

Book Reviews

enough to correct the proofs and to inscribe presentation cards for the author's copies which he instructed his publisher to send to his friends, among whom I was always proud to be counted.

Solly Zuckerman

RONALD L. NUMBERS and JUDITH WALZER LEAVITT (editors), *Wisconsin medicine. Historical perspectives*, Madison and London, University of Wisconsin Press, 1981, 8vo, pp. xi, 212, illus., \$18.50.

This is a collection of eleven papers delivered at a bicentennial symposium in 1976. Wisconsin, a State only since 1848, deserved such a study because it was not only typical for the Mid-west, but a medical pioneer in many respects. Early medicine was, of course, rural and dominated by malaria. Around 1900, the horse-and-buggy doctor began to be replaced by the telephone-and-automobile doctor. Progress in surgery made practice shift towards hospitals, and group practice began in 1916. The health problems of the cities were overcome by 1920. All this and the subjects of medical sects, societies, and education are discussed in the eleven contributions. The book is very well produced: use of sources, style, editing, bibliographies, index, and illustrations. It is primarily a social history of Wisconsin medicine. This is not surprising, as among the eleven authors is only one M.D. (six are graduate students); and impersonal social history of medicine is fashionable. As I wrote one of the first monographs in the social history of medicine fifty years ago, may I be allowed to plead for the rediscovery of the medical history of medicine? It exists too.

Erwin H. Ackerknecht
Zürich

UFFE J. JENSEN and ROM HARRÉ (editors), *The philosophy of evolution*, Brighton, Harvester Press, 1981, 8vo, pp. vii, 299, £22.50.

Darwinism has been with us for over 120 years, and other forms of evolutionism outstrip that period. Ever since Darwin dispatched his *Origin* to John Murray, philosophers have speculated about the range of phenomena which might be understood via an evolutionary perspective. Is there some kind of analogue of Darwinian evolution by natural selection controlling social change, for example? And, if so, then what are the analogues of mutation and selection? At a more abstract level, it is tempting to suppose that changes over time in the corpus of scientific knowledge (or belief) – changes like those involved in going from Copernicus to Kepler and from Newton to Einstein – constitute a definite evolution towards higher levels not of fitness, but of truth. Staying closer to Darwin, the philosopher sees that the basic model itself is not unproblematical – that there are all sorts of difficulties surrounding the meaning of “natural selection” and the question of what are the very units of selection. In other words, evolution presents philosophical issues at a variety of levels, and it is the merit of this book, based upon the contributions to an Aarhus symposium, that it tackles all the levels.

The number of essays (fifteen) and their diversity present a problem for the reviewer, but it is worth mentioning the essay by David Hull on the units of evolution, which is timely given Gould's recent reintroduction of the notion of species selection into evolutionary theory. Also notable is Harré's essay on the evolutionary analogy in social explanation, wherein he argues that the social analogues of genes are social rules. He concludes that despite the pitfalls facing anyone overlooking disanalogies between the social and the biological case, the use of the mutation/selection model is of value insofar as it allows the construction of explanations in the social sphere which do not entail a positive causality between the environment and practices adapted to it.

For the “pure” philosopher, the final section is the most exciting, comprising an essay by J. Mittelstrasse, followed by a debate between Laurens Laudan and Bill Newton-Smith on the thorny issue of whether, and, if so, in what way, scientific change may be regarded as taking us from a lesser to a greater truth. Laudan offers a “refutation of convergent realism” intended to show that it is better to see science as progressing by maximizing its problem-solving capacity