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Ray's Dictionary Trilingue
1675

John Ray (1627-1705), the supreme British naturalist of the 17th century, was a many-sided scholar who, in addition to his influential theological, philological, botanical and zoological works, produced in 1675 a *Dictionary Trilingue* in English, Latin and Greek. The utility of Ray's little three-language dictionary led to the issue of eight editions between 1675 and 1736. They were literally worn out of existence by constant handling. Only six copies of the first edition, now reproduced in facsimile, are known to have survived.

This vocabulary lists under 32 subject headings the names of birds, mammals, fish and insects, herbs, trees and shrubs, ailments, diseases, clothes, food and drink, domestic utensils, agricultural, carpentry and horticultural tools, rooms of houses and much else which Ray thought it useful to include. It reveals how little the English vernacular names of plants and animals have changed during the last four centuries and how many of their Latin equivalents became incorporated and established in modern scientific botanical and zoological nomenclature by Linnaeus and others, as generic names or specific epithets, in the 18th century.

Medical men, social, military, naval and agricultural historians, architects, theologians and mineralogists, as well as naturalists and latinists, may all find something of interest here.

The introduction by W. T. Stearn provides a short account of Ray's career, a commentary on the *Dictionary Trilingue*, primarily as a natural history vocabulary, and G. Keynes' bibliography of the edition.

[Notes from dust jacket]

Published by the Ray Society (1981)
Price £7.50.

British Museum (Natural History) by Peter Whitehead
with photographs by Colin Keates

£4.95 Scala/Philip Wilson in association with the BM(NH), 1981, 128pp.

In this centenary year, of the BM(NH) at South Kensington, there have been several books published both by and about the Museum. The exhibition "Nature Stored, Nature Studied" which commemorates the event has its own booklet but this one utilizes much of the same information plus a lot more and is much better value for money. The text is written, one assumes, for the intelligent layman but it is much more than a basic description of the functions of the museum and the captions to the photographs act as a parallel text, all crammed full of interesting facts.

The photographs are of very high quality, all in full colour and number over 200. The book has been printed in Italy and it is quite likely that the quality of reproduction could not have been achieved for this cost in this country. These alone would guarantee to sell the book and the photographer, who gains a warranted "co-authorship" on the front cover, must be highly pleased with the results.