

Book reviews

Friedrich Schiller Medicine, Psychology, Literature By Kenneth Dewhurst and Nigel Reeves. (Pp. 413+xii; illustrated; £12.00.) Sandford Publications: Oxford. 1978.

For the majority of cultivated people outside the German speaking countries Friedrich Schiller is probably best known as dramatist and poet. His play *Kabale und Liebe* was the source of the libretto of Verdi's *Luisa Miller*, an opera which was successfully revived in the last Covent Garden season after an interval of a hundred years. Schiller was also the source of the libretti of Verdi's *Don Carlos* and Rossini's *Wilhelm Tell*. His first play *Die Rauber*, produced at Mannheim in 1782, was enthusiastically received, and the success it brought enabled him to escape from his career as an army doctor. Schubert was particularly attracted by Schiller's verse and set no less than 42 of his poems to music, despite the difficulties posed by their philosophical content. Yet Schiller was always the philosopher, and his drama and verse communicated his ideas in forms which gained wide acceptance and understanding in his own lifetime.

Kenneth Dewhurst, the psychiatrist and medical historian, and Nigel Reeves, professor of German at the University of Surrey, have combined to write this excellent book. The first part is biographical, containing a vivid account of Schiller's education at the Military Academy, founded by the Duke of Württemberg, and his later medical training in the enlarged Academy at Stuttgart from 1775 to 1780. Further chapters deal with his brief career as a regimental doctor and subsequent pursuit of the creative life which was rightly his.

The next two chapters deal with contemporary medical theories and the emergence of the psychological sciences. In these pages the authors set the medical, scientific, and philosophical scene obtaining at the time of Schiller's education. They have been remarkably successful in producing a comprehensible, coherent account of the complex ideas and theories to which the young man was exposed.

Part 3 consists of the first English edition of Schiller's complete medical and psychological writings, including his dissertations on the philosophy of physiology and the connection between the animal and spiritual nature of man.

The last chapter traces the significance of Schiller's training as a doctor for the literary, philosophical, and aesthetic works on which his fame rests. The argument is too concentrated to lend itself to summary here. Indeed, this is true of the whole book. Dr Dewhurst and Professor Reeves' publication deserves the attention of all who are interested in the growth of ideas and, more especially, in the life and works of a man we are proud to acknowledge as a physician who forsook his early training for a wider stage, yet never forgot the lessons learned in Duke Karl Eugen's medical school at Stuttgart. This book is highly recommended.

R. A. HENSON

Advanced Medicine 14 Edited by D. J. Weatherall. (Pp. 385; illustrated; £8.50.) Pitman Medical: Tunbridge Wells. 1978.

This is a further volume based on a symposium at the Royal College of Physicians of London, in the same format as previous volumes. It is always amazing, and disconcerting, to find how much new material is presented every year, but the main value to the reader is the changing emphases of specialists concentrating on a limited field. This year the subject headings are gastroenterology, hypertension, clinical genetics, myocardial infarction, clinical haematology, infection, asthma, and growing areas in the basic medical sciences. The latter heading includes a valuable lecture by D. G. Grahame-Smith on clinical implications of recent advances in neuropharmacology. Other lectures of neurological interest are on the autonomic nervous system and hypertension (J. L. Reid), cerebral autoregulation and its disturbances in hypertension (J. V. Jones), slow viruses and the nervous system (W. B. Matthews), and, in the Lilly Lecture on infection, a section on experimental meningitis by R. G. Petersdorf. The important neurological complications are not mentioned in the

lecture on Gram-negative bacteraemia.

Production and editing are excellent. The transatlantic spelling is acceptable in a reprint of a lecture, but is it wise to permit American proprietary names for drugs?

J. A. SIMPSON

Cerebral Computed Tomography By Leon A. Weisberg, Charles Nice, and Myron Katz. (Pp. 337; illustrated; £15.75.) W. B. Saunders: Philadelphia, London, Toronto. 1978.

This book, written by a neurologist, neuroradiologist, and a mathematician is directed towards neurologists, neurosurgeons, and other physicians who will be using computed tomography in the investigation of their patients, and the book is organised from this point of view.

A relatively short first part deals with the theory, technical aspects, and normal appearances of brain sections. In general this section is good but, in my opinion the theoretical concepts are not presented in terms which would be readily understood by clinicians and is sparsely illustrated; for example, none of the many artefacts discussed are reproduced. This chapter is more suited to radiologists with practical experience of the features being described.

The main part of the book deals with elucidation of specific neurological symptoms and signs. Such a division has obvious difficulties and some conditions should, logically, be included in more than one chapter. However, there is remarkably little overlap, and each chapter deals in depth with a particular clinico-radiological problem. Computed tomography is never considered in isolation and most chapters are, in fact, a very good review of the diagnostic approach to a specific condition, emphasising the advantages and limitations of computed tomography. The illustrations are of good quality and well selected though, inevitably, there are some exceptions, and this especially applies to the orbits where recent advances in imaging techniques allow considerably more definition and