

## REVIEWS

## A PRELUDE TO MEDICAL HISTORY

by Felix Marti-Ibanez

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Lecturing is fast becoming a lost art nowadays especially in professional subjects where the choice of a teacher is now more dependent on his ability in academic work than his lucidity in professing his art. Granted that academic attainment is a quality sine qua non of a teacher, but a professor who professes in an incomprehensible manner may raise doubts on his possible contribution to medical education. Dr. Marti-Ibanez treats the lecture as a thing of moment, and history as via media to the finite art of medicine. With such conviction, he cannot fail to produce a readable book which is at once both informative and pleasurable.

The breadth of vision and the depth of knowledge shown in his book must have been unfailing sources of inspiration to his students. With such a helter-skelter for research, knowledge, statistics, latest advances and all the popular gimmicks in the medical profession, this book is indeed like a whiff of fresh air in a stifling doom. Dr. Marti-Ibanez is to be congratulated on his effort which should find its way to those doctors who are students of medicine and who believe that medicine is an art rather than a science.

Gwee Ah Leng

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## SYMPOSIUM ON ANTICOAGULANT THERAPY

Report of the Proceedings of a symposium held at the Royal Society of Medicine on 18th and 19th November, 1960. Edited by Sir G. W. Pickering, M.A., D.Sc., M.D., F.R.C.P. (284 pages. 21s.) London: Harvey & Blythe, Ltd. 1961.

This inexpensive book consists of papers contributed by various workers on a wide range of anticoagulant theory and practice. The scope of anticoagulants has become so great and its advances so numerous that it could be difficult for a comprehensive and up-to-date treatise to be compiled by a single person. Hence the usefulness of this published collection of opinions and comments by various interested workers and clinicians, recording the views on many subjects of current controversy, e.g. the choice of tests for controlling anticoagulant therapy. The book also contains a fair amount of information not readily obtainable elsewhere and gives an excellent summary of the present position concerning the theory and use of anticoagulants — or as what Sir George Pickering says in the Foreword "it summarises much of what is known concerning the three major questions relevant to this therapy .

- (1) In what varieties of disease does effective oral anticoagulant therapy improve expecta-

tion of life and lessen the incidence of complications?

- (2) What is the best method of controlling therapy and at what level of dosage should the therapy be used to give the maximum benefit consistent with safety?
- (3) If oral anticoagulant therapy works, by virtue of what specific biochemical change is this effected?"

The book is divided into sections consisting of papers on related subjects, e.g. Acute Coronary Insufficiency-Long-term Therapy in Coronary Thrombosis — An Evaluation of the Effect of Long-term Anticoagulant Therapy on the Prognosis of Coronary Artery Disease, followed by a discussion by the participants in the Symposium. A list of reference is given at the end of each paper.

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