

An iconography of Andreas Vesalius.

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AN ICONOGRAPHY OF ANDREAS VESALIUS.

It will be remembered that in 1914 the University of Brussels initiated a movement to celebrate the quater-centenary of the birth of Andreas Vesalius, and a committee was formed under the presidency of Professor Dr. PAUL HEGER of the University of Brussels to carry out the plan.

The permanent form which this celebration was designed to take was the publication of a Liber Memorialis in honour of the "father of modern anatomy". This memorial work was intended to take the shape of a collection of essays which were to be contributed by a group of selected scholars, the best authorities on their several subjects.

The late Sir WILLIAM OSLER was greatly interested in this memorial, and took an active part towards its preparation. Mr. M. H. SPIELMANN who is well-known as an authority and writer on art, was invited to undertake to form an Iconography of Vesalius, which was to be complete in every respect, and form a lasting memorial to the great anatomist. This part of the work was duly carried out.

Then came the Great War, which put an end to the celebration in Brussels, and also to the arrangements for carrying out the celebration of the memorial, and for some years the matter has lain dormant.

A general opinion was expressed by lovers of Vesalius in Belgium, in England and in America that this Iconography should see the light, as by itself it might be regarded — even at this date — as a reminder of the anniversary which the world of medical science was preparing in 1914 to celebrate. It has therefore now been arranged that it should be published in its complete form from the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum

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as the third volume of the Research Studies in Medical History issued by this institution.

His Majesty, the King of the Belgians, has graciously accepted the dedication and forewords will be contributed by Professor PAUL HEGER, President of the University of Brussels, Sir Arthur KEITH F. R. S., Dr. HARVEY CUSHING, C. B., and Dr. TRICOT-ROYER, President of the International Society of the History of Medicine.

The book will be something more than a treatise on the portraiture pure and simple, for cognate and contingent matters have compelled discussion, and it will appeal not only to those interested in the history of medicine and anatomy in particular, but also to those concerned in art. Historical, bibliographical, literary, biographical and critical points are treated with fullness in order that the ground may be adequately covered, from the "De Humani Corporis Fabricâ", and the "Epitome" of 1543 onwards.

Mr. SPIELMANN sets out to separate the true from the false. The book comprises the names not only of a number of the greatest among the Old Masters, but of portrait engravers also of high repute from the 16th century onwards, as well as of sculptors, and of medallists of the 19th and 20th centuries. Subject pictures, sculpture, drawings, and medals thus supplement the larger sections of painted portraits (a number of which have never been photographed before, still less published) and engravings. All are dealt with here; arguments brought forward in former controversies are considered and, when necessary refuted; claims to authenticity and allegations of imposture are examined.

The book will be illustrated by over 100 reproductions from paintings, pictures, engravings, sculptures and medals, together with a full bibliography of the subject.

An additional attraction to the book will be the inclusion of a print on antique paper taken from the original wood block by CALCAR, made for the frontispiece of the 2nd edition of "De Humani Corporis Fabricâ" published in Basle in 1555. Only a limited number of pulls will be taken from this unique relic and a copy will be given to those who subscribe to the book before publication.

The work will be published by Messrs. JOHN BALE, SONS & DANIELSSON of London at £ 1.10.0 = 18 guilders per copy, and is expected to be published about next April. C. J. S. T.