

Book Reviews

Labour Front's Institute for Work Psychology. His integration of empirical research and ethical discourse is a model for the investigation of such areas. This integration stands in marked contrast to the world of psychologists themselves who—like other civil servants and professional people—substantially separated questions relating to professional practice from questions about what that practice meant in the context of the state. This book is therefore a profound study of the politics of professional culture.

Roger Smith, Lancaster University

GALEN, *On semen*, ed., transl. and commentary by Phillip De Lacy, *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum*, 5, 3, 1, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1992, pp. 291, DM 220.00 (3–05–001863–1).

This new edition of Galen's major exposition of his views on generation breaks fresh ground in many ways. It is the first to incorporate a wide range of manuscript information, particularly so in Book II, where a ninth-century Arabic translation provides many important corrections and additions to the earlier standard Greek text. The editor's shrewd use of the fourth-century Greek excerpts in the medical *Synopses* of Oribasius also improves the Greek in many places, although their contribution in terms of new ideas or passages is much less. Secondly, the text is accompanied by a fluent English translation and a brief commentary dealing largely with the philosophical and medical problems within the text. It is a pity that more space was not allotted here to explaining many of the stylistic changes and emendations, a few of which may be unnecessary (e.g. the comment on 110, 14–16 imputes an unlikely motive to the Latin translator Niccolò).

In these two books, Galen attacks Aristotle and his followers for their views on the male and female contributions to generation, positing himself that both male and female seeds were required for conception. His arguments, drawn from experiment and logic, formed a powerful critique of Aristotle's idea of a male seed imposing itself on and shaping female material, and they continued to foster debate at least until the seventeenth century. On the whole, Galen is more impressive than his opponents, whose weaknesses he exploits to the full. How many of his examples and arguments are his own is more difficult to determine, and De Lacy is rightly reluctant to see Galen as the sole contestant in the battle against Aristotle and his followers. Yet Galen does employ a variety of observations, particular of inherited characteristics, that seem to be his own, and the general accuracy of his logic is continually impressive. He is even willing to recognize that the function of certain structures, especially the so-called "glandular-helpers" (the seminal vesicles or the prostate), is not yet settled, a somewhat unexpected touch of open-mindedness.

This new edition will be of great assistance to all students of the history of embryology, for they will be able to rely on the text and translation with greater confidence than on the older edition and Latin translation of Kühn, and in the notes and introduction find a succinct survey of the whole of ancient theories of conception and embryology. Those interested in the transmission of Galen's text, in both Greek and translation into Arabic or Latin, will also gain much from the editor's careful listing of the manuscripts and their interrelationships. In short, Professor De Lacy has once again been of inestimable service to his fellow-Galenists.

Vivian Nutton, Wellcome Institute

ROSALBA DAVICO (ed.), *The autobiography of Edward Jarvis (1803–1884)*, *Medical History*, Supplement No. 12, London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1992, pp. xli, 162, £23.00, \$38.00 (0–85484–115–6).

Top physicians suffer from the autobiographical itch, and numerous lives have been written in self-vindication by quacks and the misunderstood; but there is no surfeit of records of the doings of the great mass of the respectable middle ranks of the medical profession. That forms one reason why Rosalba Davico's edition of the hitherto unpublished autobiography of the New England practitioner, Edward Jarvis (1803–1884), deserves a warm welcome. Born the fourth child of a respectable but hardly affluent New England yeoman farmer, Jarvis was sent off to learn a trade, and