

BOOK REVIEW : BOEKBESPREKING

MEMOIRS OF ROBERT IVY

A Link with the Past. By R. H. Ivy, M.D., D.D.S., Sc.D., F.A.C.S. Pp. 148. Illustrated. R3.20. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co.; and London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1962.

This is the autobiography of one of the best beloved men in the history of American surgery. The personality of 'Bob' Ivy cannot be better expressed than in the concluding page of his autobiography—to quote: 'I have been asked the question—"What do you consider your most important professional contributions?" It does not appear that I have done much of anything important. My name is not attached to any particular operation or method of treatment; I am not known for specially good results in any category of cases. I have published nothing on original scientific research.'

In point of fact, Ivy was the pioneer in dental education and was the first dental intern in the United States in 1901. After he became an M.D. his experience in surgery was very wide and his papers ranged on contributions from immunology to traumatic surgery. By the time World War I broke out he

was well known as a teacher, a scholar, a researcher and a writer, particularly in the field of head and neck reconstructions.

He was a consultant in the field in France in World War I, and a consultant to the Secretary of War in the Surgeon General's Office in World War II. Between the wars, and after, he became an important teacher and professor of plastic and maxillofacial surgery, and was awarded almost every honour that it was possible to confer on him by his colleagues. In his later years he developed the 'Ivy Plan', making it possible for children with congenital deformities to obtain free State care from specialists, and he was also well known as a writer of many text-books, and the editor-in-chief of the *American Journal of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*.

Ivy is a whole man in every sense, not only in his distinguished academic and clinical career, but as a humanitarian, a family man and a sportsman. The book is well worth reading as a supreme example of modesty and achievement.

J.P.