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Eternal Quest: The Story of the Great Naturalists.  
Alexander B. Adams. New York: G.P. Putnam's  
Sons, 1969. 509 pp. \$10.95.

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ETERNAL QUEST: THE STORY OF THE GREAT NATURALISTS. Alexander B. Adams. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1969. 509pp. \$10.95.

Alexander Adams seems, if unconsciously, to be following in the footsteps of Donald Culross Peattie. Like Peattie, he wrote a volume on Audubon and then essayed a biographical survey of a number of important naturalists. *Eternal Quest* is the latter, and interestingly enough, it is the first book of its precise kind since Peattie's *Green Laurels* (1936) to evoke the same emotion.

*Eternal Quest* is a popularization of the history of science, written for a non-professional audience, but it is the sort of book that accomplishes more in the long run than a professional treatise. Like the immensely popular *Green Laurels*, Adams' work will urge others to the study of biology through the often inspiring examples of early investigators. Beginning with man's earliest natural speculations, Adams weaves a sprightly narrative of biological endeavor that ends with Mendel, T. H. Morgan and the discovery of DNA. His in-depth portraits are scholarly and sound; they provide no fresh information, but are not meant to do so. Undeniably we need a popular biographical narrative of the history of biology every twenty-five years or so, which will take into account the scholarship produced in the interim. *Eternal Quest* succeeds admirably in this specific role. It is recommended especially to students, but professional biologists and even the fact-hardened historian of science will find it good reading. Adams even points a moral, but it is not such a bad one; writing of the naturalists, he comments that "in these confused times we might well take to heart the lessons their lives so closely reveal to us and learn that problems are conquered only by fresh and open minds. We might also respect what they have taught us about natural history: that man is not necessarily here to stay unless he can find a better means of preserving himself and his environment."

R. S. W.

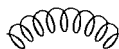
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