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to become exclusively a medical institution focusing on curative procedures, and ultimately to expand its clientele to all levels of society. While large-scale involvement of medical men with hospitals doubtless preceded the administrative-institutional transformation of the latter (medical professionalization around the hospital clinic in France following the Revolution may have been one necessary condition for the late-nineteenth-century transformation of hospitals), Cugnetti's detailed study of the Grenoble instance confirms the lack of interaction between organized medicine (with the partial exception of surgeons) and hospitals during the Old Regime. The curious mélange of welfare and penal functions served by the old hospital is evidenced by the Grenoble Hôpital Général's rules concerning discipline. In the scale of punishment inflicted on troublesome patients, the most severe penalty – worse than solitary confinement or ceremonial humiliation – was to be exiled from the institution.

Toby Gelfand  
University of Ottawa

RONALD L. NUMBERS (editor), *Compulsory health insurance. The continuing American debate*, Westport, Conn., and London, Greenwood Press, 1982, 8vo, pp. xv, 172, £21.95.

American schemes for National Health Insurance were formulated before the First World War and have been pushed, refined, and developed since then. But, aside from the stopgap measures of Medicare and Medicaid, nothing has been introduced to correspond to European and Canadian compulsory health insurance or socialized medicine.

This volume addresses topics in the history of efforts to provide politically acceptable health coverage and alleviate the financial disaster that illness can threaten for Americans. The virtue of this collection of symposium papers, originally presented at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the range of perspectives it offers. Ronald Numbers, writing as a social historian of medicine, analyses the view of physicians as they responded to “the specter of socialized medicine”, while Monte Poen, a political historian, introduces the delicate world of political expediencies that transformed Truman's lacklustre commitment to “compulsory” health insurance into only another weak strand leading towards Medicare.

The model of British National Health Insurance and the National Health Service has long been scrutinized suspiciously by Americans on both sides of the debate. Its clear weaknesses were made to appear formidable, and scurrilous tales of scandal and cheating were of great influence. This subject, which will be of particular interest to readers of this journal, is handled by Gary Land in a rather less subtle way than one might have expected from a cultural historian. Arthur Visel tear, on the other hand, discusses American attitudes and ideas linking insurance with public health in a very sensitive manner. Focusing on C.-E. A. Winslow, a public health champion of immense influence, Visel tear links two central debates in the organization of medicine during the period from the First World War to the particularly enlightened efforts of Henry Sigerist. Sigerist and Winslow suffered through the most crass form of red-baiting during the dark days of post-Second World War anti-communism, to the point where Winslow had to speak out against the abandonment of reason and attacks against “un-American art, and un-American music, and un-American science”.

Perhaps that extraordinary attitude has characterized many of the critics of health insurance, but Paul Starr, for one, believes that the long debate has brought the idea “from an idealistic youth to a kind of grim maturity”. Certainly, the recent proposals, championed by Edward Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, and their likes, have transformed the gleaming ideal of a healthy and more secure population into a technical dispute about the economics of cost containment.

Jonathan Liebenau  
Business History Unit

FRANCES FINNEGAN, *Poverty and prejudice. A study of Irish immigrants in York 1840–1875*, Cork University Press, 1983, 8vo, pp. x, 209, illus., 1r£15.00.

Frances Finnegan's study of Irish immigrants in York between 1840 and 1875 focuses on their demographic and occupational characteristics through quantitative analysis of census material. Whether the Irish were as antisocial as some contemporaries alleged is also subjected

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to critical scrutiny through sampling the criminal and poor-law records of the city. Finally, an assessment is made of the extent to which the Irish were assimilated into the local community.

The choice of York for such an extended analysis has not turned out to be particularly fruitful since successive fresh waves of immigrants replaced those who had moved on, and very few Irish remained in the city from one decennial census to the next. Thus it was the transient nature of the Celtic population, rather than the other factors so painstakingly analysed (the herding together of the Irish in slum "ghettoes", their religious and educational isolation, and their dependence on casual labouring or agricultural occupations) which resulted in such minimal assimilation into the York community.

The most interesting findings relate to the social behaviour of the Irish. Were they the drunken, violent, brutish individuals depicted by some hostile commentators? In spite of her attempt to revise the antisocial image of the Celtic immigrant, Finnegan's York evidence indicated that their record of criminal offences and their dependence on poor relief were disproportionately heavy for their numbers. Against this, the author emphasizes the social responsibility which led the York Irish to send money back to their less fortunate brethren in post-Famine Ireland. And she argues forcibly that rather than blaming the immigrants for their appalling living conditions, contemporaries should have indicted their landlords for their inhumanity and selfishness.

*Poverty and prejudice*, the title of this book, is more telling than much of its argument. It was the abject poverty in which the Irish lived, rather than their race and religion, which aroused much of the adverse comment from their more affluent contemporaries. Such prejudice did not differentiate the Irish from the English slum-dweller nor, until Rowntree's investigations a generation later, did contemporaries understand the reasons for their poverty.

Anne Digby  
University of York

RUDOLF HIRSCH (editor), *A catalogue of the manuscripts and archives of the Library of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia, University of Philadelphia Press, 1983, 8vo, pp. xx, 259, \$30.00.

Despite the growth of historical studies in recent decades, catalogues of manuscripts remain frustratingly thin on the ground. In Europe, the search for manuscripts often calls for the same combination of correspondence and travel which exercised the patience, as well as the legs, of the Renaissance humanists. America, on the other hand, though it has not yet given us a comprehensive guide to its immigrant European manuscripts, has produced invaluable starting-points in P. M. Hamer's *A guide to archives and manuscripts in the United States*, S. de Ricci and W. J. Wilson's *Census of medieval and renaissance manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, and the *National Union Catalog of manuscript collections*. Individual libraries that have published catalogues are nevertheless few in number, and all the more credit goes to the College of Physicians of Philadelphia for making known its archives and manuscripts in this way.

Founded in 1787 by a group of physicians that included Benjamin Rush, the College played an important role in the early history of medicine in America. Its own archives, and the papers which it has accumulated of many individuals, societies, and institutions, constitute a rich fund of material, much of it now made known for the first time. The College is, of course, richest in papers relating to medicine in America from the eighteenth century to the present. But there is much of interest from a European perspective. In addition to the eight medieval and renaissance manuscripts recorded by de Ricci, the College boasts Galen's *De crisibus* (Italy, 13–14th century), medical miscellanies from England (14th century) and Italy (first half of the 16th century), an *Artzney Buch* (late 16th century), and lecture notes from Padua (c. 1581–82). Papers from later periods include an autopsy report on Charles II, letters of Edward Jenner, and notes on lectures by John Abernethy, Charles Alston, Joseph Black, William Cullen, James Gregory, the Hunters, and others.

The excellent service performed by this catalogue justifies the intention to press ahead with its