

Book Reviews

doubts. Such a revision, taking into account also the studies of Friedenwald and S. W. Baron, would still have great value.

One disturbing feature of this reprint is its cavalier attitude to the classical languages. The Greek is transliterated in a modern Greek phonetic transcription, thereby making it almost unintelligible even to classicists, especially as printing and copying errors here abound. Both Greek and Latin, both as unknown to the readership as Preuss's German, are often left untranslated, and, when a version is given, it is either printed without distinguishing marks or, far too often, inaccurate: e.g. p. 11, n.1 "each doctor deals with a single disease", not, as Rosner, "for every disease there is one physician"; p. 499, "because of the size of his unmentionable organ", not "because of his obscene size". Both translator and publisher could have saved themselves space and done honour to Preuss's considerable philological scholarship if they had removed completely all the Greek and Latin and replaced them with accurate versions. As it is, the reader is frequently faced with words as perplexing as the disease which killed King Asa.

ALLEN G. DEBUS, *Man and nature in the Renaissance*, Cambridge University Press, 1978, 8vo, pp. x, 159, illus., £7.95 (£2.50 paperback).

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Dr. Debus, whose studies of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Paracelsians are well known, now turns to a broader survey of science in general from 1450 to 1650. The result is not always happy. While rightly stressing that old-fashioned, mystical, or theological ideas often coexist with others more strictly scientific and progressive, he is constrained, perhaps by the format of the series, to write a very Whiggish and traditional history, with little of the chiaroscuro of a Cipolla or a Keith Thomas and with a strong emphasis on ideas rather than, like Wightman, on their social context. Lack of space may have pre-empted a discussion of developments in therapy (save for chemical drugs), but in the six pages devoted to sixteenth-century anatomy the predecessors of Vesalius get short shrift. There is no mention of Massa or Estienne, and Berengario receives praise for his illustrations, not for his discoveries. The self-propaganda of Vesalius has triumphed once again, along with the myth of Harvey's overwhelming debt to Padua for his knowledge of Aristotle and Galen. What else did he study while he was at Cambridge?

The book shows many signs of hasty writing: pp. 18, 45, two dates for the death of Arnold of Villanova; p. 41, Flavius Anicius, a senator, is called a Roman emperor; p. 57, two English titles of *On the use of parts* are mistaken for two separate Galenic works; p. 66, the Royal College of Physicians is described as "one of the most prestigious scientific societies of Europe", perhaps by confusion with the Royal Society.

There is a good bibliography and some pertinent illustrations, but the overall effect of this worthy textbook is less exciting than the blurb suggests. Only occasionally does Dr. Debus' writing rise to the enthusiasm of Renaissance scientists, whose passion for even the humble rhubarb led, on one occasion, from Ferrara to Budapest, Moscow and far Cathay.