

Book Reviews

detail exactly how sparse medical care was in Scotland. Even if it were available, the authors show that the stringency of the Scottish Poor Law may have denied access to it. One of their tables (9.B) “shows how much was actually spent on doctors per head of the population on the poor roll. The Scottish average was £0.0154, or no more than 3½d per pauper per year in the old money” (p. 217). The comprehensiveness and range of figures the authors have been able to produce will be the envy of English historians. The homeland of conjectural history after all is also the repository of the *Statistical Account*.

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J. F. HEALY, *Mining and metallurgy in the ancient world*, London, Thames & Hudson, 1978, 8vo, pp. 316, illus., £11.00.

Professor Healy has given us an excellent handbook that incorporates the results of mineralogical and archaeological research and offers glimpses of the social and economic consequences of ancient techniques. Two sections are of particular medical interest. Following Dr. Longfield-Jones, the author clearly sets out the materials, composition, and construction of ancient medical instruments, most of which were of iron or bronze, although gold and silver were occasionally used, if frowned upon for ostentation. Some could be very complicated (F. Kiechle, *Sklavenarbeit und technischer Fortschritt*, 1969, p. 37f., is valuable here), and Galen records instruments specifically designed (II 643f., but never actually made) and of the best Norican iron/steel (II 682, 709 – the first reference is absent, the second mangled on p. 290). In the Ephesian medical contests c. A.D. 190, there may have been an annual competition for new instruments (J. Keil, *J. Öst. arch. Inst.* 1905, 128).

The use of minerals in medicine receives briefer notice, and is derived almost entirely from Pliny. The Greek tradition is largely ignored: there is no mention of the new ‘Mineral Book’ of Xenocrates (M. Ullmann, *Med. hist. J.* 1972, 49; 1973, 59), or of the many medicinal earths like the famous Lemnian earth. The many notes surprisingly have no direct reference to Galen’s detailed reminiscences of his visit to the mines of Cyprus and his medicinal finds there (XII 214–44), although a mineralogical commentary would be of great value. Neither is there a mention of the major work of D. Goltz, *Studien zur Geschichte der Mineralnamen . . .* 1972, which deals at length with ancient mineral drugs. But these omissions should not obscure our debt to the author for his sure-footed guidance over some very rough terrain.

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CARLO M. CIPOLLA, *I pidocchi e il Granduca*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1979, 8vo, pp. 113, L. 5,000 (paperback)

Professor Cipolla has given us another vignette of the problems of public health in seventeenth-century Italy. This time his subject is an outbreak of exanthematous typhus in Florence in 1620–21, but his acute observations have much wider relevance. His heroes are the doctors and public health officials, struggling to check an epidemic in the face of appalling social conditions and indifference, even hostile disobedience,