

Book Reviews

his literary evidence in a commonsense fashion with a sensible literary critical approach devoid of flights of Freudian fancy, which are now hopefully going out of fashion. He deals first with Pope's *Dunciad*, underlining the importance to it of a theme of madness, and then with Swift, and with Johnson's melancholia. The "English malady", also melancholy, typifies mid-century madness, but like rickets, also known as the "English disease", there is no evidence that depressive illnesses were commoner here than elsewhere. Byrd devotes a chapter to this problem. It was at this time that a change in attitude toward the madman became evident. Whereas in the earlier part of the century he had been locked away like an animal, and subjected to the idle curiosity of those who indulged in "visits to Bedlam", in the second half a growing sympathy with him is detectable. This change is exemplified by the writings of Cowper and Blake, and the Enlightenment of the late eighteenth century led to our modern attitude toward the mentally disturbed. The metamorphosis from the Augustan Age of rejection of insanity to the Romantic Age of acceptance is a fascinating study brilliantly portrayed here, reflected in the works of literary giants.

Gradually we are achieving a much clearer view of the history of psychiatry, and it is significant that clarity should be contributed in this instance by an individual who has nothing to do with psychiatry, or with medicine in general. Obviously no one person can encompass in scholarly depth all aspects of madness in a given historical period. Here again is the importance of collaboration between the medical historian and specialists from other disciplines, with the object of achieving an accurate analysis of a multi-faceted phenomenon.

MARJORIE GRENE, *The understanding of nature. Essays in the philosophy of biology*, Dordrecht and Boston, D. Reidel, 1974, 8vo, pp. xii, 374, \$32.00 (\$17.50 paperback).

Between 1946 and 1947 Professor Grene published several important papers on the study and nature of living nature. They are now collected together and to them four further essays have been added. The author is both philosopher of science and meta-physician and in each part of her subjects she is an imaginatively original thinker. In the present work she contributes importantly to our understanding of the natural world, and her span of old and current problems is a most impressive one.

She discusses perception, the levels of reality in biology, reducibility, Aristotle and modern biology and taxonomy, evolutionary theory and Darwin, selection, teleology, Bohm's metaphysics, natural necessity, distinctions between men and brutes, the character of living things, and the relation between nature and man.

The majority of philosophers of science concern themselves with the physical world and, thus, Professor Grene's book, dealing as it does largely with theoretical biology, is especially welcome. The issues have little to do with medicine *per se*, but are fundamental to our biological approach to it. The existence of this book should be known, and although few would wish to read it all, it provides an excellent source book for reference and episodic reading. It is a pity therefore that the author has to contrast ". . . the isolation . . . of British provincial universities . . ." with ". . . the more communicative milieu of a University of California campus . . .", for many of us must have experienced the intellectual isolation of certain American universities.