

THEOPHRASTUS VON HOHENHEIM GEN. PARACELSUS. *Sämtliche Werke*, Karl Sudhoff, Ed. *Registerband*. Martin Müller, Comp. and Robert Blaser, Ed. Einsiedeln, 1960. 281 pp. S.Fr. 60.

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PARACELSUS is eagerly studied these days by those who hope to find in mysticism protection against the onslaught of eastern "materialist" irrationalism as well as those who want to understand one of the most influential and controversial figures in medical history. The main tool for such studies is the 14-volume edition of Paracelsus' medical works by Karl Sudhoff, which appeared between 1929 and 1933. Probably all those who have had to work with this edition have sighed for an Index. They will be eternally grateful to the late Prof. Martin Mueller of Munich for compiling one during the nineteen forties and nineteen fifties with the help of his thesis candidates, to the Swiss Paracelsus Society for having sponsored its publication, and to Prof. Robert Blaser for having edited it. The index is immensely useful as it is. It is, on the other hand, uneven in its coverage and not comprehensive on many points, as evidenced by its relatively modest size. Those who look up a certain notion in the Index can hope to be guided towards several (often contradictory) Paracelsian views on the subject; yet most of the time they cannot be certain of having seen all of them. This is easily understood in view of the way this Index was compiled.

GEORGE ERNST STAHL. *Four Short Treatises*. B. H. Gottlieb, Tr. and Ed. Leipzig, Joh. Ambr. Barth, 1961. 88 pp., 6 illus. (Sudhoffs Klassiker der Medizin, vol. 36). D.M. 6.30.

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THERE are medical classics which one studies because of the great influence they once exerted. There are others one consults because in form and content they still make superb reading. The Halle clinician, G. E. Stahl (1659-1734), inventor of phlogiston and animism, belongs in the former category. In the first of the four short treatises, which Dr. Gottlieb has translated from the Latin into German, Stahl redemonstrates that passions influence the body. In the second he discusses how the actions of the physician should support the healing tendencies of nature. In the third he claims that organism is not mechanism, and in the fourth he discusses the deontological problem of how often the physician should visit the patient. The texts show that Stahl was not very original, and that he often replaced argument by invective. He was so important because he revived vitalism in the midst of a tremendous mechanist wave.