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phinische, Vormärz, Biedermeier) that are second nature to the Viennese, but unknown to almost everyone else. Occasionally, for example, when Lesky refers to Adolf Lorenz as “the father of our Nobel Prize winner, Konrad,” one has the uneasy feeling that one is reading something intended for someone else. In any case, to appreciate fully Lesky’s book, in addition to the history of medicine, one must know something about Viennese history and one must be intimately familiar with the city. For example, in discussing Viennese emergency medical services in 1881, she tells of an amateur gymnast who sustained a compound fracture of the leg. The accident occurred in a police station in the Schottenring. His friend, a medical student, spent two and one-half hours securing transportation and moving him to a clinic in Alserstrasse. This becomes meaningful and relevant only if one knows that these streets are virtually adjacent. For connoisseurs of Viennese culture, particularly of Viennese medicine, these details increase the book’s value and make it a fascinating and excellent resource; but the uninitiated will inevitably miss a good deal of what Lesky provides.

As in appraising other books of this kind, the illustrations in *Meilensteine* must be taken into account. Many of the photographs are familiar, but others are published here for the first time. About half the illustrations are in colour, and they are very finely reproduced. The illustrations were obviously intended to conform to Lesky’s general plan of relating medicine to its social and cultural context. In addition to the usual photographs of surgical instruments and wax models, there are pictures of eighteenth-century prostitutes buying wigs (their heads were shaved as a form of punishment), and of early nineteenth-century vendors selling drinking-water from carts in the suburbs of Vienna. However, as one advances through the book there are progressively fewer photographs that enlighten one about the social background of medicine, and progressively more portraits. This becomes particularly noticeable in the last several chapters, which concern the development of various specializations. In these chapters one finds mainly portraits of leading physicians, often surrounded by their assistants and students, sometimes chatting with famous political or cultural figures. These illustrations are qualitatively different from the earlier ones; they seldom reveal anything about the social context of medicine, about the theory or practice of medicine, or even about the particular specialization in question. In Lesky’s book, as in many other pictorial histories of medicine, the photographs become less interesting and less enlightening as one advances through the book. All in all, however, the illustrations are well selected and an important asset in this fine publication.

Erna Lesky’s *Meilensteine* is a beautiful and engaging book that is an excellent complement to her other writings on Viennese medicine. Anyone should find the book interesting; those with a special attachment for Viennese medicine (and who read German well) will find it to be a truly valuable addition.

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JOHN L. THORNTON, *Jan van Rymsdyk, medical artist of the eighteenth century*, Cambridge, Oleander Press, 1982, 8vo, pp. ix, 111, illus., £9.95.

William Smellie’s *Anatomical tables* (1754) and William Hunter’s *Gravid uterus* (1774), once perused, are never forgotten. Their effectiveness is due to the designer of most of their illustrations, Jan van Rymsdyk, who also drew for several works by John Hunter, for two now rare atlases, anatomic and obstetric, by C.-N. Jenty, and for a few other medical publications, all works of quality. But though Rymsdyk’s plates are still pored over today, his life is otherwise almost as if it had never been. John L. Thornton has carefully assembled and put in order for the first time what little evidence of his existence Jan van Rymsdyk left behind, and has integrated it with the lives of his better-known employers.

It emerges that Jan van Rymsdyk was born in the Netherlands, perhaps in the 1720s. Where he learnt his art is unknown. In 1750, he was in London, working, already a master draughtsman, for both W. Hunter and Smellie. In 1755–7, he produced the drawings for Jenty’s books. In 1758, although the *Gravid uterus* was still unfinished, he removed to Bristol and set up there as a portrait-painter. His one certain surviving portrait, of the Bristol surgeon William

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Barrett, looks highly competent, but he appears to have had little business, and may have gone for a time to Jamaica (p. 74). In 1764, however, he was back in London, working once again on the interminable *Gravid uterus* project. In 1778, he and his (bastard?) son Andries published a book of engravings after curiosities of natural history in the British Museum, the *Museum Britannicum*, in the text to which he cast cantankerous abuse at William Hunter for exploiting his skill without giving advancement or even acknowledgment in return. He disappears from notice around 1788, having been predeceased in 1786 by Andries, who had become an itinerant portrait-limner of moderate ability.

Despite his outstanding skill in scientific illustration, which was appreciated by such a connoisseur as Pieter Camper, Rymsdyk's life appears to have been a string of failures. An underemployed *émigré* of no fixed abode and dressed in William Barrett's cast-off clothes, he never established his career behind the portrait-painter's easel. Instead, he was reduced to slaving in a freezing Soho garret for the perfectionist William Hunter, drawing the putrid abortions and cadavers of destitute women. Paradoxically, the unrelenting professionalism which he devoted to this unpleasant but useful task has brought to Rymsdyk more appreciation from posterity than many smart portraitists have received. Anyone curious to know the full story, such as it is, should consult Mr. Thornton's bio-biblio-iconographical narrative.

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ERIC G. BAXTER, *Dr. Jephson of Leamington Spa*, (edited by Joan Lane and Robert Bearman), Leamington Spa, Warwickshire Local History Society, 1980, 8vo, pp. xii, 104, illus., £4.25 (paperback). (Obtainable from the Society, 47 Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa, Warwick. CV32 4EZ.)

This welcome book is an edited version of a study of Henry Jephson, M.D. (1798–1878), which the late Eric Baxter spent many years working on before his death in February 1979. Joan Lane and Robert Bearman, who took on the task of making the manuscript fit to print, are to be congratulated on the result, and the generous attitude that it conveys regarding the publication of detailed works of local history on medical topics.

By taking an interest in Henry Jephson, Eric Baxter was also bringing to light much of the nineteenth-century history of Leamington Spa, where Jephson was a famous medical practitioner, benefiting to some extent from the lure of the local spa waters and their attraction for a wealthy, itinerant, class of patients. It is a remarkable career, even by nineteenth-century standards, since Jephson made his way from being an apothecary's apprentice; he became a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1823, and then a surgeon to Leamington Infirmary and Dispensary in 1826, before graduating M.D. from Glasgow in April 1826. After a brief sojourn in Cheltenham, which Leamington residents disapproved of, Jephson returned to Leamington in September of the same year. Then, between 1828 and 1848, described in Chapter 2 as "the peak of fame", he practised very successfully with the aid of the local waters and "a beautiful and expressive smile". One of his many famous patients – another was Ruskin – was Lord Shaftesbury, who said of him "the very appearance of the man inspires confidence". The smiling manner was parodied by such as Forbes Benignus Winslow, but Jephson cannot have been too concerned: he went on to make a very considerable fortune, helped to establish the Warwick and Leamington Banking Company, as well as numerous civic educational amenities. These must have mattered to him a good deal after 1848, when he lost his sight. But he had reached the heart of the aristocratic and political connexion: the undergraduate W. E. Gladstone recorded a number of dinners with Dr. Jephson, apparently unoffended (this was the early 1830s) by Jephson's hostility to reform and stout adherence to the old Anglican order.

The career has been meticulously researched by Dr. Baxter, and cannot be said to make light reading. This is particularly true of the account of the philanthropic activities in the period 1848–1878, although for avid students of local Midland history, much of what is examined here is fascinating. And Jephson's career as a whole once again testifies to the staying power of conservative philanthropy, once the 1830s and 1840s had been negotiated. In a different century, he might have been incarnated as Beau Nash; but in nineteenth-century England, a genteel manner