A Linnaean Antagonist. Shortly after the middle of the 18th century many of Linnaeus' doctrines were generally accepted throughout Europe. There were, however, several isolated pockets of resistance. Two of these were Mannheim and Marburg. At the former there was Friedrich Medicus and at the latter Conrad Moench. Both were outspoken and occasionally vitriolic critics of Linnaeus—Medicus referred to him as the 'Dictator der Kräuterlehre'—and rejected his "Sexual System" of classification and many of the names he used. Moench had earlier been a supporter of the "Sexual System" but later, like Medicus, became an adherent of Gleditsch's classification. In this system, it was the position, and not the number, of stamens that was the most weighted character. When Moench set about preparing an account of the plants (flowering and non-flowering) in the Marburg Botanic Garden and its vicinity, it was Gleditsch's system, and not Linnaeus', that was used as the basis. The "Methodus" was published in 1794 and, until this reprint appeared, has been a very rare and inaccessible book.* In it, there appear numerous validly published generic and specific names. For example, Moench is the author of such well known generic names as *Hirschfeldia*, *Bergenia* and *Kniphofia*. He had a much narrower generic concept than did Linnaeus recognising, for instance, *Ceratocephalus* as distinct from *Ranunculus* and *Naumbergia* as different from *Lysimachia*. Another example is provided by his splitting of *Salvia* Linn. into *Salvia*, *Schraderia*, *Sclarea* and *Horminum*. This is an example of his using, in the cases of *Sclarea* and *Horminum*, the pre-Linnaean Tournefortian names. In general, his classification is just as, if not more, artificial than that of Linnaeus and resulted in as many misalliances as there are in the Species Plantarum.

Other than its historical interest, the chief importance of the 'Methodus' today is as a nomenclatural reference work. With however, no complementary herbarium specimens, typification of the taxa is rarely straightforward.

Costing almost £20 and running to over a thousand pages that list, in Latin, descriptions of the plants in a small 18th century botanical garden and the surrounding Hesse countryside, this is clearly a book for the specialist and not the general botanical reader. The latter will happily settle for Dr. Stearn's fourteen page introduction and leave the gnomes of nomenclature to fight over the typification of the numerous taxa in the remaining millenary.

I. C. HEDGE.

*Conrad Moench. Methodus plantas horti botanici et agri Marburgensis *and* Supplementum ad methodum plantas. Marburg. 1794 and 1802. Facsimile reprints with introduction and biography by W. T. Stearn. Koenigstein-Tannus. Koeltz. 1966. 2v. 8 in. Price DM 200 (paper bound); DM 216 (cloth).