

Book Reviews

historical argument it is surprising to find McKeown not giving an inch to recent work which suggests that an important factor in population change in the eighteenth century may have been increased fertility (through earlier marriage) rather than decreased mortality alone. Whatever the case, his overwhelming arguments for the influence of environmental change on health in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries cannot but be convincing. Here, however, McKeown parts company with other medical men who have thought about the matter. It follows he contends that such conclusions demand radical questioning of the status and role of the medical profession and the allocation of resources. A proposition that is likely to leave him as a prophet with honour in his own profession.

A. LOGAN TURNER, *Story of a great hospital. The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh 1729-1929*, [facsimile of 1937 ed.], Edinburgh, James Thin, 1979, 8vo, pp. xvi, 406, illus., £13.50.

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A. Logan Turner's *Story of a great hospital* was first published in 1937 and has been reissued to commemorate the founding of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh in 1729. The reappearance of this scarce and useful volume is to be welcomed. To begin with it is clear that Logan Turner's project is quite out of harmony with current historiographic trends in the history of medicine. His aims, as his title suggests, were to present the contemporary medical community in Edinburgh with a distinguished pedigree, a task none too difficult since the Infirmary had been staffed by such intellects and showmen as the Monros, Cullen, Christison, Syme, and Lister. Logan Turner, however, was meticulous in his method; he scrupulously followed the minutes of the Infirmary, the College of Physicians, and the College of Surgeons (though not the Town Council) to produce a precise and readable narrative. It is the attention to detail that will render the work most pleasing to current scholars though they may feel less comfortable with the straightforward interpretation they are offered.

Scottish Enlightenment studies, particularly in science, have snowballed in the last few years and now offer a context that was unavailable to Turner for viewing the founding of the institution. The major protagonists are rightly identified in his work, John Monro and his *enfant terrible* Alexander, George Drummond on the Town Council, and the College of Physicians. What is lacking is a picture of the broader economic and cultural framework within which a plan for a new hospital could flourish. Turner's determination to write the history of a *great* hospital also, at times, produced a scotoma in other areas of the interpretive field. All parties to the founding are credited, including the surgeons, who, for reasons Turner finds inexplicable, founded a surgical hospital in 1736. The reason was, as a less generous reading of the minutes shows, that they were at loggerheads with Alexander Monro over the right to attend patients with all the privileges that bestowed. Similarly Turner frequently read back into the past the later glories of the medical school. Clinical teaching was instituted in 1748, but it remained an insignificant part of the curriculum until later in the century. Students came to Edinburgh for anatomy in the winter, and flocked to

Book Reviews

London to walk the wards in the summer. Contrary to Turner's interpretation, it was, I would suggest, a feature of little importance in the early days. These examples are all evidences from a different historiographic tradition to which Turner, writing in the 1930s, could not address himself; a not altogether unfortunate thing perhaps, for otherwise the *great* might never have appeared in his title.

RAYMOND S. COWHERD, *Political economists and the English poor laws: a historical study of the influence of classical economics on the formation of social welfare policy*, Athens, Ohio, Ohio University Press, 1978, 8vo, pp. xviii, 300, \$15.00.

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Professor Cowherd's book examines the chorus of protest over mounting poverty, and especially over the soaring costs of poor relief, in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England, leading up to the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, arguably the most radical break ever in English administrative policy. He discusses schemes for the moral regeneration of the lower orders, advocated in the 1790s by Evangelicals, such as Wilberforce, and the philanthropically minded, such as George Rose. These bore fruit in, for example, the Rose Act of 1793 which gave protection to the funds of Friendly Societies, with a view to encouraging lower-class thrift (Professor Cowherd deems this "humanitarian", but does not point out that one main aim of the Act was to compile a register of workers' clubs). Professor Cowherd then charts the rise of *laissez-faire* opposition to such humanitarian schemes. Arguing that charity bred, rather than relieved, poverty, the followers of Smith and Malthus deplored government intervention in the workings of the market place, contrary to the "laws of nature". In the 1834 Act, with its doctrine of "less eligibility" and the workhouse, the Classical Economists won the day.

Professor Cowherd's technique is largely to provide a narrative account of the success of the *laissez-faire* lobby. His book is a useful digest of detail, though the main lines of the story have been familiar at least since the magisterial work of Halévy and the Webbs, and J. R. Poynter's *Society and pauperism* (1969) has a much sharper analytic edge. For, beyond his narrative, Professor Cowherd's categories and judgments are simplistic and moralizing: Poor Law interventionists routinely receive the epithet "benevolent" and *laissez-faire* advocates "doctrinaire". There is a deep failure of vision when Professor Cowherd writes (p. xiii): "When the war was resumed against Napoleon in 1803 the nation was no longer divided by ideologies" – as though lower-class opposition had simply been spirited away! And finally the book is vitiated by errors. Some are mistakes of fact (Professor Cowherd thinks that the Isle of Man is one of the Channel Isles, p. 77), but typographical errors and miscitations are plentiful (the bibliography is especially untrustworthy). Edwin Cannan is misspelt in several different ways, and (p. 103) we have Namier editing the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (*recte* Napier)!