

BOOK REVIEW

Jean Chaussivert and Maurice Blackman, eds, *Louis Pasteur and the Pasteur Institute in Australia. Papers from a symposium held at the University of New South Wales, 4-5 September, 1987, to mark the centenary of the Pasteur Institute*, Kensington, French-Australian Research Centre, The University of New South Wales, 1988, (Occasional Monograph n° 1), 93 pp.

Although the involvement of Pasteur and of the Institut Pasteur in Australia occurred at the same time as the foundation of the universally known and respected Paris research institution, the formal connection with this country was to last a mere decade. A story that starts with rabbits and the search for a biological method of exterminating them continues through anthrax to a conclusion marked by the national and scientific jealousies of the late nineteenth century. Appropriately, and usefully for students of French-Australian relations, the centenary of Pasteur's Antipodean venture was commemorated in a scientific and historical symposium ten years ago.

What happened in New South Wales was in the foreground, but the proceedings ranged quite widely over aspects of the history and politics of the Institut Pasteur and of the Noumean branch that was formally established in 1955, succeeding earlier microbiological laboratories set up in New Caledonia at the end of the nineteenth century. The participation of scientists and historians guaranteed that this would be more than an exercise in exhumation of a long-forgotten episode. Indeed up-to-the-minute issues in public health and in the safe and responsible management of laboratories are very much the concern of some of the authors. The contents of this modest but quite effectively illustrated volume set out its scope: Phyllis M. Rountree, "The Pasteur Institute and Australia", pp. 9-16; J. S. Chaussivert, "Letters regarding the 'Pasteur Mission' in Australia", pp. 17-23; Jan Todd, "The Pasteur Institute of Australia—Success and Failure", pp. 25-37; B. V. Milborrow, "Pasteur and the Handedness of Life", pp. 41-49; Graham H. Fleet, "Microbes in Wine since Pasteur", pp. 51-57; Randall Albury, "Louis Pasteur and the Career of Medical Research", pp. 59-67; Michel Morange, "The Institut Pasteur and the Development of Molecular Biology", pp. 69-75; Ditta Bartels and Marcel Blanc, "Occupational Cancers at the Pasteur Institute", pp. 77-85; J. P. Moreau, "Research

Activities into Public Health carried out at the Pasteur Institute in Noumea", pp. 87–92. The editors are to be congratulated on bringing this rich harvest to a wider audience, which can naturally include people interested in microbiology and its history, public policy in health matters and the diversity of French-Australian contacts and interactions.

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