

## Book Reviews

on the part of the ecclesiastics who ran the hospitals, and handicapped by erroneous views on the causation of the disease and its therapy. It was not plague, and therefore plague precautions, with their dire economic consequences, were not recommended; yet the fear that it might become plague always troubled them. Besides, the officials, often insulated from the lower classes, could not believe that such squalor and filth could exist in enlightened Tuscany, and their exposure to the truth, when it came, might lead them to recommend crash programmes of action but also laid them open to suspicions of exaggeration.

Professor Cipolla has a great gift for vivid reconstruction of the events in archival documents. The reviewer will no longer be able to walk in Florence without imagining the odours of stewed silkworms and the putrefaction of the S. Maria Novella hospital, where patients died sharing a bed with three or four other sufferers.

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PHILLIP DE LACY (editor, translator, and commentator), *Galen De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis Libri VI-IX*, (Corpus Medicorum Graecorum V 4, 1, 2), Berlin, DDR, Akademie Verlag, 1980, 8vo, pp. 250, M. 72.00.

Professor De Lacy's magisterial edition has now reached half-way with the completion of the text and English translation of PHP. He has been able to add to his second volume references to the notes of Theodore Goulston and to quotations embedded in a Yale MS. of scholia to Galen. His use of parallels in later authors, especially Nemesius, and in philosophical texts have enabled him to improve considerably on Müller's edition. The translation is excellent, and English readers will welcome especially his clear version in Book VII of Galen's views on sense perception.

The complications for an editor of an ancient medical text in evaluating and using the varied secondary transmission can be simply seen from the quotations of PHP preserved in the Arabic author Abū Sa'īd Ibn Baḥtīshu' (this journal 1980, 24, p. 99f.). At p. 278,15 and p. 424,24–29, the Arabic omits the poetic quotations from Euripides and Homer, probably because they are sufficiently explained in the translated context, while at p. 168,5 = Arab. p. 33,15 either the translator or a copyist has omitted the negative. The long quotation of p. 518,26–31 also shows considerable differences. It omits, probably rightly, the dubious words "in his instruction" at the end of line 27 (= Arab. p. 26,2); and seems to praise Plato for taking "blessed pains" to speak about what he did not accurately know. Galen, however, approves of Plato here precisely for not trying to give an opinion in such matters. The discrepancy can be easily resolved if, as Dr. A. Z. Iskander suggests to me, the Arabic text of p. 26,5 is emended by shifting the diacritical points to read *tarkih* (forsake, refuse) instead of *barakat* (blessing).

It is a credit to Professor De Lacy that he has successfully negotiated all such hazards, and the wealth of his lists of parallel passages and testimonia (e.g. p. 468 ff., p. 542) gives a tantalizing foretaste of the banquet we may expect from his commentary.

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