

Book Reviews

Antiquarian interest apart, the value of the book for students of ancient medicine ultimately depends on the quality of Caius' textual criticism. As far as the modern editor is concerned, this value is not great. Caius' knowledge of Greek was not particularly sensitive (certainly he was not as good as Cornarius). Nutton is realistic about this throughout, yet he shows a considerable amount of charity towards his subject. He sees Caius as an important figure in the history of Galenic textual scholarship because "a modern editor of Galen is perforce a pioneer"; as a witness to the reading of certain manuscripts, "his pedantry here proves to be a virtue".

Nutton himself indicates what might be stressed rather more: that much of Caius' work on Galen was polemically motivated, with an eye on contemporary rivals. Galen had established the precedent, in "reinterpreting" Hippocrates to the point not only where Hippocrates could do no wrong, anticipating much of the natural philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, but also to the point where he was always in agreement with Galen. The case seems to have been similar with Caius. In my view, we are not dealing here with a transparent case of a medical philologist at work.

I came away from this book with a far higher regard for Dr Nutton's historical detective work than for Dr Caius' reaction and pedantry. As an introduction to the development and criticism of the early printed editions of Galen, however, this monograph is one of the best pieces available today.

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SUE M. GOLDIE, (editor), *"I have done my duty": Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War 1854–56*, Manchester University Press, 1988, 8vo, pp. x, 326, illus., £35.00.

Sue Goldie has selected about a third of the Nightingale letters from the Crimean period and provided an excellent connecting narrative and lavish explanatory references. The complexities of Miss Nightingale's character, not least a ruthless streak, are very apparent. Some of the most revealing letters are those written after her illness in the Crimea. The patience, diplomacy, and confidence with which she had initially handled the army medical officers and others in authority had now gone. In August 1855 she bewailed that her work had foundered "on the rocks of ignorance, incompetence and ill-will". At times it seems almost that she suffered a persecution mania.

The letters cover in detail Miss Nightingale's vendetta with John Hall, the senior army doctor. He did not interfere with her activities in the Scutari Hospitals but, understandably, considered she had no authority in the Crimea. The quarrels were often trivial in origin, as for example when she complained that Hall had transferred two nurses from Smyrna to Balaclava without her approval: she had previously taken no interest in the nurses at the Smyrna Hospital.

At times Miss Nightingale treated her staff harshly or unfairly. Mrs Bridgeman and her party were thought to be excellent by the Koulali army doctors and, later by Hall in the Crimea. Miss Nightingale had no use for them; they had come out with Miss Stanley without Miss Nightingale's approval and she did not like Irish Catholics. It was all rather petty at times.

The text is highly recommended to the general reader as a balanced account of Miss Nightingale's trials and triumphs. For the historian more directly interested in the period this is an authoritative analysis with the stamp of able and diligent research. The illustrations are enhanced by the inclusion of four of the curiously primitive but highly evocative water-colours of the Scutari wards painted by Nurse Anne Morton.

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DANIEL DE MOULIN, *A history of surgery, with emphasis on the Netherlands*, Dordrecht Boston and Lancaster, Martinus Nijdhoff, 1988, 8vo, pp. xxiii, 408, illus., [no price stated].

Daniel de Moulin's *A history of surgery* is conceived on familiar lines and, within the chosen framework, impeccably executed. The work proceeds from antiquity to the very recent past and covers the whole of Europe and, to some extent, America. It is both social and technical in its