

History of Medicine

D Samarender Reddy MBBS, MA (Economics)
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History of medicine written by Dr D Samarender Reddy is an out of the ordinary paperback by a doctor who is a MA in Economics from University of Florida. The most appealing part of the book is that it is a tribute to the great men and women who laid the foundation of modern medicine as practiced today. The painstaking research done by Reddy is evident from the first chapter on Prehistoric Medicine wherein he deals with disease transmission in the Neolithic period, witchcraft and the practice of trephination on skulls in that era. The earliest code of Medical ethics, Code of Hammurabi was a dreadful code dealing with capital punishment for failures in treatment.

Intricate details of the Indian, Chinese and Greek system of medicine makes interesting reading. Galen's anatomical descriptions and Williams Harvey's theories of Circulation are an eye opener. Louis Pasteur, Laennec, Virchow and Jenner who have shaped our understanding of modern medicine figure prominently in this well written book.

The book is written in a lucid manner with engaging readability. Its flirtation with modern medicine in the last chapter on Future trends is stimulating. It would be of interest to the medical community at large and a must for all medical libraries. Paucity of bibliography and non-inclusion of antibiotics, chemotherapy, modern imaging like PET and eradication of diseases like smallpox leave the book wanting.

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