

Book Reviews

tions to 1850. In addition the book is elegantly produced, with sixteen plates illustrating the title-pages of unusual or rare publications.

This essential reference work will complement Ferguson's *Bibliography of Australia* and Dr. Bryan Gandevia's bibliography of the history of Australian medicine.

MARCEL DETIENNE, *The gardens of Adonis: spices in Greek mythology*, translated by Janet Lloyd, Hassocks, Harvester Press, 1977, 8vo, pp. xxxv, 184, illus., £10.50.

Although the main thesis of this structuralist study of the myth of Adonis, the representation of illicit seduction, is unconvincing, and several of its arguments from analogy or polar opposition appear far-fetched, the evidence here assembled for the use and abuse of spices in classical antiquity is full of interest and entertainment. The aphrodisiac properties of perfumes and the opposite effect of garlic need no mythological explanation, but why the cold and wet lettuce gained its reputation as the anti-aphrodisiac food *par excellence* cannot easily be divined even by comparison with the misfortunes of mint or the malodorous rue.

The translation is fluent, but several irritating Gallicisms and misprints remain.

BRIDGET ANN HENISH, *Fast and feast. Food in medieval society*, University Park and London, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976, 8vo, pp. [vi], 279, illus., £11.25.

The author bases her scholarly study of medieval attitudes towards food on a variety and multitude of thirteenth- to fifteenth-century English primary sources. The religious and social ideas shaping these attitudes are dealt with, and the points of view of the host, guest, cook, and servant are taken into account. There are chapters on meal times, fast and feast, cook and kitchen, methods and menus, laying the table, manners, and entertainment provided for the medieval feast. This work will become a necessary reference book for those studying medieval medicine and also for historians of nutrition, food, and social attitudes. It can be highly recommended.

JEAN DE BLONAY, *1870: une révolution chirurgicale. Les origines et le développement de la chirurgie civile et militaire moderne*, Vevey, Delta, (Paris, A. Lesot), 1975, 8vo, pp. iv, 148, illus., [no price stated].

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to 1871 marked the end of an era in European and world politics. But it also affected science, technology, and the arts, and surgery too was revolutionized by the experiences derived from the handling of military casualties. This is the author's claim, and it would be interesting to seek its substantiation as far as Britain is concerned. The author is a surgeon, and has consulted a great deal of literature to document this radical change, and his text is liberally illustrated. Unfortunately documentation of the text is quite inadequate, although there are 132 rudimentary references, mostly in French and German.