

time, safely situating it in a distant past before the era of new psychiatry had commenced. Belinda Robson examines the Cunningham Dax collection of psychiatric art, which contains more than 9000 paintings made by patients in mental hospitals over a period of forty years. The psychiatrist Dax introduced art therapy when he was working in England in the 1950s and brought the practice to Australia. Robson argues that Dax interprets these art works as reflections of specific disease states in patients. How the patients who were producing these art works themselves viewed what they were doing has been marginalised in this interpretation.

The essays in *'Madness' in Australia: Histories, Heritage and the Asylum* reflect the state of current scholarship in the history of asylum, psychiatry and 'madness' in Australia. The essays are well argued, well researched and contribute to the growing body on the history of the asylum worldwide. It is to the credit of the editors that they have brought together these various volumes written from different theoretical perspectives and disciplinary backgrounds.

Hans Pols  
University of Sydney

*For Fear of Pain: British Surgery, 1790–1850.* By Peter Stanley (Editions Rodopi, Amsterdam/New York, 2003, ISBN 90-420-1024-x [Paper] ISBN 90-420-1034-7 [Bound], illus.) 362 pp.; (Clio Medica 70: The Wellcome Series in the History of Medicine).

*FOR FEAR OF PAIN* IS A VERY PERSONAL BOOK IN WHICH PETER STANLEY explores the pain inflicted by surgeons, and suffered by patients, in the last half century before the widespread adoption of anaesthesia. Stanley explains in his epilogue that as a primary school child he read about the amputation of Nelson's arm in 1797. The image of Nelson on board a ship at sea having his arm removed without anaesthetic haunted Stanley for nearly thirty years. He had nightmares about hospital conditions during the Napoleonic Wars and developed an appalled fascination for pre-anaesthetic surgery. This book, he acknowledges, began as an attempt to exorcise this preoccupation.

Stanley has published widely and specialises in British and Australian military history, but although *For Fear of Pain* includes a chapter on surgery during the Napoleonic Wars, most of the book is devoted to civilian surgery. Drawing extensively on what surgeons themselves wrote about their craft, Stanley explores how surgeons dealt with the impact of the pain they inflicted. Few patient views of surgery have

survived, but Stanley was able to put together some glimpses of the patient's perspective.

Throughout, Stanley argues against a set of simplistic assumptions about pre-anaesthetic surgery. It was not always nasty, brutish and fast, and neither was it confined to a small range of minor operations. Military and naval surgeons faced their own particular constraints, but Stanley provides many examples of surgeons in civilian practice who took time and care over their work. They took time to ligate blood vessels and they took care in dissecting tissue. Further, there are many eye-witness accounts, especially where surgery took place in the public operating theatres of teaching hospitals, of patients who lay still and suffered the pain with a fortitude much admired by the audience. Surgeons were not, therefore, always operating on patients who were struggling against restraint.

Stanley argues that in the early nineteenth century surgeons refined old operations and invented new ones, and that 'surgical progress' proceeded apace in the last decades of painful surgery. Surgeons performed many amputations of arms and legs, devising methods to cover the stumps with flaps of skin, but they also excised joints in an attempt to preserve limbs. They removed a wide range of tumours (including performing mastectomies), rebuilt noses using flaps of skin from the forehead, repaired anal fistulae, and removed bladder stones. The idea of surgery without anaesthetic is something that most of us shy away from and do not wish to examine too closely. In the post-anaesthetic era it has been assumed that surgery without pain relief had to be fast, because we ourselves cannot imagine enduring the pain for long. The assumptions that care and precision were sacrificed to speed have followed. But Stanley shows that while speed was prized, and some surgeons timed their amputations and boasted of being faster than their colleagues, by no means was all surgery a race against the clock.

Stanley makes a strong case that surgeons were not necessarily callous in their infliction of pain. Some may have exhibited 'coarseness, want of feeling and stupidity', and many were bad tempered while operating. But in one of the most interesting sections of the book Stanley argues that arrogant behaviour in the operating theatre was often a marker of stress. John Abernethy was surgeon at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and teacher of surgery to a whole generation of medical students. The image of Abernethy vomiting after operations powerfully subverts the stereotype of the arrogant surgeon.

This book is not always easy to read and suffers at times from a paucity of punctuation. Stanley also chooses not to engage in debate with other historians of nineteenth-century medicine. References in the text are virtually all to his nineteenth-century sources, and although

he lists in his bibliography a fair proportion of the more important monographs among the secondary sources, he cites few recent articles or book chapters. Because of this, the book appears to sit in something of an intellectual void, which is a shame, because Stanley has made an important contribution to our understanding of early nineteenth-century surgical practice. Overall, this is a very valuable and interesting book.

Sally Wilde  
Brisbane

*Patrick Manson*. By Philip Manson-Bahr (Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, London, 1962, illus., hb, current (used) price US\$27.92) 192 pp.

THE FIRST EDITION OF *PATRICK MANSON*, WHICH HAS A SUB-TITLE CUM dedication, 'The Father of Tropical Medicine', is part of series entitled *British Men of Science*, the purpose of which, under the direction of general editor Sir Gavin de Beer, FRS, FSA, was to focus on the 'scientific achievement' of the biographies. It has a preface, table of contents, list of plates, list of figures, acknowledgments, nineteen chapters, twenty-two plates, nine figures, and an index, but no foreword, tables, bibliography, or references.

*Patrick Manson* is presented as a 14.0 x 20.6 x 1.9cm hardcover cloth bound book. The dust jacket, printed in two colours on white gloss paper, adds appropriate visual and historical impact. The jacket design includes an impression of Patrick Manson taken from a bronze plaque presented to Manson, together with a gold medal at the International Congress of Medicine in London, 1913 (see Plate 22). The hard cover is functional and adds longevity to the text. The author, Sir Philip Manson-Bahr, CMG DSO MD FRCP (Lond), claims that he has written this scientific biography from the perspective of having worked with Patrick Manson for thirteen years. He is also Manson's son-in-law, which must afford him a unique insight into 'The Father of Tropical Medicine'. Certainly, the book contains copious references and quotes from documents and letters to and about Manson.

The target audience appears to be primarily physicians and other health professionals with an interest in the history and development of tropical medicine. It would also be useful to those who are studying the history of tropical medicine, especially the early development of the discipline and one of its greatest advocates, Patrick Manson. For physicians and health professionals who have undertaken under-