

Book Reviews

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

Book Reviews

middle-aged lesbian reveals 'that the mother was owner of a brothel' as the cause. Severe vertigo is traced to the patient possibly having seen her father urinating: the case confirms 'the optimistic assertion that the prognosis for the psychoanalysis of agoraphobia, given a long time for treatment, is an entirely favourable one'. And so on through 'obscene words', 'morning erections', 'smoking', 'ingratitude', to 'obesity', 'fear of heights', 'Hamlet and literary creativity'—all the old favourites are here.

It is appropriate that this book should be reviewed in a journal devoted to medical history. It is a period piece of psychiatric history when it was more fruitful to attempt to discover the causes of illness in men's minds than in their bodies. Born before the days of investigative medicine, bred in Victorian culture and the morals of a generation not yet liberated by the advent of reliable antibiotics and contraception; nurtured in the creative fantasy of a genius; spiced with free discussion and description in endless permutations and combinations of taboo topics—all this has left its date stamp on its products.

'When physicians became entangled within the vortices of metaphysics, every thing was explained agreeably to the new philosophy' commented Dr. George Man Burrows in 1817. 'Nothing was so attractive and seducing as the solution of the mysterious operations of the human mind . . . Hence the aberrations of the intellect were arranged as specific diseases, and the research for first causes was overlooked in the contemplation of their effects.' At the present time, when scientific and technological advances offer a real prospect of finding 'first causes' of mental disorders, a reborn Freud would not have to turn away from its daughter specialty neurology in search of pathogenic mechanisms. He might not even quarrel with the seeming paradox that psychotherapy will find its greatest application in helping those whose underlying disease cannot yet be cured, and helping the brain-damaged to adjust.

RICHARD HUNTER

Intemeietorul Anatomiei Moderne Andreas Vesalius, by MIHAI IONESCU, Tirgu-Mures, Directia Sanitara a Judetului Mures, Serviciul de Educatie Sanitara, 1969, pp. 66, illus.

This modestly produced booklet is the first monograph in Rumanian on Vesalius, written by the chief surgeon and lecturer in the department of human anatomy in the Medical and Pharmaceutical Institute of Tirgu-Mures. The text is a straightforward account of the life and work of Vesalius in its proper setting of renaissance medicine. Although medical education on the university level is a peculiarly modern development in Rumania, there was some interchange of doctors between Rumania and countries of western Europe as early as the sixteenth century, and the first and other early editions of the *Fabrica* are to be found in Rumanian libraries. Despite the great interest which Rumanian doctors have shown in the history of medicine during the past fifty years—and the International Congress of the History of Medicine is to be held in Bucharest in September 1970—the list of references bears witness to the inadequate lines of communication between Rumania and other 'western' countries today, for the names of Cushing and O'Malley do not appear there.

F. N. L. POYNTER