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language; this is followed by a little on texts available, followed in turn by a long discussion of the taxonomy of such texts and a defence of the study of “academic” or “learned” vernacular texts. There is much to be learned here, although the author has not attempted a coherent study. Bert S. Hall devotes himself to considering problems of understanding and interpreting mostly published texts in the history of late medieval technology (nothing medical here); while Bernard Cohen’s ‘Thrice revealed Newton’ is a detailed history of the publication of Newton’s writings from 1687 to 1980. This is an excellent introduction for the novice (although, curiously it omits several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century publications), but, of course, there is nothing of specifically medical interest here.

The historian of medicine would profit from Drake’s exceptionally cogent account, from Voigts’ specialized analysis and, for correspondence, from Beaulieu’s survey.

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WALTER PAGEL, *Paracelsus. An introduction to philosophical medicine in the era of the Renaissance*, 2nd rev. ed., Basle, Karger, 1982, 8vo, pp. xii, 404, illus., SFr. 139.00.

Pagel’s *Paracelsus* is a monument of European scholarship and humane sympathy. Its first edition, 1958, supplied not only the key to the understanding of many aspects of non-Galenic medicine in the Renaissance but also an interpretation of Paracelsus’ life and personality that sought to free him from the reproach of being mystic, mad, or both. The reappearance of this fundamental book in a second, revised edition can only be welcomed, but with one reservation. The revisions comprise a new foreword, a collation of passages cited from Huser’s edition with those of Sudhoff, and twenty-five pages of corrections and addenda, mostly giving precision to some of the events of Paracelsus’ life and, in particular, stressing his links with earlier gnostic thinkers like Konrad von Meigenburg. The revisions offer a perspective of a generation of Paracelsus scholarship in miniature, and will undoubtedly prove of great value. Yet there is no indication in the text itself to refer the reader to any corrections, and he must therefore peruse the book with one finger constantly on the errata. This would hardly be acceptable in a cheap reprint; to be asked to pay well over £50 for this represents an insult to the purchaser and an injustice to the author, for it prevents the book’s diffusion among those who need it most, teachers and students of the history of medicine and of renaissance thought.

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GEOFFREY HOLMES, *Augustan England. Professions, state, and society, 1680–1730*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1982, 8vo, pp. xiv, 332, £18.50.

Professor Holmes’s book, jam-packed with information and enlivened throughout with vivid personal cameos and dry wit, invites a major rethink in our approaches to the history of the professions. The alliance of the sociology of the professions with “modernization theory” has encouraged us to think of “professionalization” as essentially a nineteenth-century development, associated with the abolition of the *ancien régime* or “Old Corruption”, the Industrial Revolution and its needs, the career open to talent within the liberal state, the Victorian ethos of service and duty, the tides of Progress and Reform. For the traditional liberal professions, the landmarks of professionalization are pointed out by sociologists and historians in the nineteenth-century constitutional spring-cleans: new state regulations, competitive entry, often through written examinations and formal certification, the shift from oligarchy and nepotism to more open self-disciplining and policing of standards, and so forth. But the nineteenth century is also the epoch when skills which, in traditional society had been mere trades, or for amateurs, such as the occupation of magistrate, nurse, schoolmaster, or architect, attained organized, public, professional status for the first time, signalled by the founding of their own chartered corporations or associations. Much valuable work in the historical sociology of medicine – e.g., by Holloway, Waddington, Scull, and the Parrys – implicitly or explicitly follows these models.

Professor Holmes, by contrast, claims – with a convincing battery of evidence – that the real watershed in the history of the professions had occurred a whole century earlier. He takes into

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consideration the cloth, military service, the law, medicine, and also other traditionally less institutionalized “service” occupations, such as journalism and surveying. His argument is that it was in the generations spanning the turn of the eighteenth century that these forms of employment came, for the first time, to command the stature, pull, and clout in state and society which they have done ever since. By this he has in mind several developments. First, a leap in aggregate numbers, in response to demands created by new affluence, leisure, and the needs of the state-at-war. Second, markedly improved remuneration – not for all members, of course, but for substantial proportions of the practitioners, and with the cream – in medicine, the Sloanes, Radcliffes, and Meads – getting rich beyond the dreams of their predecessors. Third, a real rise in respect and status, instanced in medicine by the blossoming of the humble old apothecary into the *de facto* general practitioner, increasingly honoured with the name of “doctor”; with this often went a new degree of *esprit de corps*. Professor Holmes notes how Augustan landed gentlemen seem to have thought it quite in order to apprentice younger sons to apothecaries and attorneys. And, not least, Professor Holmes argues the period sees internal transformations of these professions to meet new social needs. For instance, this is the time when new modes of medical education, such as the London anatomy schools and teaching hospitals, were beginning to provide more expert, more open, cheaper, and briefer forms of training than heretofore. In a short review it is impossible even to hint at the rich density of evidence agilely mobilized to depict the rise to social and economic prominence of the professions at this time. Professor Holmes is not indifferent to the institutional and legalistic dimensions of the tale of the professions – the oligopolistic statutes of the College of Physicians, for instance. But he is anxious not to confound the substance with the shadow. For him the continued formal hierarchical divide between physicians and apothecaries meant less than the fact that up and down the country in market towns, more and more capable medical men – call them apothecary-surgeons, or what you like – were tending the sick.

Professor Holmes’s no-nonsense concern with the nitty-gritty of numbers and incomes is salutary (and incidentally it amounts to the fullest survey in print of the social composition and standing of medical practitioners in Augustan England). And it is refreshing that he avoids getting bogged down in the sociological semantic morass of attempting to distinguish a profession proper from a mere occupation or job. Yet his concern with close-focus details, his omission of any analysis of the theory or the historiography of the professions, and the lack of a concluding overview, mean that many important questions remain unchewed.

Nowhere in the book are the issues of professional leverage, hegemony, or what Foucault would call professional “*savoir-pouvoir*”, raised. The implications for social relations and social control entailed by emergent professional practice (often, one supposes, supplanting community practice or folk self-help) are not examined. Because Professor Holmes’s focus is on numbers and trends, he doesn’t examine the conflicts and rivalries between his professional men and lower grade operators (pushed into marginality?). Thus, how far the rise of the new surgeon-accoucheur, looked at another way, was the marginalization of the midwife is not raised. Indeed, women are staggeringly totally absent from the book. Lastly, some kind of a long look backwards would have been welcome. Thus, one can probably accept that the Augustan age saw more provincial apothecaries than there had been a couple of generations earlier. But Professor Holmes might have engaged himself with Charles Webster’s and Margaret Pelling’s account of the impressive aggregate numbers of the whole spectrum of medical practitioners in early Stuart London and Norwich (at one point he seems to refer, disparagingly and question-beggingly, to earlier “empirics” as though they were somehow “sub-professional”).

Yet, overall this book is both a breath of fresh air and a fund of information. It constitutes a remarkable, wide-ranging moving picture of the surge of professional men into society, and brings heaps of new empirical fuel to rekindle the languishing flames of the “professionalization” debate.

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