

Book Reviews

physiology', which describes the work of the Cambridge school of nerve function, 1934 to 1952. A continuation of Sharpey-Schafer's *History of the Physiological Society during its first fifty years 1876–1926* is provided by Dr W. F. Bynum in an excellent essay, 'A short history of the Physiological Society 1926–1976' (pp. 23–72), and there are descriptions of 'Historical exhibitions and demonstrations' (pp. 18–97P) which include papers on a wide variety of topics concerning the history of British physiology. They include contributions by outstanding living physiologists, such as A. V. Hill, Barcroft, A. F. Huxley, Whitteridge, and Feldberg. The rest of the number concerns demonstrations and communications of present-day physiology.

This is an important contribution to the history of physiology, which may be overlooked by historians. It deserves, therefore, to be published separately.

ERNA LESKY, *The Vienna Medical School in the nineteenth century*, Baltimore and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976, 8vo, pp. xv, 604, illus., £16.00.

In 1965 Dr Erna Lesky, the distinguished Professor of the History of Medicine in the University of Vienna and Director of the Institute for the History of Medicine there, published *Die Wiener medizinische Schule im 19. Jahrhundert* which was received with justifiable acclaim; it was described by Professor O. Temkin as "... a magnificent achievement . . . a work of great industry, of intelligent analysis, and of personal dedication. It deserves to appear in translation . . ." (*Bull. Hist. Med.*, 1965, 39: 587–589, see p. 589; see also review in *J. Hist. Med.*, 1965, 20: 422–424). It is one of the most scholarly and detailed accounts of a medical school in existence, and this, along with the importance and widespread influence of the New Vienna School itself, destined it to be an outstanding contribution to the history of medicine. It is now translated, with updating, which consists mainly of supplementing the bibliography and the notes, especially with recent publications, especially those in English. It remains a remarkable work, packed with information and dealing with a topic no student of nineteenth-century medicine can ignore. This translation is, therefore, most welcome for the book will now reach the wider audience it richly deserves. Dr. Lesky's masterpiece can be recommended unreservedly.

DAVID KNIGHT, *The nature of science. The history of science in Western culture since 1600*, London, A. Deutsch, 1976, 8vo, pp. 215, £4.95.

In an attempt to elucidate science as an intellectual, social, and practical activity overlapping other areas of knowledge and as an expression of culture, Dr. Knight, a historian of science, adopts a thematic, rather than the more traditional chronological, presentation. By this method he can cover a much wider canvas. Throughout, he is concerned with the whole of science and not a single science, and the entire book is based on historical material used judiciously and expertly as illustrative examples of the matter under consideration.

First, the author describes the ways in which investigators have assessed their own attempts to describe and explain nature, and then the relationships between science and other activities, the scientific community with its various institutions, science as a career, science and government, and the utility of science. His 'Epilogue' deals with science today and the problems it will face in the future.