

## Book Notices

**Richard Woodhead**, *The strange case of R L Stevenson*, Edinburgh, Luath Press, 2001, pp. xi, 208, £16.99 (hardback 0-946487-86-3).

This pleasantly unassuming book describes the medical history of Robert Louis Stevenson through a series of fictional reminiscences in nineteenth-century style. Each part is recounted as if it were a memoir by one of Stevenson's doctors. The doctors and their patient were real enough—Andrew Clark, Karl Ruedi, Thomas Bodley, E L Trudeau, and Bernard Funk—and the disease entities too. Stevenson was popularly thought to have suffered from consumption and each of the doctors was, in his way, involved with developing or implementing specialist cures for the “white plague”. The suspicion of this disease certainly dominated Stevenson's life. Richard Woodhead successfully uses the voices of these five doctors to challenge such a diagnosis, offering instead their conviction that Stevenson was afflicted with the much less glamorous condition bronchiectasis. The device works sufficiently well. Woodhead brings alive the need felt by Stevenson's wife Fanny to believe in his consumption, and possibly Stevenson's wish to concur, especially when the world seemed against them. Woodhead discusses shifts in the knowledge base as the tubercle bacillus is seen and identified, and allows his doctors to speak either confidently or dubiously about the medical changes they were living through. Throughout, Stevenson himself twists and glitters across the text, his stories painfully blocked for months, cigarettes dangling from his long fingers or anxiously inspecting spittle for blood. Here and there the conversations are stilted. Woodhead relies

on letters, medical texts and other genuine materials for his dramatization which, while lending authenticity, tend towards high Victorian seriousness. But I thoroughly enjoyed it. This would make a charming gift for any enthusiastic fan of RSL.

**Anargyros Anastassiou, Dieter Irmer**, *Testimonien zum Corpus Hippocraticum, Teil II: Galen. 2 Band: Hippokrateszitate in den übrigen Werken Galens einschliesslich der alten Pseudo-Galenica*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001, pp. lvi, 416, DM 228.00 (hardback 3-525-25808-9).

The second volume of this project lists the quotations from and references to Hippocratic texts among the writings of Galen that are not specifically devoted to Hippocratic commentary. The passages are first printed according to the Hippocratic text from which they come, and, more briefly, according to the Galenic work in which they are found. An appendix updates and corrects the passages selected in volume 1. The two indexes list the Galenic references in this volume and the proper names mentioned in both volumes. Where no modern edition is available, the authors have revised the Greek of Kühn's edition against a selection of manuscripts. They have included also some pseudo-Galenic material, mainly from Kühn, signaling it as such in the margin and explaining their decisions in the introduction. Although the authors are usually correct in deciding between spurious and authentic Galenica, it is surprising that they still hesitate to condemn *On theriac, for Pamphilianus* and to rescue *On the small ball* from Wenkebach's scruples.