

REVIEWS

A HUNDRED YEARS OF EVOLUTION. By G. S. Carter, M.A., Ph.D. London : Sidgwick and Jackson. 1957. Pp. 206+x. 21s.

THE EVOLUTION OF LIVING THINGS. By H. Graham Cannon, F.R.S. Manchester University Press. 1958. Pp. 180+ix. 12s. 6d.

The centenary of the *Origin of Species* has aroused a number of travellers in the evolutionary train into activity. In some cases it has aroused them from slumber. Not so much Dr Carter who has reviewed the century and gives an account which corresponds with what is widely taught about evolution and Darwinism in university departments almost everywhere. Naturally it is not in touch with recent developments in genetic theory. Naturally its focus is in comparative anatomy and palæontology : to him these are real and tangible things ; the rest is seen at an uncertain distance.

Professor Cannon's contribution is of a different kind. He has slumbered very long. And he seems to have slumbered in the luggage van of the train. For when he rubs his eyes all he finds in focus is the giant figure of Lamarck so long misunderstood.

Professor Cannon's interest in Lamarck has not, however, led him to look at what others have recently said about Lamarck. He is unaware of the scholarly histories, the penetrating experiments and the somewhat novel theoretical issues which have within the last twenty years revised our understanding of Lamarckism. He is also unaware of the displacement of classical genetics by unexpected and paradoxical theories which have slightly revised but greatly strengthened the position of Darwinism.

Let it not be thought that Professor Cannon's work is to be disdained. It is far more exciting than Dr Carter's. It is a book that is worth keeping and those who keep it will be able to bequeath a beautifully produced volume that will be as refreshing for their grandchildren as it has been for them.

C. D. D.