

### Book Reviews

W. S. CRAIG, *History of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh*, Oxford, Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1976, 4to, pp. xxix, 1125, illus., £35.00.

An immense amount of labour was spent on this book by the late Professor W. S. Craig, and it is tragic that he did not live to see the finished product.

It will, however, serve to commemorate the College's forthcoming tercentenary. Since its establishment by charter, granted by Charles II in 1681, the College has played an important role not only in Edinburgh, but also in relationship with its sister colleges in Glasgow and London, and with its Fellows and Members in all parts of the British Commonwealth. Its influence outside the University has been, and still is, an important factor in its functioning. It has played an active role in social reforms, particularly in Scotland, and in advocating improved public health and sanitation in Edinburgh. Today it is actively involved with postgraduate teaching and research, and its library is one of the best of its kind in Britain, having been founded in 1682.

Professor Craig traces its evolution in great detail and deals with every possible aspect of its activity both in Edinburgh and elsewhere, over its three hundred years of existence. The material used is fully supported with references and notes and with several long extracts from documents and there are many excellent illustrations. Several appendices include additional data, one of them (E) having a translation of the College's Charter. The price is not excessive when the size and the quality of production are taken into account.

This is a book for reference rather than for continuous reading and the excellent indexes will direct the enquirer to the topic or person he seeks. As a repository of factual information it will remain a definitive work, but unfortunately it does not go beyond this. In other words, little attempt is made to study the local, national and international background influences, which affect the establishment and survival of any institution. As Dr. Christopher Lawrence and other historians are pointing out, the Edinburgh scene particularly in the eighteenth century as it influenced medicine was very complex, and in order to comprehend the College fully we must understand the extra-Collegiate climate and the problems it encountered, as well as the state of medicine elsewhere in the world. This is not, however, to belittle Professor Craig's enormous labours for which we should be most grateful. It would seem, however, that the Edinburgh Royal College of Physicians has not had the services of the kind of historian who recorded the history of its some-time rival institution in London.

A. L. DONOVAN, *Philosophical chemistry in the Scottish Enlightenment. The doctrines and discoveries of William Cullen and Joseph Black*, Edinburgh University Press, 1975, 8vo, pp. x, 343, illus., £7.00.

Dr. Donovan of the University of West Virginia is concerned here with a study of the interaction of the two great eighteenth-century Scottish chemists, William Cullen (1710–1790), and his pupil Joseph Black (1728–1799) who discovered carbon dioxide in chalk when seeking a lithotropic agent. This important advance and its genesis are discussed here in detail; it is essential to realize that Black accepted the theory of phlogiston at this time, although he abandoned it later. This and Black's influence on the emerging science of heat form the second part of the book, the first being an

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excellent account of the general scene at Glasgow and Edinburgh, against which the pioneering work of Cullen, whose chemical doctrines are considered in Part One, and of Black, took place. This was part of a remarkable phase of Scottish culture when the advancement of science was of both philosophical and practical concern. Thus science, economics and technology found common ground in philosophy which was of great moment to Scottish society. Edinburgh was the centre of this endeavour, which in part accounts for the remarkable progress and stature of the Medical School then and later, when chemistry was becoming an essential topic for medical students to be acquainted with.

Dr. Donovan has provided us with an important contribution to the analysis of eighteenth-century Scottish science and medicine, its origins and the factors influencing it, drawn against the background of the Scottish Enlightenment. It deserves wide attention, and it is to be hoped that others will be stimulated to examine in the same scholarly detail the many other problems of this general topic which await consideration.

J. DUPAQUIER (editor), *Annales de démographie historique 1973. Enfant et sociétés*, Paris, Mouton, 1975, 8vo, pp. 488, illus., Hfl.36.00.

Since 1964 the Société de Démographie Historique, which has its headquarters in Paris, has published its proceedings each year. This number first appeared in 1973 and is now reprinted, indicating an increasing interest in its important topic.

There are forty communications, ranging in size from large articles such as the one by R. Étienne on 'La conscience médicale antique et la vie des enfants' together with the discussion generated (pp. 15–61), to the brief presentation of documents like that of F.-Y. Le Moigne on 'Remède infaillible contre les vers des enfants' (p. 394). The arrangement is chronological: antiquity, the Middle Ages (including a paper on the attitude of the Church), seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the nineteenth century (here Peter Laslett's paper on 'L'attitude à l'égard de l'enfant dans l'Angleterre du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, d'après les sources littéraires, politiques et juridiques', pp. 313–318, should be noted; of great value also is A. Armengaud's 'L'attitude de la société à l'égard de l'enfant au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Elements de bibliographie' (pp. 345–352). Each article is a scholarly contribution with full documentation and often containing tables, graphs and illustrations; the bibliography to the papers covers pp. 433 to 479.

The French school of historical demography has been the pioneer in this field and it demonstrates in this collection that it is still the foremost. There is here a great deal of most valuable and important information on a subject that has been much neglected, but is now receiving more attention. It is natural to contrast this type of history of childhood, characterized by a careful, scientifically controlled approach, with the somewhat less precise romancing of the American psycho-historians.

This issue of the *Annales*, like its nine predecessors, can be welcomed as a significant contribution to the history of paediatrics and to historical demography. It deserves widespread attention and will, it is to be hoped, stimulate other scholars to apply these approaches and techniques to similar material in their own countries.