

Book Reviews

HOWARD B. ADELMANN (editor), *The correspondence of Marcello Malpighi*, 5 volumes, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1975, 4to, pp. xx, 1–436; xii, 437–916; xiv, 917–1420; xiv, 1421–1850; x, 1851–2227, \$95.00 the set.

In 1966 Professor Adelman astonished historians of medicine and science with the publication of his monumental *Marcello Malpighi and the evolution of embryology*. Nothing like it had appeared in recent times, and it received the praises of reviewers it richly deserved, as well as literary prizes for its author. It will remain a remarkable record of his scholarship and industry. But it has also been known for about ten years that he was engaged on editing the letters of Malpighi. Now with their publication in five large volumes Professor Adelman again engenders in us surprise at the magnitude of the work, praise for the thorough scholarship displayed, and adulation on the appearance of an outstanding contribution to learning.

Altogether there are 1,079 letters deriving from many different sources and covering the period 1658 to 1694: Volume I (1658–1669), II (1670–1683), III (1684–1688), IV (1689–1692), and V (1693–1694). The volumes constitute letters from Malpighi and also from his correspondents, amongst whom are such famous contemporaries as Borelli, Fracassati, Bellini, Steno, Redi, Bohn, and Marsili. His exchanges with the Royal Society by way of Henry Oldenburg are also included. Approximately one-third of the Malpighi letters and two-thirds of those sent to him have not been published before. As is usual with Dr. Adelman's books, there is an extensive list of literature cited (pp. 1985–2151) and a detailed index (pp. 2155–2226), each found in the last volume.

The letters themselves have been carefully transcribed in the language in which they were written, which is mainly Italian, Latin being used mostly in those to and by foreign correspondents. There is a brief summary of each in English, with meticulous and extensive annotation of the letter itself. Cross-referencing throughout with the author's 1966 book on Malpighi renders it supplementary to this massive treatise.

Historians of seventeenth-century medicine and surgery must now begin to integrate the contents of Malpighi's letters and those of his correspondents into their own studies, for a wide range of data are now available on the period in general, on institutions, the Royal Society being to us the one of greatest interest, and, most important of all, on individuals. As well as renowned contemporary Italians, a few of whom have been mentioned above, there are references to such non-Italians as Caspar and Thomas Bartholin, Descartes, de Graaf, Leeuwenhoek and Swammerdam. But in particular Malpighi kept in contact with the English school of experimentalists, and new additions to their biographies and to our appreciation of their work will now be necessary. There are many references to Nehemiah Grew, Boyle, Willis, and to Sir Thomas Baines and Sir John Finch, who spent many years in Italy on medical and diplomatic duties. But Walter Charlton, Thomas Birch, Thomas Burnet, Ent, Glisson, Harvey, Highmore, Hooke, Martin Lister, Lower, and others also receive mention. Another benefit of Dr. Adelman's volumes is the information it gives us concerning the way in which doctors and scientists kept in contact with each other. He has, therefore, also contributed to the history of human communications.

Professor Adelman has provided us with another extraordinarily useful source book, which not only gives us additional information about Malpighi and his work,

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but also concerning his contemporaries, and seventeenth-century medicine and science in general. It will be a mine of information, in gratitude for which researchers for years will sing the praises of a very great yet humble scholar.

MICHAEL V. DEPORTE, *Nightmares and hobbyhorses. Swift, Sterne, and Augustan ideas of madness*, San Marino, Calif., The Huntington Library, (Folkestone, Kent, Dawsons), 1974, 8vo, pp. xi, 164, £5.00.

Madness seems to have been common amongst eighteenth-century poets, and in the past much endeavour has been expended in futile attempts to explain it by means of a psycho-analytical approach. Dr. DePorte, Associate Professor of English at the University of New Hampshire, praiseworthily, does not follow this trail. He begins by reviewing abnormal psychology in England, 1660 to 1760, and shows the fascination that insanity had for people at that time, as portrayed in literature. Swift thought it due to excessive imagination and *A tale of a tub* is one of the most intriguing pronouncements of this relationship. The author goes on to examine closely his use of madness in satire with the intention, as with his analysis of Sterne, to show that the idea of mental anomaly and the nature of irrationality were central to their work. Knowledge of this is clearly essential when dealing with the writings of these men. Awareness of the madness of Gulliver, for example, is equally necessary. Unlike their contemporary literary figures who were also mentally disturbed, Swift and Sterne illuminate for us eighteenth-century attitudes of mental abnormality. In the case of *A tale of a tub* and *Tristram Shandy* insanity determines their structure; not only this, Sterne's novel is intended to be of therapeutic value in cases of mental illness.

Professor DePorte has produced a scholarly study of the great Augustan theme of madness. It is of considerable importance to the medical historians, because it is a valuable contribution to the history of eighteenth-century medicine. And yet it is the kind of book likely to be overlooked. It should, in fact, be carefully examined by all those interested in the history of psychiatry and psychology, and in Augustan medicine and literature. The absence of a psycho-analytical aroma is especially in its favour. Hopefully it is a healthy sign of a new age of post-Freudian psychiatry which may now be opening.

MAX BYRD, *Visits to Bedlam. Madness and literature in the eighteenth century*, Columbia, S.C., University of South Carolina Press, 1974, 8vo, pp. xvii, 200, illus., \$9.95.

The author is an assistant professor of English in Yale University and is concerned here with eighteenth-century attitudes in Britain to insanity. His evidence is taken from the literature of the period, especially from the writings of Pope, Swift, Johnson, Cowper and Blake. A very similar work by Michael V. DePorte, *Nightmares and hobbyhorses. Swift, Sterne and Augustan ideas of madness* (San Marino, The Huntington Library, 1974) has recently covered much the same ground at much the same level of scholarship.

Like DePorte, Byrd avoids the psycho-analytic approach and prefers to present