

## Book Reviews

texts of Salerno, and smacks of the study. A contrast is provided in one manuscript by the inclusion of questions and answers on similar topics by Albert of Trebizond, "the great philosopher", here reproduced as Annexe 3, which show links with Salerno and the writings of Guillaume de Conches. There is also in it a rare reference to a pseudo-Galenic work, *On the secrets of women*.

Professor Thomasset deserves our thanks for bringing these texts again to our attention, and for devoting to them a clear and detailed commentary. His discussion of medieval ideas on contagion, spontaneous generation, the power of semen, and on human physiology in general provides an elegant synopsis which should prove of great assistance and value to all interested in these topics. To his comments on the *mola uteri* (text, paras. 316–319; commentary, pp. 141–143) should be added a reference to Y. V. O'Neill, 'Michele Savonarola and the *fera* or blighted twin phenomenon', *Med. Hist.*, 1974, 18: 222–239; and the whole section on ideas of conception should be compared with M. A. Hewson, *Giles of Rome and the medieval theory of conception* (1975).

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MARIE-HELENE MARGANNE, *Inventaire analytique des papyrus grecs de médecine*, Geneva, Librairie Droz, 1981, 8vo, pp. x, 409, [no price stated], (paperback).

This valuable book collects details of all the Greek medical texts found on Egyptian papyri, lists them according to the collections from which they come, and provides a detailed bibliography of corrections and secondary references to them. Enough is given of the original Greek and in a French translation to enable the reader to find his way among the fragments of drug recipes and literary texts, especially with the aid of the detailed indexes. It is a pity that the names of authors are not given also in the French list of proper names on p. 354, but are to be found only in the diffuse table of papyri on pp. 391–400.

Dr Marganne specifically excludes magical papyri of medical content as well as documentary papyri referring to the activities of medical men in Egypt. This is unfortunate since no good work has been done on their interpretation, and a similar checklist would be very useful. Her list is otherwise complete up to 1981 (including the important catechism of P. Turner 14), with the possible exception of P. Petersburg 13, a reference in a library catalogue to a work of Theodas of Laodicea, a leading Empiric physician. The secondary bibliography is less satisfactory, since it fails to distinguish adequately between corrections, major discussions, and passing references. This is particularly necessary for n. 102, the famous "Anonymous Londoner", where the three separate sections of this papyrus are put indiscriminately together, and the list of secondary references seems to consist entirely in comments, often *en passant*, on the most famous section of the papyrus, the so-called history of early Greek medicine by Menon, the pupil of Aristotle.

Such minor deficiencies will, I hope, be remedied in a series of supplements in the form of articles, for this project is too valuable to be left to stagnate. To that end, I add three comments: nn. 77–78, P. Catal. Corcoran needs proper bibliographical citation; nn. 30 (P. Johnson) and 138 (P. Oxy. 2547) are both to be found in the library of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine; nn. 41–69 (P. Antin.) should not be regarded as forming the products of a "medical school at Antinoopolis", for they could come from the library of a single physician. The presence of doctors does not indicate the existence of either a teaching establishment or of a unified body of doctrine, and medical schools, with their modern implications, should not be multiplied *praeter necessitatem*.

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P. WRIGHT and A. TREACHER (editors), *The problem of medical knowledge. Examining the social construction of medicine*, Edinburgh University Press, 1982, 8vo, pp. viii, 232, £12.00 (paperback).

It might be fairest to consider this collection of essays as nothing more than the sum of its parts. From that point of view, the reader gets a pleasing diversity, held together by the