

Book Reviews

other relaxant drugs. Inevitably, each reader will be tempted to think that he might have selected differently from the wealth of legend and fact surrounding the strange story of curare; but there is none who will fail to be grateful to the author for the meticulous care with which he has gathered his material, and the charm of its presentation. There are some good pictures, and a useful index.

JAMES PARKHOUSE

Things for the Surgeon: A History of the body-snatchers, by HUBERT COLE, London, Heinemann, 1964, pp. 174, 1964, illus., 30s.

The author has presented a sensational account of the trade of resurrectionists, the men who, in the years before the passing of the Anatomy Acts, supplied the human material requisite for the training of anatomists and surgeons. The gaps left by lack of authentic details have been filled with commendable ingenuity; it is a pity, however, that in some cases where the facts were readily available, they have been misrepresented or ignored. It was, for instance, William and not John Hunter who founded the Windmill School of Anatomy. But this is a book that will undoubtedly have a strong appeal for those who are fascinated by this somewhat unsavoury but necessary aspect of the anatomists' and surgeons' craft.

JESSIE DOBSON

Footprints on the Sands of Time, The Story of the House of Livingstone 1863-1963, Edinburgh, E. and S. Livingstone, 1963, pp. 71 [no price given].

This little book was issued at the time of the centenary in 1963 of the publishing firm of Messrs. E. and S. Livingstone, and it unfolds a story as exciting as any to be found in human achievement.

The business was started in May 1863 by Edward Livingstone, who chose a shop exactly opposite the entrance to the university, where he proposed to trade as a new and second-hand bookseller. Two years later his brother, Stuart Moodie Livingstone, joined him in partnership. The strategic position of the shop brought the staff in contact with students and their problems and it was with precise knowledge of the needs to be fulfilled that they were able to select the books they undertook to publish, an aim that has been maintained throughout the years. From these early times there grew a tradition of generous support for university and civic activities and assistance and encouragement for young students. Among the many distinguished students known to them was Robert Louis Stevenson, whose first literary venture was supported by the Livingstone brothers; *The Edinburgh University Magazine* first appeared in January 1871 and Stevenson wrote in his *Memories and Portraits*: 'I went home that morning walking upon air.'

Soon after the new Medical Buildings opened in 1881, a 'medical branch' was opened in Teviot Place and Messrs. E. and S. Livingstone came to be recognized as the leading medical booksellers and printers in the capital.

This is a story of devotion, loyalty and industry, delightfully told and plentifully illustrated, an inspiration to all, whatever their activities. It has been produced with the high standard of printing, arrangement and accuracy that is the hall-mark of this fine firm.

JESSIE DOBSON

Contraception Through the Ages, by B. E. FINCH and H. GREEN, London, Peter Owen, 1963, pp. 174, 25s.

This interesting book reviews the history of the folklore, beliefs and methods of birth control from prehistoric days to the 'pill'. Though intended for the lay public it can

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be read with advantage by the medical historian, who will find the bibliography useful for any deeper studies into the subject.

We would point out that Avicenna was not a Jewish physician; that the suffix *-et* on a Scandinavian noun represents the definite article; that the Graefenberg ring is not a barrier method of contraception. In a historical account of this character mention should be made of the Cromer Street Clinic, the first birth control clinic opened in England by, and under the supervision of, a medical man, the late Dr. Norman Haire. It was there that the Graefenberg ring was first introduced into this country and where the Dutch Cap, so much more reliable than the cervical cap used at Marie Stopes's clinic, was popularized under the name of the Haire Pessary.

An interesting, readable and informative history of the subject.

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