

Book Reviews

G. J. BARKER-BENFIELD, *The horrors of the half-known life. Male attitudes toward women and sexuality in nineteenth-century America*, New York and London, Harper & Row, 1976, 8vo, pp. xiv, 352, £2.95 (paperback).

Beginning with a general background consisting of Alexis de Tocqueville's view of the effects of democracy on American men and on their relations to women, the author next discusses the male domination of parturition in America and the important international standing of American gynaecological surgery in the nineteenth century, including an account of J. Marion Sims. The third and fourth parts of the book deal with individuals: the Rev. John Todd (1800–1873), a prolific writer of books on advice for men; and Augustus Kinsley Gardner (1821–1876), an obstetrician and gynaecologist concerned with the social and political meaning of reproduction.

The dominance of the male over the female as far as health, activity, and sexuality are concerned provides the central theme of this thoughtful and provocative book. It is a scholarly study with full documentation, and it provides the male case, to be set against the strident female claims, nowadays so numerous and uncritical.

MARY ROTH WALSH, *Doctors wanted: no women need apply. Sexual barriers in the medical profession, 1835–1975*, New Haven, Conn., and London, Yale University Press, 1977, 8vo, pp. xxiii, 303, £10.80.

Yet another outcry against the claimed suppression of American women doctors by male members of the profession. The author claims that this has been due to a conscious effort, based on economic and psychological motives, to limit their number, whereas in the late nineteenth century women comprised ten or more per cent of the enrolment in eighteen medical schools surveyed. Despite the vigorous activities of the feminist movement beginning in the nineteenth century, women have wielded little power in medical institutions and this is the same today. Their relative unimportance in the American profession continues and the author's message is that without great effort it is likely to persist.

Perhaps sex-role stereotyping, which identifies doctors solely as male, is more potent in the States, but a comparative study of the situation in a variety of countries would be interesting and possibly useful in guiding future campaigns. Meantime this scholarly book, even if somewhat weighted in favour of the female, presents a great deal of fascinating material, much of it unexplored until now. There is also, however, inevitable repetition of well-known themes.

ARTHUR RAISTRICK, *Two centuries of industrial welfare. The London (Quaker) Lead Company 1692–1905*, Buxton, Moorland, 1977, 8vo, pp. 168, illus., £3.95.

Although the Company worked mines in Derbyshire, Wales, and Ireland, this book deals mainly with the area between the Rivers Tyne and Swale. The sub-title is therefore, 'The social policy and work of the "Governor and Company for Smelting down lead with pit coal and sea coal", mainly in Alston Moor and the Pennines'. The enlightened social, medical, and nutritional policies for the work-forces are of particular interest, and Dr. Raistrick's book is a significant contribution to the history of occupational medicine. It is a revised version of the first edition of 1938.