

Book Reviews

covered, with instructions to refer to the Historical Manuscripts Commission for details. Medical scientists are generously represented, along with a few clinicians. Among physiologists, for instance, William Sharpey, Michael Foster, Charles Sherrington, and Henry Dale make it, but not Ernest Starling, William Bayliss, or E. A. Sharpey-Schafer. Thomas Sydenham is included, but not Richard Bright; Edwin Chadwick but not William Farr. No attempt has been made to indicate scientists for whom no papers could be located.

So rich are the manuscript resources of British science and medicine that no guide can hope to be complete. For natural history, however, we now have as full a guide to public repositories as is practicable; and while *Manuscript papers* would be three times as useful were it three times as long, at least it makes a start, in a well-produced inexpensive volume. The preface also alludes to the possibility of a further volume. In the meantime, we can be grateful for these reference books.

J. G. A. Sheppard
W. F. Bynum
Wellcome Institute

ROSEMARIE DILG-FRANK (editor), *Kreatur und Kosmos. Internationale Beiträge zur Paracelsusforschung*, Stuttgart and New York, Fischer, 1981, 8vo, pp. 206, DM. 58.00 (paperback).

The eleven papers in this collection were originally published in *Medizinhistorisches Journal*, 1981, 16. Three of them are in English, one is in French, and seven are in German, and they treat Paracelsian themes in different ways. Walter Pagel's 'The Paracelsian Elias Artista and the alchemical tradition' shows Paracelsus describing the adept of the future in the form of the Biblical Elisha, a doublette of the prophet Elijah. This name was often used in anonymous alchemical treatises during the Middle Ages. Paracelsus believed in the transmutation of iron into copper, from the evidence of iron when added to a copper-vitriol solution seeming to be transformed into copper. He also believed that the adept will literally transmute iron, through the stage of copper, into gold. The post-Paracelsian tradition includes a friend of Giordano Bruno, Raphael Eglinus Iconius (1559–1622), who published Bruno's notes even after Bruno had been apprehended by the Inquisition. Eglinus believed in the conversion of mercury into various metals, and that Elias Artista would, in the future, do the same for transmutation into gold. This tradition culminates in the Messianic movements of the seventeenth century. Then Elias is interpreted alchemically as the universal medicine whereby what is ordinary or bad can be changed into something good.

Arlene Miller Guinsburg points out the role of magic in Paracelsus' theological interpretation of passages in the Gospel according to St Matthew. Hartmut Rudolph's paper on Paracelsus' exegesis and understanding of Scripture compares him with Luther, his contemporary. Both stress the importance of faith, but Paracelsus insists that faith must be based on and confirmed by experience, just like medicine.

Joachim Telle deals with Paracelsus' highly individual language, Lucien Braun's 'Nature et philosophie' explains what Paracelsus meant by such terms as "light of nature", "light of the spirit", *astrum*, and *monarchia*. Wolfgang Schneider investigates to what extent Paracelsus' prescriptions, though based on alchemical ideas of quintessences and elixirs, have entered the pharmacopoeias of his time and later because the substances contained in them were recognizable and their compounds were found to have curative effects. Karl-Heinz Weimann's paper shows the development of dictionaries of Paracelsian terms right into the twentieth century. Textual criticism aided by biographical data is represented in Edwin Rosner's paper on Paracelsus' monograph on the miners' disease. He comes to the conclusion that the bulk of the extant monograph is from the 1560s and not genuine, but based on a short version by Paracelsus of 1520. Robert-Henri Blaser's 'Ulrich Gyger, sin diener' is purely biographical.

Marianne Winder
Wellcome Institute