

of cocktails, the need for relaxation and, if possible, work with regular hours. The value of alkalis is weighed in the balance and found wanting. For the benefit of the patient's wife there is a useful chapter at the end of the book on "Ulcer Cookery".

Any doctor can confidently recommend a study of this book to supplement the advice he gives to his particular patient. The only criticism the reviewer would make of this book is the price. There will be many patients who will think twice about spending 17/6d. on a book. A cheaper, paper-backed, edition would surely reach a larger public.

A History of the Royal College of Physicians of London. SIR GEORGE CLARK, F.B.A. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1964. Volume One. Pp. xxiii + 425. Price 55s.

Since 1687 the long history of the Royal College of Physicians of London has never been attempted in full; The Roll of the College by William Monk is certainly a biographical history, but as such, valuable as it is, lacks cohesion. The Royal College has not always been wise in its actions, but in inviting an historian not a member of its College to write its history it has shown true wisdom. Sir George Clark has been able to draw on his profound knowledge of both social and political history in his approach to his task.

The Royal College of Physicians of London was founded in 1518 by a charter of Henry VIII on the initiative of Thomas Linacre six years after the Act of 1511 which had entrusted the licensing of physicians and surgeons throughout the country to the bishops of the dioceses acting with assessors. The petitioners asked for the creation of a perpetual college of learned and weighty men who should practise medicine in the City of London and for seven miles around it. This was granted and the members of the College were charged to deter the ignorance and presumption of malicious persons—the quacks and mountebanks—by their own example, and to punish them by using the power of the act of 1511 and statutes to be enacted by the College itself. They might sue and be sued, hold meetings and make statutes and ordinances for the proper government, supervision and correction of the College and all men of the faculty in London and within seven miles. No one was to practise this faculty within these limits unless admitted by the president and College by letters sealed with the common seal on pain of paying five pounds for every unlicensed practice, half to go to the king and half to the president of the College. Every year they were to elect four of their number who were to exercise their power over the physicians of London and all those from outside who practised medicine within it and to supervise and examine the physicians' prescriptions for internal and external medicine. The punishments were to be by fines, amercements, imprisonment or other reasonable and fitting ways. Sir George shows that this new College was something new in the establishment, differing in many respects from the city corporations and guilds. It more closely resembled but was in few points identical with the College of Heralds and Doctors' Commons. Its power over those who practised medicine was immense and in the early days it never hesitated to fine or cast into prison those who practised without its sanction. Its control over its own fellows, it

must be confessed, was equally stringent. It was, however, quite impossible that so small a body of men could hold a monopoly of medical practice in a large metropolis, and its quarrels with the apothecaries and to a lesser extent the surgeons, were inevitable. Credit must be given to these pioneers for the example they set by their standards of medical behaviour and ethics; standards though buffeted by succeeding generations have been maintained to the credit of the profession. To begin with, the College was not concerned with education: for its first 200 years it was never concerned with undergraduate education. This was left to the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge and the universities of the Continent, particularly Padua, Montpellier, and later, Leyden. In Tudor times the examination of the candidates for fellowship was strict and rigorous, consisting of examination before the assembled College in the texts of Galen: four times was the candidate examined at three-monthly intervals and finally was his knowledge of practical procedures in use and practise minutely investigated. Before a candidate could become a fellow, he must have been four years in practice or held a degree of one of the universities.

Much of the work of the College in these early days was in the running down of impostors, and of apothecaries who either dispensed poor drugs or meddled in the doctor's business. To set standards the London *Pharmacopoeia* was published in 1618. Imperfect and incomplete as it was, this was the first real contribution to medicine made by the College. To their own fraternity, their formal lectures and anatomy demonstrations must have been valuable, but the seeking of scientific knowledge was not yet for them.

This history complements in a most satisfying way the first volume of the *History of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries* published under the final editorship of Dr Underwood a year ago. It is a delight to be able to compare the actions and feelings of the members of both camps. One interesting feature arises in the mind of your reviewer. In all the actions of the physicians there runs a small strand of dignity sometimes lacking in the councils of the Worshipful Society. This is brought out well in the two volumes and is fascinating though not entirely unexpected.

St Mary's Hospital, Manchester. 1790-1963. J. H. YOUNG, M.D., D.OBST.R.C.O.G. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. Pp. viii + 124. Price 30s.

This is a straightforward account of the St Mary's Hospitals, Manchester from their first abortive start in 1790 to the present day. The story is a chequered one but all the more interesting for that. Dr Young has already written a history of *Caesarean Section* and has brought his considerable skill to this task with great success. This history is readable and well illustrated. Manchester men will welcome it as an addition to the already considerable collection of histories of their school and Manchester medicine in general.

A Time to Heal. The Life of Ian Aird, the Surgeon. HUGH MCLEAVE. London. Heinemann. 1964. Pp. ix + 278. Price 30s.

To read a biography of a person whom one has known in work and in play cannot but raise doubts and criticisms in the mind of the reader.