

Book Reviews

rose from humble beginnings to be Chairman and Chief Executive of Beechams Group Ltd. By training, he was an accountant, qualification in which he secured by the aid of a correspondence course. He tells his story well, and it is of considerable value to the historian to have an account of pharmacy from the commercial point of view, because most histories deal only with the biographical and technical aspects. The author does, however, discuss some of the latter, in particular the 6-APA penicillin, but again the board-room perspective and decision-taking are revealing. He also gives the story of Lucozade, Brylcreem, Phensic, Beechams powders, and other pharmaceutical products with household names.

The book is written in a chatty and absorbing style with no references. It will, however, become part of the bibliography of pharmaceutical, as well as of business, history.

JOSEPH SCHILLER and TETTY SCHILLER, *Henri Dutrochet (Henri du Trochet 1776–1847). Le matérialisme mécaniste et la physiologie générale*, Paris, A. Blanchard, 1975, pp. 229, illus., Fr. 50 (paperback).

Dutrochet was a highly original French biologist who contributed importantly to basic concepts such as osmosis, the cell theory, and to the growing science of microscopy at the beginning of the nineteenth century. His extreme materialism is reflected in this pioneer work in general physiology and it had considerable influence in France and other countries.

The authors first deal with the biography, iconography and the scientific concepts and influence of Dutrochet. Then follows a previously unpublished autobiography and comments by Dutrochet on his own work, paper by paper, and finally thirty-six letters. Thus we now have a much better idea of the man and of his scientific contributions, and Dr. and Mrs. Schiller are to be congratulated on providing such an excellent appraisal of him. Their book is a model of its kind and we need more like it.

LOUIS-VINCENT THOMAS, *Anthropologie de la mort*, Paris, Payot, 1975, 8vo, pp. 540, Fr.99.

Professor Thomas is a sociologist and a founder member of the Société de Thanatologie. His large and scholarly book deals with all aspects of death and is divided into four sections: death in general, that is its physical, biological and social aspects; the experience of death; part and present attitudes to death; death as physical decay in the imagination, thus death and language (*thanato-sémiologie*), death and symbols allaying beliefs and attitudes. In sum it is a detailed and critical comparison between African death, already dealt with by the author in an earlier book, and death in the West. From this it is hoped will arise a better understanding, allowing man, by means of a new humanism, to accept more readily his destiny of death.

The author has documented his text with a profusion of informative footnotes, but in general there tends to be a somewhat uncritical accumulation of data. He does show, however, the increasing interest in death as illustrated by a profusion of studies, which in itself is combating the taboo usually placed on the subject. This book is, therefore, useful because of its encyclopaedic format, but in addition presents a number of stimulating ideas, as well as some that are perhaps ghoulish.