

Workhouse Infirmary and on the work of Agnes Jones, who is portrayed through Nightingale's writings, but also through the editorial perspective of McDonald, as a paragon of Christian virtue and a martyr to the cause of nursing. In addition to a fairly detailed discussion of Jones's appointment and work in the main text, McDonald also devotes an appendix to a further consideration of her life, alongside those of John Sutherland and William Rathbone. The story of the reform of workhouse nursing is well told, through the carefully edited texts in this section of the volume, and provides a very useful resource.

The third useful element within *Florence Nightingale on public health care* is the insight it provides into Nightingale's perceptions of sanitary reform. The inclusion of Nightingale's treatise on *Sick nursing and health nursing* stands alongside her *Sanitary statistics of native colonial schools and hospitals* and her *Rural hygiene*, to illustrate the breadth of her perspective on public health.

Florence Nightingale on public health care is, then, a very useful resource for scholars in the fields of history of nursing and history of medicine. As well as providing the reader with carefully edited critical editions of some of Nightingale's most important works, it makes available to future scholarship in these fields a vast array of correspondence, notes and other unpublished material, which will enable a more thorough and complete understanding of Nightingale and her work.

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Helen King (ed.), *Health in Antiquity*, London and New York, Routledge, 2005, pp. xxii, 292, US\$87.50 (hardback 0-415-22065-3).

The publication of conference papers can be fraught with problems, as this volume shows. The original organizer of the conference gave up, some contributors drifted away, one died, others were added, and a valiant editor stepped in to link together essays that differ considerably in scope

and quality. The original theme seems to have been that of health, and the ancient Greek and Roman views on health, as opposed to disease, but, apart from Emma Stafford's paper on the cult of the goddess Hygieia, and Gillian Clark on Christian and pagan ascetics, this proved impossible—or a missed opportunity. Plutarch and Galen's discussion of health are briefly noted, those of Athenaeus of Attaleia and hellenistic doctors disregarded entirely. Philosophical (and later theological) discussions of the classification of "good things" are likewise omitted.

Instead, we are given four useful papers on the results of archaeological and palaeopathological surveys of ancient sites from Greek prehistory to Pompeii, showing more promise of things to come than overturning standard views. Another archaeological paper, by Ralph Jackson, is the highlight of the volume. He compares the written advice on bone surgery with the evidence of instruments and skeletal evidence to show the relative effectiveness of ancient bone surgery—and its complexity and ingenuity. This is a model of solid scholarship that integrates detailed evidence into a wider picture. In a more literary fashion John Wilkins tests the advice of medical writers on diet against that of cookbooks and food writers to assess the feasibility of medical dietetics for ordinary Greeks and Romans. He argues for a general similarity between the two, and draws attention to the way ancient preferences differed from those of modern dieticians. Two papers look generally at notions of health as applied to women (Helen King) and the disabled (Nicholas Vlahogiannis), interesting topics for which the ancient evidence is relatively sparse. The late Dominic Montserrat studies the Christian healing cult of SS. Cyrus and John at Menouthis, a nice introduction to a cult less familiar than that of Cosmas and Damian. Two further papers offer musings on the use of drama in modern healing and its potential application in ancient healing cults, and on the importance of a pleasant environment in modern hospital architecture and at certain ancient shrines. The latter is more successful in avoiding special pleading.

This is a difficult volume to review, for, despite the editor's valiant attempt in her introduction, neither the theme nor the individual contributions cohere easily. There is some high quality scholarship on display that was well worth publishing in some form, but there are gaps, not all the fault of the authors. But Classicists still fail to use the Arabic Galen, to their disadvantage. There is no reference to Galen's comments on the role of rhetorical performances in the Asclepius cult (*On examining the physician* 1,1-2) or his important exposition of the role of Hygieia in the fragments of his commentary on the Hippocratic *Oath* (edited by Franz Rosenthal). These include quotations from the famous paean of Ariphron, and from at least one other poem, and give a Pergamene perspective on the significance of Asclepius and his family.

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Maaïke van der Lugt, *Le ver, le démon et la vierge: les théories médiévales de la génération extraordinaire: une étude sur les rapports entre théologie, philosophie naturelle et médecine*, Collection L'Âne d'or, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2004, pp. xiv, 621, €37 (paperback 2-251-42018-5).

The worm, an animal formed by spontaneous generation, represents the Virgin Birth of Christ ("I am a worm and no man" of Psalm 22 could be read as a Christological text); the demon is a semi-spiritual creature capable of inseminating a woman; and the virgin, who gives birth parthenogenetically, is also, perhaps, the Virgin Mary. Maaïke van der Lugt explores these three themes in medieval embryology through theological, philosophical, and medical texts from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries. The introductory remarks on the *Malleus maleficarum* are something of a false trail; van der Lugt's focus is on scholastic accounts of human and animal generation in the Middle

Ages, with a few excursions into more general texts.

Van der Lugt convincingly argues that theologians, philosophers and physicians shared a discourse on development in which the Virgin Birth was a common theme. "Divine embryology" was concerned with four aspects of the Virgin Birth: the roles of Mary and the Holy Spirit, the influence of the stars, the timing of the formation of the embryo and its ensoulment, and the source of material from which it was formed. Scholastics made no absolute distinction between nature and miracle, and described the conception and Virgin Birth of Christ in the same terms as ordinary generation. The popular devotion to Maria Gravidia also implied a real rather than a miraculous pregnancy: conception by the Holy Ghost was one more way, in addition to parthenogenesis, putrefaction and demonic insemination, by which a virgin could become pregnant.

Van der Lugt then considers the limits of natural generation. Animals could become pregnant without insemination through the action of the wind (by proxy for the *pneuma* of semen) or the stars, though wind eggs and molar pregnancies were the imperfect results. Spontaneous generation yielded ignoble animals such as insects and vermin, though a search for nobler examples is suggested by medieval legends of barnacle geese, and vegetable lambs, which grew on trees. Medieval scholars accepted the possibility of conception by demons but, unlike later theologians, did not associate it with sorcery, and denied demons generative power, insisting on their borrowing or altering human semen to achieve offspring. Van der Lugt painstakingly compares French and English manuscript and printed sources on demonic reproduction: Merlin, who lacked a human father, is our conductor through a series of accounts of generation by incubi, succubi, and humans; parallels that made it easier to accept the Virgin Birth as a natural rather than a supernatural event.

The chapters on the conception of Christ demonstrate that theologians drew on medical writings, some no longer extant, to describe the development of Christ *in utero*. Aristotelian