

Book Reviews

FRANK J. ANDERSON, *An illustrated history of the herbals*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1977, 8vo, pp. xiv, 270, illus., \$21.20.

Recent revival of interest in folk-medicine, fringe practices, and nature therapy is reflected in the number of books that have appeared in the last few years on ancient herbal remedies. This one deals with the herbals themselves, and, although it cannot compete with Eleanour S. Rohde's classic, which in any case is concerned only with English herbals, it offers a creditable account for the specialist and lay reader. It is based on the herbal collection of the New York Botanical Garden, and gives a brief description, fully illustrated, of thirty early works, from Dioscorides to Francisco Hernandez (1514?–1587). There are bibliographical notes, a glossary, and a bibliography. Although the author's style may grate on some, his book will be a useful reference work for historians of medicine and pharmacy.

HENRY WERLINDER, *Psychopathy: a history of the concepts*, (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, No. 6), Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell, 1978, 8vo, pp. 218, [no price stated].

The author, in his Ph.D. thesis, identifies three main lines of thought: first, from about 1800, the influence of Pinel in France, who stressed the affective disorders in mental illness; second, Morel's idea of degeneration, which took shape about 1860 and introduced the hereditary aspects of psychiatric disorder; third, an "Anglo-Saxon syndrome of American origin characterized by inadequate control of impulses leading to remorselessness, egoism, aggressiveness, etc." Today this third current seems to be the most important, and the author points out that it did not originate with Prichard's "moral insanity" (1835) as is usually alleged.

This book will be of special interest to practising psychiatrists and psychologists, who will be helped in their comprehension of present-day concepts by this excellent survey of the latter's evolution.

H. J. P. ARNOLD, *William Henry Fox Talbot, pioneer of photography and man of science*, London, Hutchinson Benham, 1978, 4to, pp. 383, illus., £13.50.

The recent interest in photography demands that its pioneers should be re-examined and their work re-assessed. Talbot (1800–1877) was one of the most remarkable, and this book, surprisingly enough the first full-length study of his life and work, does adequate justice to his polymathical genius. The author seeks to flesh out this hitherto shadowy figure and to evaluate his contribution and himself in relationship to nineteenth-century science, learning, and technology. In this he has been entirely successful. His book is well written, fully illustrated with Calotype reproductions, some seen here for the first time, and the text is adequately documented. There are helpful appendices of genealogies, lists of major biographical source material, and of his works and patents. It tells the story of a remarkable man and of a revolutionary invention, but it also gives a fascinating picture of a nineteenth-century English gentleman and of the state of science at that time. It can be warmly recommended.