

## Book Reviews

Boehme and Weigel under Germany, Comenius under Czecho-Slovakia. Part II, 1 is works about alchemy arranged by authors, part II, 2 by subjects. Certain advantages of the new grouping are undeniable and in any case the index of names provides essential help. No opportunity seems to have been taken in facilitating the finding of anonymous items as against previous bibliographies. For example there is the original reconstruction (1714) of the book *Aesch mezareph* (purifying fire) from the pieces scattered through the *Kabbala denudata* – the attempt was repeated by Scholem in 1927 independently. It is entered under the catchword “Short” (item 248, 1–3, on p. 63–64, ‘A Short enquiry concerning the Hermetic Art . . .’). Judiciously the author of the *Kabbala denudata*, Knorr of Rosenroth, is referred to in the index, although his name does not appear in the title of the English work of 1714. To trace the book in the catalogue is therefore left to the good luck or detective arts of the user. It is also in vain that he would look for it under preferable catchwords (such as *Kabbala*, *Aesch mezareph* or even the obviously spurious Philalethes named on the title) in the catalogue of the Wisconsin–Duveen collection by J. Neu (Nr. 3827 on p. 241, also under ‘Short . . .’), whilst it seems to be missing in Ferguson’s *Bibliotheca* altogether. Other examples are the catchwords “Concerning” (instead of “salt” or “aqua vitae”, Nr. 342 and 343) and “Corollary” (instead of “hyle”, Nr. 344). None of this, however, can diminish the standing of the work as a useful auxiliary to the classics of historical-chemical and alchemical bibliography.

Walter Pagel

A. E. DINGLE, *The campaign for prohibition in Victorian England*, London, Croom Helm, 1980, 8vo, pp. 233, £12.50.

One aspect of the “condition of England” question which so troubled Victorian social reformers was the problem of intemperance. In Victorian England, as in contemporary Russia, this was brought about by the combination of an impoverished social environment, the absence of leisure outlets, and cheap liquor. For Victorians the difficulty lay less in recognizing a problem than in diagnosing it, distinguishing between chronic alcoholism and excess “social drinking”. However, increasingly after 1850 opinion in élitist circles — among clergymen, doctors, magistrates, and employers — came to regard drink as a major source of social evil, and therefore inclined to favour legislation restricting its sale. A powerful and well-organized temperance movement pressed politicians for reform of liquor licensing. Yet virtually nothing was achieved by 1914. Dr. A. E. Dingle, in this compact and scholarly work, traces an aspect of this failure, by analysing the history of the United Kingdom Alliance’s agitation for prohibition in Britain, between the 1860s and 1895. The Alliance sought a “local veto” whereby ratepayers in localities might opt to go “dry”. Given the tide running in favour of democratic local government reform, this was a not unreasonable demand. The Alliance failed for two reasons. As prohibitionists they could brook no compromise with mere restrictionist reformers. For them Demon Drink was evil itself. Second, their political tactics were inept. Drawing upon a wide range of sources, Dr. Dingle traces very well the interaction of two uncomprehending worlds; that of a provincial nonconformist-orientated agitational pressure group, and

## Book Reviews

the exclusive world of Westminster, preoccupied with party battles and aware of legislative complexities. The Alliance was for too long mesmerized by the example of the Anti-Corn Law League which had apparently coerced Westminster by force of popular agitation. After 1870, the era of the "Caucus", politics worked differently, yet the Alliance's leaders never managed to work successfully within the confines of the Liberal Party. The history therefore reveals much about the political system of the time, so different from our own when Whitehall departments and interest groups dominate social legislation. Perhaps Dr. Dingle might have spread himself more in his conclusions in this direction. The liquor question reveals the relative autonomy of "High Politics" at Westminster at this period, with political leaders like Randolph Churchill and Sir William Harcourt able to take up social questions as weapons to embarrass both their colleagues and opponents.

J. R. Greenaway  
School of Economic and Social Studies  
University of East Anglia

JOHN FORRESTER, *Language and the origins of psychoanalysis*. London, Macmillan, 1980, 8vo, pp. xvi, 285, £15.00.

Words are the essential tool of mental treatment. A layman will no doubt find it hard to understand how pathological disorders of the body and the mind can be eliminated by "mere" words. He will feel that he is being asked to believe in magic. And he will not be so very far wrong, for the words which we use in our everyday speech are nothing other than watered-down magic. But we shall have to follow a roundabout path in order to explain how science sets about restoring to words part at least of their former magical power.

Dr. Forrester's book argues for the deep-seated importance of sentiments such as these – Freud wrote this in 1890 – to Freud's life-long work. Complementing rather than dismissing recent accounts which have argued that Freud was above all a biological scientist, Forrester argues that psychoanalysis was first and foremost a therapy, and that the key to the therapy was the talking-cure. Encouraged by his encounters with hysterics and early dramatic case histories (such as Breuer's treatment of Anna O), Freud early in his career formulated cardinal principles. Subjects were to talk – were in fact to say everything, whatever came into their heads. The very act of talking was in itself to be cathartic. The analyst was to listen to the *content* of the patient's story, picking up its secret meanings. This was an important step, as much handling of hysterical patients, in the Charcotian mould, had scrutinized speech characteristics of the disturbed (e.g. aphasia) but had scarcely sought the key to these disturbances in the interior of the speech itself. And above all, overcoming repressions by recollecting past traumas and articulating them in words, the subject was to break the spell of the neurosis which had him in thrall (in 1895 Freud and Breuer called this "getting rid of it by turning it into words").

Forrester insists that this pattern of verbalizing the repressed remained central throughout Freud's clinical practice. Silence was illness; words were symptoms for him. Forrester shows how Freud's interests clustered around those elements of consciousness where language would most likely be a clue to underlying disturbances – slips of the tongue, jokes, mistranslations from foreign languages, the significance of