

Book Reviews

is a necessary item and a valuable addition to the library of every scholar-physician and surgeon.

MACDONALD CRITCHLEY

Dr. Jenner of Berkeley. DOROTHY FISK. London: Heinemann, 1959; pp. vii+288. Illustrated. 25s.

Much has been written about Edward Jenner, but there was need for a new appraisal of the life and work of the great physician-naturalist. John Baron's two-volume *Life* was published in 1827-38, but although it retains its value as a vast repository of facts it is not easy reading, and, what is perhaps more important, it is not accessible to the ordinary general reader. The late Dr. Dawtrey Drewitt's *Life*, originally published in 1931, is probably the best of the many short books, but it is a charming essay rather than a full-scale biography and it appears to be little known. Mrs. Fisk is a practised writer whose name is familiar to those interested in medical history by virtue of one of her earlier books, *Bouquet for the Doctor*. In writing the *Life of Edward Jenner* she had a fine subject and a challenging one, for Jenner's interests and achievements covered a very wide range, and, while there were abundant but widely scattered materials for a biographer to work on, much of it was of a controversial nature. Mrs. Fisk has done ample justice to Jenner the country doctor, the discoverer of vaccination, the naturalist, the poet and the man. Her book is detailed, accurate, and altogether absorbing. The background to country practice in the eighteenth century is sketched in with admirable skill, and extracts from Jenner's voluminous correspondence, especially the letters that passed between him and his friend and mentor John Hunter, are used with telling effect. Production, printing and illustration provide a worthy setting for an inspiring story superbly told. This admirable book should appeal to all classes of readers, not least to the boy or girl who may be thinking of taking up medicine as a career.

W. J. B.

St. Peter's Hospital for Stone, 1860-1960. Edited by CLIFFORD MORSON, O.B.E., F.R.C.S. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 1960; pp. viii+64. Illustrated. 21s.

It is curious that although calculous disease was for long one of the commonest maladies in this country, a special hospital for stone was not established until 1860. One of the grounds put forward when the appeal for the original Hospital for Stone was launched was, indeed, the fact that there had been a marked increase in the frequency of stone in this country in the years 1850-60—an increase ascribed to bad feeding in the 'hungry forties'. Another declared object of the new institution was the development and application of the then comparatively new operation of lithotripsy in place of the ancient one of lithotomy. It is well-known that the establishment of all the special hospitals met with strong opposition, but in no other case was the reaction so vocal or so violent as that called forth by the proposal to establish a Hospital for Stone. The project was denounced in the medical press as useless and injurious. A manifesto signed by a large number of the leading physicians and surgeons on the staff of general hospitals described it as an 'evil'. This opposition died hard. In 1866, when the Hospital had been in existence for six years, Mr. W. J. Coulson was called upon to resign his office of surgeon to St. Mary's Hospital because he had accepted an appointment at St. Peter's.