

Book Reviews

changing views of human nature, and is written by the editor, who is Professor of English in the University of California at Los Angeles.

Clearly, both sides of the coin are necessary for a balanced view of the Renaissance and Dr. Kinsman has done well to illuminate the reverse face.

SIR CYRIL BURT, *ESP and psychology*, edited by Anita Gregory, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1975, 8vo, pp. vii, 179, £4.50.

Although Cyril Burt (1883–1971) is best known for his work on the application of psychology to education, to the development of children and to the assessment of mental qualities, he also contributed to ESP, as an obituarist had to point out (*The Times*, 15 October 1971). This book, stimulated by the same obituarist, contains eight carefully selected essays based on articles, lectures or reviews, all published except the last two. They range from 1935 to 1967, but most were written in the 1960s.

Burt believed that consciousness is a central feature of psychology, and that the application of mathematics to psychology is likewise essential. These two extremes arose out of his work in educational and developmental psychology, which closely resemble para-psychology because in each an amalgam of personal experience and impeccable experimental and statistical data is essential. Burt's attraction to ESP is therefore understandable, and in the brief but informative introduction the editor explains this and other background features of his interest in, and approach to, what in his day was an unorthodoxy. However, his statement that ESP is a natural phenomenon that should be part of psychology, although held as heretical when made, may now, in view of increasing data, be more acceptable.

The editor has chosen only papers intended for the general reader, and together they provide us with an excellent survey of Burt's work on ESP. Whether right or wrong, as may be judged in the future, there is no doubt that ESP forms an important part of the history of psychology in general.

WHITFIELD J. BELL, jr., *The colonial physician and other essays*, New York, Science History Publications, 1975, 8vo, pp. [2 11], 229, illus., paperback, [no price stated].

Since 1940 Whitfield Bell, a historian by training, has been publishing papers on the history of North American medicine. He now collects together sixteen of them, and as the title of the book, which is also the title of the first paper, suggests, they deal predominantly with the eighteenth century. All but three ('A portrait of the Colonial physician', 'Philadelphia medical students in Europe, 1750–1800', 'Body-snatching in Philadelphia') are centred on the activities of individuals, and amongst others there are John Redman, Benjamin Franklin, John Morgan and William Shippen. Each essay is a scholarly contribution with full documentation and written in a pleasing style. As a collection they present an excellent survey of eighteenth-century American medicine, together with vivid insights into the activities of particular physicians. Moreover, as most of this medicine stemmed from European practice, Dr. Bell's book should be studied carefully by all those engaged in any aspect of medicine in the eighteenth century, as well as students of American medicine. It can be warmly recommended, and it is to be hoped that Dr. Bell, the accepted authority on Colonial American medicine and science, will now provide an integrated history of this formative period.