

Book Reviews

Vivian Nutton, in the first chapter, wrote a 43 page essay on the social history of medicine in ancient Greece and Rome that is the best introduction to this vast topic I have seen. Katharine Park's description of medicine and society in medieval Europe, a society more diverse than our own, she claims, tells us about a universe of disease and the various attempts to cope with the effects of such widespread illness.

Roy Porter nicely summarizes his own extensive work on patients, doctors, and illness in the long eighteenth century when there was much self-medication and lay healing. Guenter Risse has provided an outstanding chapter on the medical institutions and their role in the practice of medicine in the age of the Enlightenment, a time when the health of nations became an increasingly important and practical issue.

Lindsay Granshaw shows that hospitals developed in the context of increasing urbanization, expansion of trade, and increasing geographic mobility. Irvine Loudon discusses the medical reforms of the early nineteenth century and the growing role of the general practitioner in Britain. Elizabeth Fee and Dorothy Porter compare developments in public health in Britain and the U.S., while Jane Lewis covers the story of state medicine in Britain during this century. Paul Weindling, in a short essay on a large subject, nicely summarizes the changing patterns of disease in the last two centuries. Unfortunately, in contrast to his fellow authors in this volume, he uses the minimalist approach toward his sources. The references are spare. Arthur Imhoff, in the final chapter, provides his usual thoughtful and wide-ranging analysis of the implications of the changes in life expectancy.

Psychiatry is represented in the book in the essay by Porter on the eighteenth century but more specifically in a second Porter essay on madness. As is evident from the much too brief descriptions of these rich essays, most of them in the second half of the book pertain to medicine in Britain. For developments on the Continent or in North America, Asia, and Latin America, separate monographs will have to supplement this collection, but those of us who teach history of medicine or those who merely want some excellent reading are all in Andrew Wear's and his collaborators' debt. The essays that he has collected for this volume make for not only good reading, but will also, I predict, provide the basis for many good classroom discussions.

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JOSEP LLUIS BARONA VILAR, *La doctrina y el laboratorio: fisiología y experimentación en la sociedad española del siglo XIX*, Estudios sobre la ciencia 16, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1992, pp. xii, 323 (84-00-07221-9).

Following the enormous effort made by Spain during the Enlightenment to gain access to the fields of scientific activity being developed in other parts of Europe, the country, which refused to abandon the Old Regime, showed, in the years following the war with the France of Napoleon (1808-1812), a completely devastated scientific panorama; a disastrous beginning to a century in which the protracted socio-economic crisis would be a constant restraint on intellectual development. Nevertheless, at the end of a path strewn with difficulties over a period of more than a hundred years, Spain succeeded in joining, in the second and third decades of the twentieth century, the mainstream of European science and culture, and then began what some writers have called the "Age of Silver" of Spanish cultural history—after the sixteenth-century "Golden Age"—which was tragically interrupted by the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

This difficult development of Spanish science is analysed in Josep Lluís Barona's book which deals with the specific case of physiology. The work, the result of more than a decade of research into the subject, uses a thought-provoking model of analysis to discover the particular circumstances which surrounded the beginnings of the development of biological experimentation in Spain, showing how through a good part of the nineteenth century Spanish society was unable to create suitable conditions to assimilate the conceptual and institutional changes brought about by the introduction of the experimental method of analysis of biological

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phenomena. Only in mid-century did the situation improve; but it was not until the last twenty-five years of the nineteenth century that, having overcome the serious crisis facing it at all levels, the country was able to lay the bases that would allow it to renounce definitively a doctrinal physiology burdened by numerous ideological obstacles, and to enter fully, in the first third of the current century and with first rate figures, into laboratory research. In order to demonstrate this evolution the author uses different techniques, from bibliometric analysis and prosopography to the study of institutions and the textual analysis of handbooks. The result is an exhaustive study of Spanish physiology during the nineteenth century. He shows how a thorough and complete history of the medical and biological sciences in Europe requires contributions such as this, based not on the setting for the creation of the science, but rather on a country like Spain in which it was mainly consumed. This helps us to understand the assimilation and diffusion of ideas and scientific research and the complex processes of social acceptance and institutionalization of science in different social and historic frameworks.

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S. W. F. HOLLOWAY, *Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain 1841–1991: a political and social history*, London, The Pharmaceutical Press, 1991, pp. xvii, 440, illus., £35.00 (0–85369–244–0).

Pharmacists have suffered from a lack of historical attention by comparison with doctors. The expansion of research into the social history of medicine has seen increased attention paid to the organization and social composition of the medical profession, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century. The volume of this new work on doctors is considerably greater than the attention which has been paid to pharmacists and the rise of the pharmaceutical profession. Sydney Holloway has long been known for his almost single-handed work in this area. Now he has produced a history of the professional organization, the Pharmaceutical Society.

The publication was funded by the Society and is thus an “official history”, although, as Holloway points out, he was given complete freedom to publish as he saw fit. Lack of manuscript Society sources was a problem, but Holloway has, nevertheless, succeeded in putting together a lucid account, focusing primarily on the legislative milestones on the road to pharmaceutical professionalization. Jacob Bell, son of the Quaker founder of the pharmacist’s shop in Wigmore Street, had the vision of the establishment of pharmacy as a science and as a profession. Chemists and druggists, whose number increased markedly at the end of the eighteenth century, were considered part of the medical profession. Gradually, the professional pharmaceutical chemist became separated from doctors. This was achieved by a series of organizational and legislative changes—by the establishment of the Society itself in 1841 and its examining functions; by Pharmacy Acts of 1852 and 1868, which defined pharmaceutical chemists and their specific functions, in particular that of dispensing poisons; and by the 1858 Medical Act, which drew together physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, and demarcated them from the chemists and druggists.

The process of professionalization was not an easy one. The Society was beset by a rival organization, the United Society of Chemists and Druggists; and, even after the 1868 Act, the pharmaceutical ideal of an individual proprietor pharmacist was not easily established. Unqualified proprietors continued to sell patent preparations, chlorodyne in particular. The rise of the company chemists, led by the ex-medical botanist and unqualified Jesse Boot, threatened professional status. The 1908 Pharmacy Act brought compromise with the company chemists and strengthened the boundaries against unqualified practice. The 1911 National Health Insurance Act, passed after a complex struggle in which the insurance industry, doctors and pharmacists formed a temporary alliance against the threat of Friendly Society control, also achieved considerable gains. It recognized the principle that dispensing should be limited to pharmacists (although the effective separation of prescribing from dispensing came only with the NHS in 1948); and it enormously increased the volume of business.