

Book Reviews

Dr. Knight has written an excellent book that will prove invaluable as an introductory explanation of science for a wide audience, but especially for the younger person entering this discipline. It will also be a useful text for those interested in the history of science and medicine. It is very well written and does not demand of the reader much previous knowledge of science. It richly deserves a cheaper, paperback format.

DAVID KNIGHT, *Sources for the history of science 1660–1914*, Cambridge University Press, 1976, 8vo, pp. 223, £7.00 (£3.00 paperback).

The history of science draws on a vast literature, ranging from travel books to those on higher mathematics or molecular biology. A guide to these research sources is, therefore, an essential need and Dr. Knight provides us here with an excellent one. He first discusses the history of science in general, then histories of science, manuscripts, journals, scientific books, and surviving physical objects. To some extent the book reflects the author's own interests, which are mainly concerned with chemistry from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, but this is bound to happen, for no-one can cover the whole field at research depths. Again on a personal note, the author's opinions about the history of science as a discipline and those who practise it, are very valuable. However, British sources are given prominence, which the author admits, and it is also a pity that there is no cumulative bibliography, although copious footnotes are provided.

Nevertheless, as a readable, reliable and up-to-date survey and guide this book can be strongly recommended. It will provide an excellent introduction to the history of science for students. It is to be hoped that a companion volume on history of medicine sources will also appear in this series *Sources of history*, which is edited by G. R. Elton.

JOHN REDWOOD (editor), *European science in the seventeenth century*, Newton Abbot, David & Charles, 1977, 8vo, pp. 208, illus., £6.50.

The author's purpose is to illustrate by readings ". . . of literature telling men how to think scientifically and recording the thoughts of those who had tried patent methods. . . ." (p.10). The anthology is intended for the student and lay reader and it has four sections: 'Aims and methods' of selected men of letters and philosophers; 'Enterprise and achievement' of contemporary natural philosophers; 'Journals and scientific institutions' of the late seventeenth century; 'Instruments and men', dealing with the microscope. It is intended to display the diversity of seventeenth-century intellectual endeavour and achievement, the inter-relationships of disciplines, and a common bond that united them.

However, despite the fact that the word "European" occurs in the book's title, no less than twenty-two of the thirty authors selected are British. This can be due either to Britain's overwhelming importance in seventeenth-century science, or to the fact that an author writing in English is easier to include than one employing a foreign language.

In the case of the section on 'Anatomy and medicine' (pp. 103–127) the selections are unrepresentative: Harvey and Malpighi yes, but why Gassendi and Digby at the