

## Book Notices

by ideas of physiological difference between the sexes, which led some medical men to argue that female physiology was unsuited to undergo the strains of higher education.

Although sketches of the protagonists and institutional developments in the general British context are provided, the authors pay particular attention to events in Scotland, such as the unsuccessful attempt by Sophia Jex-Blake and four other women to gain medical degrees at the University of Edinburgh, and the establishment of the women's college, Queen Margaret College, which was affiliated to the University of Glasgow.

The volume ends with a selected bibliography of primary and secondary literature. All in all, it provides an easily accessible introduction to the history of women's entry to higher education and the medical profession with a particular focus on Scotland.

**Brian Bracegirdle**, *Notes on modern microscope manufacturers*, The Quekett Microscopical Club, 1996, pp. xiii, 88, £11.50 (0-09514441-7-4). Distributed by Savona Books, 9 Wilton Road, Hornsea, North Humberside HU18 1QU, UK.

The SIMON Index (G Clifton, *Directory of British scientific instrument makers*), published in 1995, lists and describes most British scientific instrument makers active before about 1850. Such an enterprise is, amongst other things, a measure of the interest in early instruments and a lack of concern for later ones. The present work is based on Brian Bracegirdle's examination and cataloguing of the collections of microscopes in the Science Museum in London. The volume is a series of notes on microscope and microtome manufacturers alphabetically arranged. The great majority of entries pertains to post-1850 manufacturers but there are a few earlier examples. Most entries relate to British makers although a few foreign firms are included. Importantly, Bracegirdle insists that none of his dates for microscopes are estimates, all his dates for serial numbers being derived from

documentary evidence. This is a volume for the enthusiast and the specialist but even the amateur who has picked up a microscope in an antique shop will no doubt wish to refer to this, the authoritative source, for some time to come.

**Fritz Spiegl**, *Sick notes: an alphabetical browsing-book of medical derivations, abbreviations, mnemonics and slang for the amusement and edification of medics, nurses, patients, and hypochondriacs*, New York and London, Parthenon Publishing, 1996, pp. xii, 171, illus., £12.00, \$19.00 (1-85070-627-1).

Compendia of medical jargon are addictive, and what makes Fritz Spiegl's survey doubly compulsive is the alphabetical ordering with lavish cross-referencing, which means that almost every entry leads the curious eye to yet further instances of gobbledygook or in-house slang. Start the linguistic mystery tour, for instance, with "Doorhandles" (patients who "remember" another complaint just as they are about to leave the GP's surgery), follow up the cross-references—"For a Friend (FAF)", "Heartsinks" and so forth—and, hey presto, you will go through most of the alphabet from Ambulance Chaser to Wallet Biopsy via Grey Suits, chuckling along with Spiegl's droll view of medical practice today. Illustrated with some out-of-the-way medical cartoons, *Sick Notes* will serve as a "Panacea" (q.v.) for most of the (often imaginary) diseases here listed.

### BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED

(The inclusion of a title does not preclude the possibility of subsequent review. Items received, other than those assigned for review, are ultimately incorporated into the collection of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine.)

**Raquel Álvarez Peláez**, *La conquista de la naturaleza americana*, Cuadernos Galileo de Historia de la Ciencia no. 14, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1993, pp. 607, illus., no price given (84-00-07369-X).

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*Brothers in spirit: the correspondence of Albert Schweitzer and William Larimer Mellon, Jr.*, transl. Jeannette Q Byers, Syracuse University Press, 1996, pp. xviii, 188, illus., \$28.95 (0-8156-0344-4).

**José Luis Fresquet Febrer**, *La experiencia americana y la terapéutica en los Secretos de Cirugía (1567) de Pedro Arias de Benavides*, Cuadernos Valencianos de Historia de la Medicina y de la Ciencia XLI (serie A), Valencia, Instituto de Estudios Documentales e Históricos sobre la Ciencia, 1993, pp. 194 (84-370-1196-5).

**Donald H Kausler and Barry C Kausler**, *The graying of America: an encyclopedia of aging, health, mind, and behavior*, Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1996, pp. x, 356, £39.95 (0-252-02159-2).

**José Pardo Tomás and María Luz López Terrada**, *Las primeras noticias sobre plantas americanas en las relaciones de viajes y crónicas de Indias (1493-1553)*, Cuadernos Valencianos de Historia de la Medicina y de la Ciencia XL (serie A), Valencia, Instituto de Estudios Documentales e Históricos sobre la Ciencia, 1993, pp. 364 (84-370-1177-9).

**Stefan Petrow**, *Sanatorium of the south? Public health and politics in Hobart and Launceston 1875-1914*, Hobart, Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 1995, pp. vii, 218, illus., A\$20.00 (0-909479-13-5).

**Howard Spiro, Mary G Mccrea Curnen, Enid Peschel, and Deborah St James** (eds), *Empathy and the practice of medicine: beyond pills and the scapel*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1993, pp. xi, 208 (9-780300-066708).