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first with the poetic view of mind, with examples from Homer and the tragedians, second with the philosopher's, i.e. largely Plato's, and finally with the medical, i.e. the early Hippocratic texts. All three approaches are combined in a discussion of hysteria, in which he also stresses the social and sexual prohibitions of Athenian women and the ambivalent, yet often effective, distancing of the doctor from his hysterical patient.

There is much to praise here: the account of mental disorder in poetry goes beyond Dodds' famous description of irrationality, and chapters 11 to 13 give in a short space many perceptive insights into early Greek medicine. One may take exception to some details: e.g. the naïve dismissal of the consequences of Edelstein's view of Hippocrates, or the occasional belief in the Hippocratic corpus as embodying all Greek medicine. It is true that extant early representations of melancholy/black bile seem more to satisfy a theoretical need than to rest on observation, but later doctors, relying on earlier sources, cf. p. 228, certainly recognized its physical properties, however baffling they may be to us. But it is only with Platonic philosophy that the author's modernist tendencies triumph. Instead of a detailed discussion of relevant passages in the *Phaedrus* and the *Timaeus* (e.g. 89B-C, which has medical implications), we are treated to an analysis of the *Republic* which often becomes a psychoanalysis of Plato with the political and social background left out. But, for the most part, Freudian psychohistory is kept away, and the author rarely descends to unintelligible jargon. Misprints, however, are common, and some, e.g. p. 228, b, are serious.

Like the sociologist Alvin Gouldner's *Enter Plato*, this book poses new and searching questions for students of Classical Greece, and should not be lightly discarded because of occasional unprofessional conduct of language. A second volume on madness and reactions to it in the Hellenistic and Roman periods would be most welcome, especially as Galen prefers to see only the rational crust on a seething cauldron of doubts, fears, and irrational disorders.

JULIUS PREUSS, *Biblical and Talmudic medicine*, translated by Fred Rosner, New York, Sanhedrin Press, 1978, 4to, pp. xxix, 652, illus., \$35.00.

Reviewed by Vivian Nutton, M. A., Ph. D., Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BP.

This new version of Preuss's magnificent collection of data on Jewish medicine cannot fail to be warmly recommended. As well as providing an accurate version (such errors as exist are trivial), Dr. Rosner has enlarged the index, expanded many of Preuss's references, and prefaced the work with a moving invocation of its author. It would have been even better if, instead of the summary of chapters and details of the careers of Preuss's descendants, we had had a more detailed exposition of his achievement and his relationship with contemporary scholars in the history of medicine such as Julius Pagel.

Dr. Rosner has eschewed a revision of the original, although he notes in passing a few minor errors, in favour of a translation. While this was undoubtedly right in the case of the later chapters, where Preuss's description of the Hebrew texts remains unsurpassed, it is more questionable in the opening section, where the considerable advances in ancient and medieval history have greatly altered the background against which Preuss worked and where many of his general statements are open to serious

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doubts. Such a revision, taking into account also the studies of Friedenwald and S. W. Baron, would still have great value.

One disturbing feature of this reprint is its cavalier attitude to the classical languages. The Greek is transliterated in a modern Greek phonetic transcription, thereby making it almost unintelligible even to classicists, especially as printing and copying errors here abound. Both Greek and Latin, both as unknown to the readership as Preuss's German, are often left untranslated, and, when a version is given, it is either printed without distinguishing marks or, far too often, inaccurate: e.g. p. 11, n.1 "each doctor deals with a single disease", not, as Rosner, "for every disease there is one physician"; p. 499, "because of the size of his unmentionable organ", not "because of his obscene size". Both translator and publisher could have saved themselves space and done honour to Preuss's considerable philological scholarship if they had removed completely all the Greek and Latin and replaced them with accurate versions. As it is, the reader is frequently faced with words as perplexing as the disease which killed King Asa.

ALLEN G. DEBUS, *Man and nature in the Renaissance*, Cambridge University Press, 1978, 8vo, pp. x, 159, illus., £7.95 (£2.50 paperback).

Reviewed by Vivian Nutton, M. A., Ph. D., Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BP.

Dr. Debus, whose studies of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Paracelsians are well known, now turns to a broader survey of science in general from 1450 to 1650. The result is not always happy. While rightly stressing that old-fashioned, mystical, or theological ideas often coexist with others more strictly scientific and progressive, he is constrained, perhaps by the format of the series, to write a very Whiggish and traditional history, with little of the chiaroscuro of a Cipolla or a Keith Thomas and with a strong emphasis on ideas rather than, like Wightman, on their social context. Lack of space may have pre-empted a discussion of developments in therapy (save for chemical drugs), but in the six pages devoted to sixteenth-century anatomy the predecessors of Vesalius get short shrift. There is no mention of Massa or Estienne, and Berengario receives praise for his illustrations, not for his discoveries. The self-propaganda of Vesalius has triumphed once again, along with the myth of Harvey's overwhelming debt to Padua for his knowledge of Aristotle and Galen. What else did he study while he was at Cambridge?

The book shows many signs of hasty writing: pp. 18, 45, two dates for the death of Arnold of Villanova; p. 41, Flavius Anicius, a senator, is called a Roman emperor; p. 57, two English titles of *On the use of parts* are mistaken for two separate Galenic works; p. 66, the Royal College of Physicians is described as "one of the most prestigious scientific societies of Europe", perhaps by confusion with the Royal Society.

There is a good bibliography and some pertinent illustrations, but the overall effect of this worthy textbook is less exciting than the blurb suggests. Only occasionally does Dr. Debus' writing rise to the enthusiasm of Renaissance scientists, whose passion for even the humble rhubarb led, on one occasion, from Ferrara to Budapest, Moscow and far Cathay.