

### *Book Reviews*

information concerning the contents and author rather than the publication *per se*. Together it provides a unique survey, the like of which is not available in the history of medicine. The last three volumes deal exclusively with British authors, many of whom practised medicine and in some cases are better known as medical practitioners than as veterinarians.

In view of its value as a source-book, and despite the fact that the bibliographical detail is not always trustworthy, the publishers are to be commended for producing a reprint of it. The fact that it is of elegant workmanship is also to their credit.

EVA CRANE (editor), *Honey. A comprehensive survey*, London, Heinemann, 1976, 8vo, pp. xvi, 608, illus., £15.00.

The editor is Director of the International Bee Research Association and is one of the most renowned apiculturists in the world. Together with twelve colleagues, who are also international experts, she has produced a remarkably comprehensive survey of information on honey. The sixty-eight-paged bibliography, with more references in the text, indicates its scholarly nature and encyclopaedic character. There are sections on honey production, the characteristics of honey, its preparation for the market, and honey as a commercial product, but historians of medicine and biology will be especially interested in the last two chapters. In 'The language of honey' (pp. 426–438) the origins of "honey" and associated words are discussed in a detailed but readily comprehensible manner. The last chapter, 'History of honey' (pp. 439–488) is by Dr. Crane, who surveys honey since before the appearance of man, a topic that has been little explored, to modern honey production from 1900 onwards. Although she at times reveals historical naïvety, her account is accurate and one of the best short ones available.

The book is well illustrated and the indexes are excellent. It can be warmly recommended as an outstanding work, which will remain for some time a standard treatise on all aspects of honey, including its history and philology.

K. C. CHANG (editor), *Food in Chinese culture. Anthropological and historical perspectives*, New Haven, Conn., and London, Yale University Press, 1977, 8vo, pp. ix, 429, illus., £14.40.

In few countries is food allied so closely to culture as in China, and Professor Chang's book aims to provide for the first time in English an anthropological study of this tradition by analysing a culture through its eating habits. Not only are the foodstuffs themselves described in great detail, but also the unique methods of producing, preserving, preparing, serving, and eating them, and their effects upon society. The approach is chronological, ranging from ancient to modern China, each of the eight collaborators contributing a chapter on a historical period; the last two deal with modern China, north and south. The amount of data is at times overwhelming, especially when foods are described without interpretation. But the most interesting aspects of the book are the discussions of factors influencing cooking of food, such as religion, the importation of foreign commodities, economic and social development, military operations, technology, the absence of taboos, the moral and magical rules of daily existence, amongst others. The role of food sym-