

Book Notices

Renate Wittern and Pierre Pellegrin (eds.), *Hippokratische Medizin und antike Philosophie*, Medizin der Antike, Band 1, Hildesheim, Olms-Weidmann, 1996, pp. xii, 651, DM 138.00 (33-487-10037-1).

This volume of proceedings from the 8th Colloque Hippocratique comes more stoutly packaged than many of its predecessors, and contains much to interest specialists in ancient medicine. The broad theme of the conference, Hippocratic medicine and ancient philosophy, is made even broader by the inclusion, mainly justified, of investigations of Hippocratism in Byzantium, the Renaissance, and the late-eighteenth century, and, less satisfactorily, of a variety of other papers on "interpretations". Some, Villard and Wenskus on chance, Wesley Smith on the development of therapies for acute diseases, and Elinor Lieber on the diseases of the Scythians in *Airs, waters, places*, deserve their place, but others are less easy to appreciate.

The main body of the proceedings contains many surprises; alongside the familiar Aristotle, Plato, and the Presocratics are the Attic orators, Hellenistic writers on Utopia, and a Late Latin anonymous author of a text largely on generation. Four papers stand out for the variety of new questions they raise. Volker Langholf compares the Hippocratic and Platonic ideals of doctor-patient communication, including non-verbal communication; Ann Hanson examines critically the role(s) ascribed in the biographical tradition to Phaenarete, Hippocrates' mother or grandmother, and shows how obstetrics came to be included in the picture of Hippocratic medicine; Philip van der Eijk discusses interpretations of a fourth-century BC doctor, Diocles of Carystos, arguing convincingly that Jaeger was wildly exaggerating when he characterized a long fragment on the principles of dietetics as a major contribution to the philosophy of scientific method; and, finally, Daniela Manetti

continues her re-examination of the Anonymus Londinensis papyrus by setting its author's view of Hippocrates in the context of Roman Hippocratism.

All in all, the high scholarly level of these colloques is maintained, and we look forward to the publication of the 1996 meeting in Pisa.

Steven Cherry, *Medical services and the hospitals in Britain, 1860–1939*, New Studies in Economic and Social History, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. vii, 93, £17.95, \$27.95 (hardback 0-521-57126-X); £6.25, \$9.95 (paperback 0-421-57784-5).

Cherry has provided a concise overview of the development of institutional medical services during a period when they underwent expansion, faced increased demand and financial difficulties, and became the focus of debate on the delivery of health care. With a critical bibliography, a broad picture is painted that embraces the professionalization of medicine and nursing, changes in medical practice, and the historical debates on mortality and health care. Cherry hints at more than he can cover and offers a brief analysis of finance and questions of accountability and control. It is asserted that by 1939 substantial reforms were needed, a point that was widely accepted. This book provides a much needed introduction to an important era in the development of medical services.

Hester Parr and Chris Philo, *'A forbidding fortress of locks, bars and padded cells': the locational history of mental health care in Nottingham*, Historical Geography Research Series No. 32, Historical Geography Research Group, 1996, pp. v, 98, illus., no price given (187-0074-14-9).

The authors of this short monograph pride themselves on their empirical approach. In a

Book Notices

historical geography of mental health care in Nottingham, a detailed narrative is given of the development of institutional services in the nineteenth century and de-institutionalization in the late-twentieth century. A discussion of historical geography provides an informative background to the methodology. Local events are cautiously linked to national change, with the focus always on Nottingham. Institutional geography is connected to changing attitudes to mental health care. Less attention is given to treatment, and developments elsewhere are often glossed over to assert Nottingham's important role.

Nicolas Postel-Vinay (ed.), *A century of arterial hypertension 1896–1996*, transl. Richard Edelstein and Christopher Coffin, Chichester, John Wiley & Sons, and Paris, IMOTHEP, 1996, pp. x, 213, illus., £25 (0-471-96788-2).

Although an edited volume, the chapters in this book are not accredited to particular authors. An editorial committee of fifteen (including an historian) seem, however, to have been at the helm. This is a most useful book. It has chapters on measuring blood pressure, the recognition of hypertension as an insurance risk and a history of high blood pressure, epidemiological studies, aetiological concepts, treatment, the normal and the pathological, social factors, current state of play and genetic contributions to the condition. It is detailed and well referenced but the decision to treat the scientific and cultural past (table of contents) of the concept as different categories should alert the reader to the volume's historiographical orientation.

O L Wade, *The romance of remedies: a physician looks back*, Bishop Auckland, Durham Academic Press, 1996, pp. x, 133, illus., £8.50 (1-900838-02-8).

According to the author "This book is a result of retirement, memories and a word

processor". It combines brief accounts of the discovery of several drugs (quinine, curare, digitalis, sulphonamides, penicillin, streptomycin, thalidomide and vitamin B12) with the author's experiences with them during thirty years as a physician and professor of therapeutics. A variety of unusual events are recorded, in which the author took part. References are given to the sources from which the historical accounts are derived, but apparently the events in which the author was involved were not documented at the time when they actually took place. The result is good entertainment but limited in value to historians.

Gesnerus, Supplementum 44 (1995): Index, Vol. 1–50, 1943/44–1993, Basel, Schwabe, 1995, pp. vi, 166, Fr. 45.00, DM 54.00.

This cumulated index which covers the first 50 volumes of *Gesnerus* also includes the authors of the *Gesnerus supplements* (1990–1993) and of the publications of the Swiss Society of the History of Medicine and Sciences (1922–1987), but not their contents. The titles of articles and books remain in their original languages, German being used for the subject headings. Clearly laid out, with a good system of cross-references, it is an invaluable guide to an invaluable journal.

Jonathan Sawday, *The body emblazoned: dissection and the human body in Renaissance culture*, London and New York, Routledge, 1996 (hardback 1995), pp. xii, 327, illus., £12.99 (paperback 0-415-15719-6).

In his review of the hardback edition of this book (*Med. Hist.*, 1996, 40: 253–4), David Harley wrote: "Sawday has provided a fascinating cultural history of early modern dissection that will stimulate new thinking about the understanding of the body and the interaction of medical ideas with other currents of thought."