

Book Reviews

language; this is followed by a little on texts available, followed in turn by a long discussion of the taxonomy of such texts and a defence of the study of “academic” or “learned” vernacular texts. There is much to be learned here, although the author has not attempted a coherent study. Bert S. Hall devotes himself to considering problems of understanding and interpreting mostly published texts in the history of late medieval technology (nothing medical here); while Bernard Cohen’s ‘Thrice revealed Newton’ is a detailed history of the publication of Newton’s writings from 1687 to 1980. This is an excellent introduction for the novice (although, curiously it omits several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century publications), but, of course, there is nothing of specifically medical interest here.

The historian of medicine would profit from Drake’s exceptionally cogent account, from Voigts’ specialized analysis and, for correspondence, from Beaulieu’s survey.

Marie Boas Hall
Tackley, Oxford

WALTER PAGEL, *Paracelsus. An introduction to philosophical medicine in the era of the Renaissance*, 2nd rev. ed., Basle, Karger, 1982, 8vo, pp. xii, 404, illus., SFr. 139.00.

Pagel’s *Paracelsus* is a monument of European scholarship and humane sympathy. Its first edition, 1958, supplied not only the key to the understanding of many aspects of non-Galenic medicine in the Renaissance but also an interpretation of Paracelsus’ life and personality that sought to free him from the reproach of being mystic, mad, or both. The reappearance of this fundamental book in a second, revised edition can only be welcomed, but with one serious reservation. The revisions comprise a new foreword, a collation of passages cited from Huser’s edition with those of Sudhoff, and twenty-five pages of corrections and addenda, mostly giving precision to some of the events of Paracelsus’ life and, in particular, stressing his links with earlier gnostic thinkers like Konrad von Meigenburg. The revisions offer a perspective of a generation of Paracelsus scholarship in miniature, and will undoubtedly prove of great value. Yet there is no indication in the text itself to refer the reader to any corrections, and he must therefore peruse the book with one finger constantly on the errata. This would hardly be acceptable in a cheap reprint; to be asked to pay well over £50 for this represents an insult to the purchaser and an injustice to the author, for it prevents the book’s diffusion among those who need it most, teachers and students of the history of medicine and of renaissance thought.

Vivian Nutton
Wellcome Institute

GEOFFREY HOLMES, *Augustan England. Professions, state, and society, 1680–1730*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1982, 8vo, pp. xiv, 332, £18.50.

Professor Holmes’s book, jam-packed with information and enlivened throughout with vivid personal cameos and dry wit, invites a major rethink in our approaches to the history of the professions. The alliance of the sociology of the professions with “modernization theory” has encouraged us to think of “professionalization” as essentially a nineteenth-century development, associated with the abolition of the *ancien régime* or “Old Corruption”, the Industrial Revolution and its needs, the career open to talent within the liberal state, the Victorian ethos of service and duty, the tides of Progress and Reform. For the traditional liberal professions, the landmarks of professionalization are pointed out by sociologists and historians in the nineteenth-century constitutional spring-cleans: new state regulations, competitive entry, often through written examinations and formal certification, the shift from oligarchy and nepotism to more open self-disciplining and policing of standards, and so forth. But the nineteenth century is also the epoch when skills which, in traditional society had been mere trades, or for amateurs, such as the occupation of magistrate, nurse, schoolmaster, or architect, attained organized, public, professional status for the first time, signalled by the founding of their own chartered corporations or associations. Much valuable work in the historical sociology of medicine – e.g., by Holloway, Waddington, Scull, and the Parrys – implicitly or explicitly follows these models.

Professor Holmes, by contrast, claims – with a convincing battery of evidence – that the real watershed in the history of the professions had occurred a whole century earlier. He takes into