

Book Reviews

commended for making available a treatise which can be read only in incunabula and early printed editions. But the actual latin text could have been subjected to a little more rigorous revision, so that some of the sentences might give better sense. The list of errata by no means covers all the misreadings, particularly in the first part of the book, a surprising fact considering the people who are supposed to have helped the editor.

C. H. TALBOT

Ancient Medicine: Selected Papers of Ludwig Edelstein, ed. by OWSEI TEMKIN and C. LILIAN TEMKIN, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press; London, Oxford University Press, 1968, pp. xiv, 496, port. front., £5 19s. 0d.

Apart from the two-volume work on Asclepius, this volume contains the majority of the late Ludwig Edelstein's contributions to the history of ancient medicine, six of the papers appearing for the first time in English, and we must be grateful to the editors for making so much of Edelstein's work available in this form.

The first section of the volume is mainly Hippocratic, beginning with the well-known work on the Hippocratic Oath. Since this was first published as a supplement to the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* in 1943, the arguments which Edelstein put forward to support his theory of the Pythagorean origin of the Oath have been submitted to searching analysis by classical scholars (e.g. H. Diller, *Gnomon*, xxii, pp. 71 ff.) and now seem to rest on the interpretation of certain words and phrases which are not found in all versions of what is undoubtedly an extremely fluid text. Nevertheless, the theory is an attractive one since it seems to explain so many odd features of the Oath as it has come down to us. The essays which follow—on Hippocratic prognosis, Hippocratic wisdom, and the Hippocratic physician—are drawn in part from Edelstein's original doctoral dissertation. This was notable for its independent views and for demolishing the accepted picture of Hippocrates as the towering 'father of Greek medicine', the sole author of what is now called the Hippocratic corpus, the product of a whole school of physicians rather than of any single individual. This part of the book concludes with an illuminating essay on the school of physicians known as the Methodists, of whom the best-known member is Soranus.

The second part explores various aspects of Greek and Roman medicine, including anatomy, dietetics and the relations between medicine and religion and magic. Part III discusses the ethics of the Greek physician, ancient philosophy and medicine, and the Hellenism of Greek medicine. A few additional papers brought together as Part IV include an essay on Vesalius the humanist and another on Sydenham and Cervantes.

Even those scholars who disagree with some of Edelstein's interpretations and conclusions—and he was always extremely independent in his views—will welcome the provision of so much good matter for academic debate within a single volume. This will be an indispensable work for anybody whose researches take him into the field of classical medicine.

F. N. L. POYNTER