of the Paris medical faculty in which Patin's life interest was centred. "No praise," says Dr. Packard, "was too fulsome for those who furthered its cause and no abuse too savage for those who dared to attack it." Of particular interest are the pages concerned with Patin's relations to Molière, his controversy with Théophile Renaudot, the gazetteer and quack, and his quarrel with the physicians of Montpellier.

Guy Patin was born in 1601 at a village in Picardy, graduated in medicine at Paris in 1627, was elected dean of the faculty of medicine in 1650, and died in 1672, so that his active life covered the greater part of the seventeenth century. The historic value of his letters, on which his fame rests, has been impugned by such critics as Bayle and Voltaire, but Dr. Packard rightly maintains that as pictures of the life of the day they are invaluable. It must be remembered that they were never intended for publication.

Patin was an upholder of the old Greek medicine as represented by Hippocrates and Galen, and a bitter opponent of the new chemical remedies which had been introduced by Basil Valentine, Paracelsus, van Helmont, De Mayerne, and others. Like most of his contemporaries, Patin was firmly convinced of the value of copious bloodletting and free purgation in diseases of all kinds. "There is no remedy in the world," he said, "which works as many miracles as bleeding."

Dr. Packard points out that though Patin never became in the strict sense of the term one of the physicians to the Court, his letters are full of references to medical matters connected with the Court and of tales of physicians honoured by the king.

Patin's scholarly tendencies are illustrated not only by his interest in the history and literature of his profession, but also by his lively concern in general literature, as shown by the allusions in his letters to new editions of Vossius, Lipsius, Casaubon, Scaliger, Grotius, and so on.

The work is illustrated by contemporary portraits of Guy Patin, his son Charles Patin, professor of medicine at Padua, of whom Voltaire said that "his works were read by scholars, while his father's letters were read by the idle," Cardinal de Richelieu, Cardinal Mazarin, Jean Riolan the Younger, Gabriel Naudé, the librarian of Cardinal Mazarin and author of a well-known book on the history of magic, and François Guénault, physician to Louis XIII. and, owing to his advocacy of antimony, one of the men whom Patin most detested. In the bibliography which is appended, special attention is given to the articles by Chereau, and the editions of the letters published by Pierre Pic and Paul Triaire.

Dr. Packard's book is a scholarly achievement, written in an attractive style, and gives an admirable picture of French medicine in the seventeenth century.

Our Bookshelf.

Die Süßwasserflora Deutschlands, Österreichs und der Schweiz. Herausgegeben von Prof. Dr. A. Pascher. (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1913-1925.)

THE series of volumes comprised in Pascher's "Süßwasserflora" first began to appear in 1913 and is now rapidly approaching completion. Those so far published deal with the Flagellatæ, the Isokontæ (apart from Volvocales and Desmidiaceæ), the Bacillariales, Heterokontæ, Phæophyceæ, Rhodophyceæ, Charales, and Bryophyta. The work deserves to be more widely known among those interested in the study of freshwater Algæ, for since each volume is compiled by a specialist on the particular group, it usually embodies the results of critical work and is strictly up-to-date. It is far more than a popular summary of what is known. At the same time, keys for the determination of genera and species are numerous and as a rule carefully prepared, so that even a relative novice is put in the position of being able to identify common forms both speedily and easily.

As with all such collective publications, the treatment is somewhat unequal. Perhaps the most disappointing was the volume on Zygnemales by Borge, which, both as regards text and illustration, was altogether too scanty. On the whole, however, one can have nothing but praise for the care that has been bestowed upon the text, whilst the majority of the volumes are excellently illustrated, nearly every species being figured. Of particular value are the early volumes on Flagellatæ by Pascher and that dealing with Heterokontæ and the Red and Brown Algæ just published, which contain a mass of information here collected together for the first time.

Although ostensibly a freshwater flora of Central Europe, several of the algal groups are treated almost *in extenso*, all the genera and a great majority of the species being mentioned, even such as are at present only known from regions quite remote from Central Europe. In this respect, however, there appears to be no uniform plan, and the result is somewhat incongruous. Especially in some of the volumes more care might have been expended on the preparation of the index, which is of special importance in a taxonomic work. The price of the different volumes (averaging about four shillings) is very reasonable.

As the above was passing through the press, a thick volume on Cyanophyceæ by Geitler has been published. Algologists will welcome the detailed systematic treatment of this difficult group. The only defect is a tendency to multiply genera rather unnecessarily, whilst the introductory matter is based on a somewhat one-sided consideration of the literature.

F. E. FRITCH.

Biology and Human Life. By Benjamin C. Gruenberg. Pp. xiv + 592 + xi. (Boston, New York and London: Ginn and Co., 1925.) 7s. 6d. net.

IN Great Britain, biology is taught in schools, usually only in secondary schools, mainly from the examination point of view, to pupils who intend to pursue the subject further at a university or are preparing for a medical career. The majority of pupils, and particularly those in elementary schools, receive little if any