

Book Reviews

translation, four of the most important as lengthy appendices. More than 1200 pages are occupied by 28 *Excursuses* which discuss the evolution of our knowledge of a particular organ or structure—the heart, the brain, the alimentary canal, and so on. The writings of precursors, contemporaries, and followers have been scrutinized for every possible relevant fact or idea. There are over 2000 printed references and many original manuscript sources, and the index alone runs to 137 pages.

It says much for the scientific worth of Malpighi's dissertations that their simple lustre is only the greater for being shown in this rich setting. And beyond all this scientific detail is the historical background, which includes a notable account of the great Studium at Bologna and of seventeenth-century Italy and what must be regarded as the definitive biography of Malpighi, occupying over 700 pages of the first volume. Professor Adelman tells us in his introduction that he intends his work for the 'general reader' as well as the student, and this biography certainly justifies his intention, for it reads in parts like a film script based on one of Victor Hugo's novels, with sudden death, murder, and the splendour of the courts of Popes and Princes contrasting with the quiet friendship and encouragement of a Borelli. Adelman suggests that Malpighi—a sensitive and diffident scholar—had recourse to his microscope to escape a sea of troubles, and he is probably right. What he saw through his lenses, we are wisely reminded, he saw 'with the mind of a seventeenth-century scholar and he could not possibly interpret his findings otherwise than in the intellectual context of his times'. We are shown that intellectual context in all its texture of complex simplicity (or simple complexity) and in this way we are helped to understand how and why Malpighi interpreted his observations as he did, an achievement which will always be beyond the reach of misguided 'historians' who seek to understand and evaluate such work in the light of twentieth-century knowledge.

Adelman's work is undoubtedly one of the great landmarks—to set beside Sarton and Needham—in modern historical scholarship in the field of science and medicine.

F. N. L. POYNTER.

Carl von Linné, by HEINZ GOERKE (Grosse Naturforscher Series, No. 31), Stuttgart, Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1966, pp. 232, illus., DM. 23.50.

The Linnaean Society was founded by Dr. James Edward Smith in 1784, after purchasing Linnaeus' Herbarium and Library. In so doing this country was the first to keep alive the memory of Carl von Linné—a memory which has dimmed in recent years. The self-imposed task of reviving it has, however, been taken up by Professor Heinz Goerke of Berlin in this book.

It is a small hard-back with a table of contents, an index and list of personal and place names. There are also annotations and a list of references.

There are ten chapters devoted to his life and six to his work. There is an interesting introduction dealing with the historical background of Sweden and her relationship with her neighbours, which sets the scene for Linnaeus' life.

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Linnaeus—named Carl after the reigning king of Sweden—was born in 1707 and died in 1778. His work as a botanist has obscured the fact that he was also a doctor of medicine and colleague of the famous Swede—Nils Rosen von Rosenstein. In 1757 he wrote a dissertation *Febris Upsaliensis* based on his experience of treating malarial fever. Already in 1733 his tidy mind had drawn up 137 rules for good living called *Diaeta Naturalis*. This was followed by a *Materia Medica* in 1749. Although he suffered from migraine, as befits an obsessional personality, and probably had an attack of typhus or typhoid fever, the definitive cause of his death remains unknown.

This interesting and varied account of his life can be read with profit by his many admirers.

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