

Book Reviews

A. McGEHEE HARVEY, *Adventures in medical research. A century of discovery at Johns Hopkins*, Baltimore, Md., and London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976, 8vo, pp. xiii, 464, illus., £11.15.

The Johns Hopkins University was opened in 1876, the Hospital in 1889 and the School of Medicine in 1893. Since then, in addition to patient care and student education, a stream of important research has poured forth, thereby establishing these institutions as one of the most outstanding medical centres in the world. Dr. McGehee Harvey, emeritus professor of medicine, has been reminding us over the last few years of the great men of Hopkins in a series of brilliant sketches published in the *Johns Hopkins Medical Journal*. He now presents a collection of twenty-six essays, and again he is more concerned with the individuals who have accomplished fame, rather than with the scientific aspects of the advances they achieved *per se*. He has researched each with great care and uses diaries, reminiscences, first-hand accounts and other sources not previously explored; his knowledge of pre-nineteenth-century medicine, however, is limited. He writes with great skill, but it is a pity that a better system of documentation has not been employed.

It is remarkable that there have been so many men and women of repute and international fame at the Johns Hopkins. Since the immortal trio of Welch, Osler and Halsted, there has been a sequence of renowned individuals: Abel, Dandy, Cushing, Sabin, MacCallum, Mall, Ross Harrison, Barker, Helen Taussig, Hench, Moore, Erlanger, Thayer, Janeway, Blalock, Wintrobe, and many others. Subjects like tissue-culture, urology, mycoses, pharmacology, neuro-surgery, women in medicine, thyroid disease, neuro-ophthalmological disorders, paediatrics, and chemotherapy have been pioneered, and Dr. Harvey discusses each of these in detail, using many unique illustrations.

This is a fascinating book which deserves unhesitating praise and recommendation, and wide distribution. It not only relates the contributions and lives of an impressive number of medical workers, but it also adds substantially to the history of American medicine and to the history of scientific medicine. It also testifies to the foresight of its founding faculty and to the qualities of their successors that in a relatively brief period of time the Johns Hopkins won the international acclaim, which it retains today.

DEREK FRASER (editor), *The new Poor Law in the nineteenth century*, London, Macmillan, 1976, 8vo, pp. [3 11.], 218, £5.95 (£2.95 paperback).

There are eight scholarly essays, prefaced by an excellent editorial 'Introduction' (pp. 1–24), which deal with various aspects of policy towards the poor. Together they contribute to recent studies that are showing how the new Poor Law, reinstated in 1834, failed, making way for more recent reform and the welfare state. Professor M. W. Flinn's paper on 'Medical services under the new Poor Law' is of particular significance to the medical historian; their inadequacy led eventually to the National Health Service with, amongst other developments, the change of work-houses into hospitals.

Dr. Fraser's book, which is in the praiseworthy 'Problems in focus' series, can be warmly recommended and should be read by all those working on social aspects of Victorian medicine.