

Book Reviews

for discussion. This was clearly part of a more widespread reaction against these unorthodox practitioners who, as trained doctors, could not be dismissed easily as quacks. Homoeopathy was outlawed by the Liverpool profession in the face of considerable lay support manifest through the homoeopathic dispensaries and hospital.

In the account of the Institution in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries Mr. Shepherd emphasizes the development of specialisms within hospital medicine. The establishment of Liverpool as an international centre for orthopaedics is traced from the 1850s, when the bone-setter Evan Thomas was shunned as a quack, to the 1930s when Thomas's son, Hugh Owen (1834–1891), M.R.C.S., was remembered with respect, and his grandson, Sir Robert Jones, had become a world-famous specialist. Jones's work during the 1914–18 war, when he organized the orthopaedic treatment of military casualties, shaped his subsequent career and, indeed, had enormous implications for the development of orthopaedics generally.

After the First World War the Institution's role changed. Its academic functions were usurped by the local medical school. What happened to the social functions remains unclear, partly because of the lack of systematic membership data in relation to statistics of the local profession.

If the book lacks an analytical framework and does not place events in their national context, the wealth of material in the provinces is nevertheless amply displayed. Mr. Shepherd has made a major contribution to the history of Liverpoolian medicine and his book will provide a much-needed foundation for further investigations.

Stella V. F. Butler

Department of History of Science and Technology
University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology

ZVI RAZI, *Life, marriage and death in a medieval parish. Economy, society and demography in Halesowen 1270–1400*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, 8vo, pp. xvi, 162, £12.00.

This short book makes a large and fundamental contribution to our knowledge of medieval English demography. It demonstrates that a microscopic study of one locality is the only sure way of establishing the nature of population change and its results in pre-industrial societies. It also shows that complicated issues can be explored succinctly and lucidly. Dr. Razi has exhaustively analysed the court rolls of one West Midlands manor, in order to determine changes in total population and such related variables as age-specific mortality, age at marriage, size of family, and illegitimacy levels. These records have been used for similar purposes before, but Razi's novel and sophisticated methodology makes his work far more reliable than previous exercises. He establishes first that the famine of 1315–17 had a major effect on a parish whose population had been growing rapidly. Yet the famine was not a successful Malthusian check. It slowed down demographic growth without preventing it. The impact of the Black Death and of later outbreaks of plague was much more severe. Roughly forty per cent of the population died in 1348–9, and at least twelve per cent in each of the plagues of 1361, 1369, and 1375. For the survivors, living standards

Book Reviews

improved: expectation of life at twenty rose, age at marriage for women fell, more land was available. But plague had left a middle-aged and elderly population, and by 1400 Halesowen was doomed to demographic stagnation for a generation or more. This general picture had been suggested by much previous work on medieval agrarian society, but it had not been established in such overwhelming and convincing detail. Thanks to Dr. Razi, historians of the Black Death and its effects now have some firm statistical ground to stand upon. It is safe to predict that Halesowen will become as famous in historical demography as Dr. E. A. Wrigley's Colyton, and there could be no higher praise than that.

Paul Slack
Exeter College, Oxford

V. E. LLOYD HART, *John Wilkes and the Foundling Hospital at Aylesbury*, Aylesbury, Bucks., HM + M Publishers, 1979, 8vo, pp. 79, illus., £5.00.

There is a wealth of manuscript information pertaining to the Foundling Hospital and its country branches, yet published work on this important eighteenth-century social institution is minimal; but it is not for this reason alone that Dr. Lloyd Hart's small book is a welcome addition to the literature. He gives, in a lucid, readable style, a lively account of the foundation of the small branch hospital at Aylesbury, its intimate involvement with the local Member of Parliament, John Wilkes, and the events leading to its closure in 1768. The first quarter of the book gives much original background information about the London Foundling Hospital and a further chapter provides brief details about the large Yorkshire branch at Ackworth. The personalities involved are clearly etched and, through their letters, the author demonstrates the compassion for and the care taken to ensure the well-being of these unwanted infants.

If there is a criticism of this book, it is one of brevity. It merely whets the appetite and leaves the reader wanting to know more; both about the foundlings and the running of the institution. For this reason it is to be hoped that this small local study is only the precursor of larger and more informative volumes about the Foundling Hospital.

Valerie Fildes
Wellcome Institute

T. S. PENSABENE, *The rise of the medical practitioner in Victoria*, Canberra, Australian National University, 1980, 8vo, pp. xiii, 219, illus., [no price stated], (paperback).

The social implications of developments in Australian medicine have received scant attention from historians. This scrupulously researched case-study is therefore welcomed as a fundamental contribution to Australian medical history and to an understanding of the importance and influence of doctors in Australian society today.

As an economic historian, Mr. Pensabene is concerned with two questions: "How did the medical practitioner improve his professional status? How was this increased status directed?" (p. 5). To answer these questions he takes the period 1870 to the