

RESTITUTION

Give back, learn how, what you have learned to take
 And call your own – all the gifts Life gave you
 Before your time was up; the blue bird flew
 Beyond the Dawn that crimson Youth's green lake.
 Be brave and sensible; hand back; forsake
 What greed of living would hang to: the blue-
 Throated bird of youth, wild jungle cry, true
 Call of the Spring in rhythm without break.

Pindar and Vergil, Dante, all the great
 Whose names are trumpets on the Roof of Fame,
 Surrendered one by one the gifts that Life
 Withdraws from us by ancient common Fate –
 End of all Flesh, our death, end of all strife
 But end no less of ageing and its shame.

The Lyceum, Victoria,
 Gozo – 5.vi.68.

J. AQUILINA

MENTAL DOODLING

On the whole,
 I have grumbled too much about life
 But always
 Like a loving husband about his wife.
 Frankly, my man,
 Loving them both
 I would part
 With neither life nor wife;
 For, mark my words,
 The fun of it all
 Lies in joint struggle and strife.

The Lyceum, Victoria,
 Gozo – 5.vi.68.

J. AQUILINA

BOOK REVIEW

THORKILD HANSEN, *Arabia Felix*, English translation London, 1964.
 Originally published Copenhagen, 1962.

In 1761 a Danish expedition left Copenhagen on a tour which was to take its members, or rather those who survived, through the Mediterranean to Asia Minor, Suez, Bombay, Arabia and home again across Europe. On the way they collected a great deal of historical and scientific information.

The book is of particular interest to students concerned with Maltese studies for in June 1761 the expedition spent several days at Malta. In fact Hansen's book gives very little direct information about the island but some members of the expedition made copious observations and their diaries and notebooks are preserved, in some cases published. The author indicates these sources. One member of the expedition, apart from describing Valletta 'compiled a Flora Melitensis, which included 87 different plants; he described the big salt-extraction installations on the coast, studied the island's trade and discovered how the Maltese brought snow from the mountain tops of Sicily'. Another man made measurement of latitude and longitude which resulted in Malta's position on the map being corrected.

Clearly the expedition collected important information on late eighteenth century Malta and it would be useful if some further research was undertaken on the topic.

B.W.B.