receipts", for instance, appear in the same form in learned treatises, manuscript collections of recipes, and in oral tradition. The book ends with a case study in the popular medicine of the time, by looking at women's work as medical practitioners. Nagy illustrates very clearly how women, especially charitable gentlewomen, were not mere nurses but undertook the treatment of the most difficult cases.

There are problems with the book: inevitably, the evidence about popular healing comes from the literate and well-to-do part of the population, who might be said to share a common outlook with regular practitioners. Whether the majority of the population had its own medical culture in seventeenth-century England is a question that neither Nagy nor any other historian has succeeded in answering. Lucinda Beier's *Sufferers and healers* covers rather similar ground, but Nagy's book will be useful as a student text. It has drawn on a wealth of primary material and has a good bibliography.

Finally, one should add that the book was originally a master's thesis and has the enthusiasm and iconoclasm often associated with postgradute research and, now alas too rarely, with North America. Historians such as Charles Webster and Walter Pagel are roundly taken to task for their Whiggishness in concentrating on great names and male practitioners, though the duo of Margaret Pelling and Roy Porter do receive due praise for their work on the social history of medicine.

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G. S. ROUSSEAU and ROY PORTER (eds.), *Sexual underworlds of the Enlightenment*, Manchester University Press, 1987, 8vo, pp. x, 280, illus., £29.95.

This work is the second volume of a planned trilogy devoted to the study of sexuality in the eighteenth century (the first, edited by P. G. Boucé, appeared in 1982 under the title *Sexuality in eighteenth-century Britain*). As the editors point out in the preface, the history of sex still remains shrouded in darkness. In the work of Foucault we have a magnificent theoretical statement about the history of Western sexuality, but as yet we possess precious little hard data with which to assess and refine his hypothesis. The aim of the trilogy, in consequence, is to lighten this darkness by presenting a detailed picture of the history of sexuality in the century which, for good or ill, was the cultural birthplace of modern man. In this, as in the previous volume, an image of the richness and variety of eighteenth-century sexual mores is created through a series of independent and highly particular essays. There are ten essays in all, divided into three loosely defined subject areas: 'Sex and discourse', 'Sex and society', and 'Sex at the margins'. The contributors form a multi-disciplinary cast of historians, literary critics, and anthropologists, and there is no dominant ideological line. This is the editors' preference, since the purpose of the book is avowedly descriptive rather than interpretative. By contrast with the earlier volume, the present work supposedly has a wider European perspective but in fact the majority of the essays are anglocentric. Inevitably they are extremely wide-ranging, embracing topics as diverse as the dubious delights of the sexual marketplace (Peter Wagner), the libertarian potential of the masquerade (Terry Castle), and the homosexual underpinning of neo-classicism (G. S. Rousseau). Arguably the most interesting essay to the non-specialist reader is the one by Théodore Tarczylo devoted to a methodological critique of the anti-libertarian interpretation of eighteenth-century French sexuality. On the one hand, says Tarczylo, this is a view based on the unacceptable conflation of regionally distinctive demographic statistics: eighteenth-century France was a socio-geographical expression. On the other hand, historians who attempt to label the Enlightenment an age of either sexual liberty or sexual constraint are guilty of anachronism. Eighteenth-century sexual ideologies must be construed in their own terms and not through the prism of the late twentieth century.

All social and cultural historians of the eighteenth century will find this volume fascinating reading. As has been long recognized, man's sexual history defies easy penetration. The authors are to be uniformly commended for their careful and cautious reconstruction of the sexual life (more correctly, the sexual opportunities) of the man in the street. At last a picture of

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eighteenth-century sexuality is beginning to emerge which takes us beyond the memoirs of Boswell. Historians of eighteenth-century medicine will find the volume especially interesting. Virtually every essay has some bearing on the history of medicine, for medical men occupied a vital position in the sexual marketplace. It was medical men who produced the serious and not-so-serious sexual literature of the age; the clergy, it seems, pretended that sex did not exist. It was medical men, again, who administered to the sexually incompetent and the sexually wounded through their pills and potions: they laid down the parameters of the sexually natural and claimed to be able to keep the sexually active whole. Indeed, according to Roy Porter, medical men were not just the orchestrators of the sexual dance, but keen participants. That eighteenth-century creation the man-midwife was a sexual predator. Like the dancing-master and the eunuch, he was often a liberating force in the aristocratic household, offering his prestigious clients a sexual as well as a medical service. There can be no doubt, then, that *Sexual underworlds of the Enlightenment* is an informative and thought-provoking publication. Once introduced to this rich dish of sexual delicacies, the reader can only wish he could stay longer at the table. Even now there still seem so many aspects of eighteenth-century erotica unexplored. When, for instance, will someone write on that ultimate eighteenth-century experience in sexual titillation: the stuffed mermaid? This reviewer awaits with eagerness the third volume of the trilogy.

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AMALIE M. KASS and EDWARD H. KASS, *Perfecting the world: the life and times of Dr. Thomas Hodgkin 1798–1866,* Boston, San Diego, and New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988, 8vo, pp. xxx, 642, illus., $34.95/£24.50.

If it is ever necessary to reduce the extensive library of medical biography to a select handful of books, the Kass' life of Thomas Hodgkin ought undoubtedly to be among the survivors. Not least because it is more than a *medical* biography. The Kass' study is an immensely readable narrative, not just about medicine but about Quakerism, science, and the politics of colonialism in the nineteenth century. The authors' many years of painstaking research have been amply rewarded, not with inconsequential footnotes, but by detail which allows them to illuminate and not obscure Hodgkin's life.

Thankfully the Kasses have taken the "and times" part of their title seriously and not indulgently. For instance, they neatly use the apprenticeship of the young Quaker apothecary to examine medical education in early nineteenth-century London and the workings of the "chain of friendship" among the Friends. Similarly, they plot Hodgkin's years at Guy's, simultaneously demonstrating patronage at work in a great voluntary hospital and the career of the new membrane pathology. The last two hundred pages of the narrative treat Hodgkin's life by subject rather than chronologically. The reader may feel this was a judgmental error since the book loses the integral sense of events so convincingly conveyed in the first part. Confronted by Hodgkin's myriad activities, however, the authors' decision is comprehensible. Although Hodgkin was a medical man by profession, a mammoth part of his time was devoted to organizations concerned with the condition of North American Indians, slaves, aborigines, and countless other tribes and races enjoying their first encounter with civilized white man.

One of the most forceful impressions left by this book is how extensive a transforming power Quakerism was in industrial society. Quaker ideals pervaded the lives of Hodgkin and his circle, few of whom ever doubted that, with a little encouragement, every individual could find the inner light and become self-sufficient. Nor did they doubt that in too much relief lay the danger of dependence. The medical dimension of this view is well documented by the Kasses in their account of Hodgkin's lectures on the promotion of health, delivered among the miserable poor of Spitalfields. Likewise, the authors recover many other tangible memorials of Quaker endeavour, including political reform movements and a new account of disease. In its own way the Kass' book is a Quaker text. In general it centres on the individual and what he was or was not able to bring about by his own efforts. Conversely, there is a relative neglect of Hodgkin as a

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