

Book Reviews

The book has six main sections: 'Anfänge der Medizin', 'Hippokrates', 'Instrumente und Medikamente', 'Asklepios', 'Der Arzt als Stand und Beruf', 'Ende und Weiterleben der antiken Medizin'. Within each of these chapters are numerous headed subsections which help to spotlight subjects in the absence of an index. If the result is occasionally a little like reading through a card index, then it is one which is both well-ordered and comprehensive. Inevitably, there is some overlap and repetition, most noticeable in the Asklepios section, but in the main the arrangement is a good one. It is strengthened by the use of numerous well-chosen in-text illustrations which have been skilfully integrated so that they almost invariably lie adjacent to the corresponding text. A good balance has also been reached with the footnotes which, without overloading the text, give access to a considerable number of references in addition to those of the general bibliography.

This reviewer would have liked to have seen a little more space devoted to disease and its treatment with perhaps rather fewer or briefer descriptions of healing sanctuaries, but these are minor points which do not detract from the overall excellence of the book. Antje Krug is to be congratulated on providing us with a book that will undoubtedly be long and widely used.

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LEENDERT G. WESTERINK, (editor and translator), *Stephanus of Athens, Commentary on Hippocrates' Aphorisms, Sections 1–2, Corpus Medicorum Graecorum XI 1,3,1*, Berlin DDR, Akademie Verlag, 1985, 8vo, pp. 257, M.78.00

Professor Westerink, who has over many years edited philosophical and educational texts from late Antiquity and the Byzantine Empire, now turns his attention to medicine. His publication of the first part of a lecture course delivered in sixth-century Alexandria on the major medical text in the Hippocratic Corpus can be warmly welcomed, not least because it comes equipped with an accurate English translation. But the editor's services go further, for he has made available for the first time large parts of the commentary as well as clarifying their relationship to the other pieces of exegesis printed alongside them by the only previous editor, F. R. Dietz, in 1834. It is now possible at last to read the text as a whole and to appreciate some of the complex problems of dating, text, and indeed authorship.

The work survives in three different versions, as well as in later citations by Theophilus, who lived c. 870. The passages here printed represent an abridgement and a revision of a text which survives in its entirety for books III and IV in a Madrid MS. The same codex also contains, ascribed to Asclepius, a third version of the lectures on Books V and VI. With characteristic learning, the editor argues that either the lectures on books III–IV and V–VI were taken down by two different students, probably at two different times, and a later copyist wrongly attributed the second set to Asclepius, on whom Stephanus avowedly depends for some of his ideas; or the ascriptions are correct and the citations from Theophilus, who knew the whole of Stephanus' lectures, show that Stephanus was, in Books V–VI at least, content merely to repeat the words of his predecessor. A decision is difficult—compare the similar confusion of authorship of the commentary on Galen's *On sects*—but, ultimately, of relatively little importance, for, in either case, we are dealing with reports of teaching in the mid or late sixth century.

These commentaries show no sterile Galenism. Galen is often behind many of the interpretations, but his opinion is not slavishly followed, and he is usually cited from memory. It is interesting to see that Stephanus was still lecturing on Galen's anatomical texts (p. 37), although not, of course, dissecting. The lectures are full of useful examples drawn from practice, and some effort is made to explain to the audience some of the phrases that refer to social or medical situations now past (cf. p. 63 on athletics). The lectures are punctuated with references to the sort of patients the students might treat (cf. p. 45, "You must be a tyrant, if necessary in the face of disease and not allow the art to yield to person or rank."), and, p. 257, with a classroom reminiscence of Professor Gesius. Stephanus' aim is to imbue his pupils with proper method, and he contrasts the Hippocratic physician often with the "idiot" physician,

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who through ignorance of the proper method commits error after error and who is led astray by a simplistic reliance on symptoms. But there are limits to a doctor's knowledge; only God, a higher power, knows everything or disposes of health to every patient, and the workings of the heavens are not always revealed to the physician. Sometimes the responsibility for a patient's failure to recover can be properly laid at the door of his doctor, but at other times chance and the vagaries of the patient himself must take the blame (cf. pp. 123 and 231).

Although one might take issue with Professor Westerink's renderings on occasions (e.g. "gases" for "*pneumata*" and "trial" for "*peira*") and occasionally suspect his text of being more corrupt than he allows (e.g. p. 241, 32), this should not take away from his considerable achievement in editing and translating this complicated text. It is a mark of the quality of his scholarship that one regrets not having a longer introduction which would set out more clearly the meaning and significance of the "Olympiodorean method" (a reference to Richard is not enough by itself) or set the work itself in its broader educational context. But this reviewer also appreciates the virtues of brevity and concision.

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GIAMBATTISTA MORGAGNI, *Clinical consultations*, the edition of Enrico Benassi (1935) trans. and rev. by Saul Jarcho, Boston, Mass., Francis Countway Library of Medicine 1984, 8vo, pp. C, 450, \$42.50 (distributed by University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville).

It is rare to be able to greet a book with unreserved applause, but *The clinical consultations of Giambattista Morgagni* deserves nothing less. The story of the publication is interesting in itself. In 1771, Morgagni, perhaps more than a little aware of his abilities, gave to Michele Girardi, his favourite pupil, fourteen folio volumes of his writings. Included were a hundred clinical consultation reports, opinions on cases in which, in most instances, Morgagni had not seen the patient. They were written in Italian and, after many vicissitudes, they were edited and annotated by Enrico Benassi, an eminent Italian radiologist, and issued in an edition of 500 copies in 1935. The current edition is a translation by Saul Jarcho of Benassi's edition with a new preface, and a great many new footnotes.

Consultations by letter, as Jarcho points out, were "neither a novelty nor a rarity in Morgagni's time" (p.L). They were common in the middle ages and, in the eighteenth century, both Boerhaave and Cullen had extensive epistolary practices. In some instances, the original letter asking Morgagni's advice has been preserved, in others only his reply. The reader familiar only with Morgagni's *De sedibus et causis morborum* may at first be surprised by this volume and its apparently marginal use of pathological anatomy, but closer acquaintance clearly shows the letters to be progeny of the same hand that wrote the classic of local pathology. The impression the letters leave is of Morgagni, using every resource available, attempting to paint a picture of sickness as part of the life of the sufferer. Using anatomy, humoral pathology, chemistry, ancient knowledge, climatology, and so forth, he built up an account of how specific diseases—aneurysm, phthisis, or whatever—took such a form in the patient at the time. On the basis of this he constructed careful, and entirely individual, therapeutic indications. Within this world, pathological anatomy was simply that, the anatomical aspect of disease, not its be-all and end-all. The cases also show that Morgagni was not only a physician, since they include advice on trauma (a torn tongue) and pregnancy. Jarcho has provided a simple and sensitive, but scholarly introduction, avoiding any flamboyant theorizing about eighteenth-century practice. For *aficionados* of Enlightenment medicine, this volume will be a treasure. For tyros looking for a point of entry into the strange world of eighteenth-century practice, it should be a delight.

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