘Light’.

The text is concentrated and meaty, but there are also not a few original views and illuminating perspectives. One example is Richard Toellner’s ‘Development of modern medicine in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’ (vol. V, p. 985). He recalls that following ancient Greek tradition medicine was assessed as an art in the earlier part of the period. From the early eighteenth century onwards the emphasis shifted to the applied-science side. The physician was no longer an “artist” (*technites*), but had become a “natural philosopher”. He was *philosophus* by virtue of his profession, but he was not a physician given to philosophical speculation or a philosopher who also practised medicine – both such existed in the seventeenth century, Helmont representing the former and Locke the latter type. The Renaissance began the turning-away from reliance on the authorities of old. By a strange paradox the new humanistic-philological restoration of Galen contributed to his destruction by demonstrating where his teaching was at variance with fact. It was still Galen, however, who provided the platform for criticism and innovation. This applied equally to Vesalius, the humanist, and Harvey, the Aristotelian. Naturally, there long persisted a deep gulf between theory and practice. Indeed, neither Vesalius nor Harvey could claim an immediate functional merit in contemporary practical medicine – the rapid movement of the blood in a circle contradicted all accepted clinical doctrine. It was in this way that the scientific shift dissolved the unity of medicine – physic in practice still followed the ancients, whilst theory observed the new scientific deal and a shadow of medical unity survived only in physico-theological discourse. Premature and exaggerated efforts of applying science to medical practice fed scepticism towards medical effectiveness and power, as seen in its evaluation by Kant. By and large, it thus took some three centuries until what had been severed in the Renaissance was reunited in the nineteenth century.

The work under notice is a Marathonian giant which no library, academic or private, can afford to overlook. Its heavy volumes are no bedside reading, but once opened are difficult to lay down again.

Walter Pagel

AXEL HINRICH MURKEN, *Joseph Beuys und die Medizin*, Münster, F. Coppenrath, 1978, 8vo, pp. 160, illus., \$20.00.

Joseph Beuys is considered to be one of Europe’s leading contemporary artists. He sees himself as a healer – hence the book’s references to his works as “medicaments” – who aims to cure a sick society by making people aware of their creativity. How he intends to do this when, as Murken proclaims, Beuys deliberately “etherializes” and “mystifies” (p. 145), is a moot point.

Book Reviews

Murken attempts to explain to a wider audience how Beuys's imagery is taken from scientific and, in particular, medical themes. As if to emphasize this, the felt book-cover is designed to look like a first aid kit. Murken, despite his claim that the artist's life needs consideration, does not explain the significance felt has for Beuys (during the war Beuys was saved from certain death from exposure by being wrapped in fat and felt).

Having discussed his influence on the art world, Murken goes on to introduce the basic themes in Beuys's work. He follows this with an account of Beuys's intellectual and artistic development which is largely repeated in a later chapter on the medical aspects of his work. The book ends with an edited interview with Beuys, as disjointed and confusing as Murken's text. Footnotes and illustration references in the German have at times been misplaced or omitted in the parallel English text, which includes many irritating typographical errors.

Murken tries to explain Beuys's work by using superficial references to such diverse fields as the writings of Paracelsus, to alchemy, to homoeopathy, and to anthroposophy. To add to the confusion, he delights in the use of metaphysical jargon and neologisms such as "symbolloaded", "selfexperienced", "human-ness", and occasionally refers to works not actually illustrated. The art objects described are laden with medical artefacts and symbols, and these Murken describes as "multi-level" and "unmistakable" in meaning. However, they are often obscure or paradoxically banal.

We are informed that Beuys aims to integrate the disciplines of art and science, although elsewhere scientific processes are seen as a deliberate contrast to the irrational. With such contradictions, one can question whether Murken's eulogy on Beuys's interpretation of medicine is anything but superficial.

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JOHN B. BLAKE (editor) *Centenary of Index Medicus, 1879–1979*, Bethesda, Md., National Institutes of Health, National Library of Medicine, 1980, pp. vii, 115, \$7.00 + \$1.75 postage.

The world of medical bibliography owes an immeasurable debt to those twin products of the Surgeon-General's Library and John Shaw Billings, the *Index-Catalogue* and *Index Medicus*, and it was a happy idea for the National Library of Medicine to celebrate the centenary of the *Index Medicus* by a symposium on medical bibliographical topics held in May 1979. Of the eight papers in this volume, half relate more or less directly to the object of the commemoration and half to more general topics in the relationship between medicine and bibliography. Most display a bibliographical knowledge by no means narrowly medical.

Frank B. Rogers's '*Index Medicus* in the twentieth century' is the paper most closely related to the title of the volume. He surveys the progress of the *Index Medicus* and related publications, partly from personal experience, with reflections on the past and future development of subject-indexing and a look forward to modern information retrieval systems.