

home, on his field, in the midst of his family, his oxen and his sheep, his temple, his priests, his feasts and fasts and festivals as a man with virtues to praise and weaknesses to pity, the man as apart from the "guinea stamp" and who is "the gow'd for a' that". The group is very comprehensive; there are Afridis, Pathans and Baluchis, adepts with the gun as with the plough; there are other warrior cultivators, Panjabis, Jats, Scindhis, Moslems from the U.P.; there are the men from Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa; cotton cultivators from the typical cotton tracts of the Berars and Maharashtra; Madrasis and Burmans; there are men wedded to the land and there are aboriginal tribes with their shifting cultivation; there are the prosperous looking men in very consequential attire and there are men exhibiting their manly frames as God made them; bright open faces of the boy cultivators alongside the furrowed crows'-footed faces of these old "horny-handed sons of toil", showing what this ancient craft can do to the "human face divine". What kind

of house does he live in, what does he eat, how much or how often, what are his clothes, his furniture, his utensils, what is his daily routine, what are his amusements, his pleasures, his domestic cares, the codes of his caste or his religion, the customs at marriages, feasts or funerals—to these and similar questions the reader will find an interesting variety of answers. Not the least entertaining part of the answers is the lore of proverbs, which so pithily sum up the hoary wisdom of the cultivator, so helpful, so amusing and so illuminating. The womenfolk come in for a goodly share of the descriptions; they are worthy helpmates as much in the field as in the home, who are often shrewder and better able to drive a bargain than the brawny male. The book is illustrated with a fine set of photographs of the different types which lend very great charm to the book. As an entertaining little book on the ways of the Indian ryot and, we may add, of his wife, the volume is a little gem.

A. K. Y.

CENTENARIES

Paracelsus (1490-1541)

PARACELSUS, a German physician, was born in Einsiedeln about 1490. His surname was Hohenheim; but he gave it up for the one of his own making. At a comparatively early age he questioned what was taught to him in Medicine by his father and struck out new ways himself. He did similarly when he entered the university of Basel. He left school chemistry and started for the mines in Tirol and preferred to learn by going to nature herself. He then went wandering over a great part of Europe. The book of nature, he affirmed, is that which the physician must read. Though others called him an ignorant vagabond, he himself valued his knowledge differently and wrote "Whence have I all my secrets, out of what writers and authors? Ask rather how the beasts have learned their arts. If nature can instruct irrational animals, can it not much more men?" He had thus acquired great stores of facts which gave him an unquestionable superiority to his contemporaries. So in 1526, on his return to Basel, he was appointed town physician and a lecturer in the University.

He broke away from tradition. His lectures were in German and not in Latin. They were expositions of his own experience and of his own methods of curing and were not commentaries on the text of Galen. For a couple of years this new venture brought him

reputation and practice. But in due course jealousy and enmity gathered sufficient momentum to drive him away and he ended his life in a miserable way.

For centuries he was evaluated in every possible way. But now it is acknowledged that his vigorous attacks on the degenerate Galenism of his day helped the foundation of modern scientific medicine. His *Chirurgia magna* went through nineteen editions and translations into several languages. He is credited with the discovery of the inherited characters of syphilis. He protested against the excessive blood-letting in vogue at that time. It is claimed that he was one of the first to bid modern Europe think for a moment upon the idea that diseases are inflicted neither by saints nor demons. Thus and in several other ways Paracelsus helped the downfall of the scholastic medical science of his time.

Paracelsus died at Selzburg 24 September 1541.

De Candolle, Augustin Pyramus (1778-1841)

AUGUSTIN PYRAMUS DE CANDOLLE, a French botanist, was born at Geneva 4 February 1778. Having had his education at the college of Geneva, he went to Paris in 1796 and became a favourite pupil of the botanist, Desfontaines. In 1808 he became pro-