

Book Reviews

analysis of the illustrations of dissections in miniatures, sculptures, medallions, title-pages of books, typographical ornaments, portraits of dissectors, anatomical theatres and caricatures on this theme, provides a comprehensive survey of a subject which until now could only be reached through painstaking research. The illustrations show clearly the passing of basic artistic ideas from one country and prosector to another, plagiarisms as well as creative concepts, the use of flayed human skin as an ornamental motive in title-pages far more extended than until nowadays accepted. Curiously enough this book proves that a point of anatomical illustration—the basement dissecting scene in Valverde de Amusco—could attract entirely independently the interest of at least three different scholars, at precisely the same moment.

The book is excellent and extremely useful, with well-arranged indices of authors, artists, and illustrations, but as the standard reference for the history of anatomical dissections, offers certain flaws which must be kept in mind. It represents the classical approach in medical history and relies almost exclusively on Western culture; even there, the omissions of anatomical theatres, dissecting scenes in title-pages of books, and even more of great dissectors, are numerous. One puzzling omission is the title-page with the dissecting theatre of Madrid used in the *Anatomy* by M. Martinez, first published in 1728, reprinted in 1730, 1745, 1747, 1752, 1757, 1764, 1775, and 1788, which was one of the most popular texts in Spanish. Although the author M. Martinez is mentioned and the engraver Fr. Matias Irala registered for another work, their title-pages, portraits and certain illustrations have not been incorporated, in spite of their importance in the history of anatomical dissection; this point is also valid for Portuguese dissectors.

There are several other areas where the authors should have extended their research: Oriental cultures are represented only by a copy of a watercolour; and in respect of the American continent, Spanish-America is entirely ignored. Anatomical dissection in humans was carried out in Mexico City at least one century earlier than those at Cambridge, Mass., reported by Wolf-Heidegger; a chair of anatomy with dissection compulsory for medical students was established in Mexico City in 1578, with a programme following very closely the lectures and work on cadavers carried out at Salamanca, and Coimbra. It is also regrettable that Wolf-Heidegger has ignored the strong movement in favour of human dissections and the building of anatomical theatres during the eighteenth century in Spain and Spanish America by Virgili, Gimbernat and Hunter's pupils, which led to a great upsurge of surgical training. Finally, no history of human dissection can be written without a proper study of the Lima School under Unanue at the beginning of the nineteenth century. His anatomical dissection and the emphasis he placed on this training during the process of medical education compared very favourably with any European school during the same period.

F. GUERRA

Idle Thoughts of a Surgical Fellow, by STACEY B. DAY. Montreal, Cultural and Educational Productions, 1968, pp. 344, illus., £5 10s. 0d.

In spite of its title this book is a serious work by a surgeon who has many interests

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which range from pathological observation on the bones of the extinct Giant Irish Deer to a discussion on the best way to build a radiation-free room. The most important part of the book is contained in Chapter IV which contains an essay for which in 1960 the author was awarded the Moynihan Prize and Medal; the subject was 'The surgical treatment of ischaemic heart disease' and special consideration is given to the variations of the coronary circulation. A review is given of all the surgical methods then available for increasing the coronary circulation. This essay is followed by a list of over 500 references which should prove of value to medical historians. This chapter is followed by an account of several cases in which an anastomosis was made between the pulmonary artery and the left atrium of the heart for patients suffering from severe angina pectoris.

The chapter entitled 'Idle thoughts culled from the history of medicine does not contain much that is new and is somewhat disappointing. In the interesting section on 'Dress for surgeons' the story of the development of the antiseptic and aseptic techniques is described but the name of Alexander Ogston as the discoverer of the staphylococcus is not mentioned.

Throughout the book the author mentions many ideas which occur to him which appear trivial but might become more important at some future date.

At the end of the book there is a photograph of the author with a brief account of his chief achievements; an account of his undergraduate days in Dublin is given in an introductory chapter that is appropriately headed 'A Touch of the Green.'

ZACHARY COPE

Selected Papers of Edmund Bergler, M.D. 1933–1961, ed. by M. BERGLER, New York and London, Grune & Stratton, 1969, pp. x, 981, no price stated.

The late Dr. Bergler was the author of some three hundred papers and more than twenty books devoted to broadening and popularizing the contribution of psychoanalysis to understanding normal and abnormal mental life. Seventy-nine of his papers are reprinted here with minor excisions; and appended is a chronological list of his writings.

Dr. Bergler left Vienna in 1938 and was in private practice in New York at the time of his death in 1962. He was a second-generation Freudian and a fluent exponent of the theory with a flair for adapting it to changing cultural tastes and patterns.

If 'rum, sodomy, the lash' used to epitomize naval life, then 'impotence, frigidity, perversion' would be a fair summary of psychoanalytic preoccupations. It is the essence of this collection plus rather more than a dash of sado-masochism. At the same time it attempts a show of therapeutic prowess to encourage the faithful. Dr. Bergler for instance, finds that 'scopophilia "exchange mechanisms"' derived from 'beating fantasies' cause depersonalization, an insight which has enabled him to achieve a 'series of successes' with such cases. Greater attention to 'psychic masochism' or 'pleasure in fear', would, he believes, forestall a number of postpartum depressions. Ejaculatory difficulties are explained on the basis of 'psychogenic oral aspermia' founded in 'the breast complex'. To understand impotence one must discover 'what object, or objects, are chosen for intercourse'. Psychoanalysis of a