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organizations made available were aimed at rehabilitating the poor, particularly by helping cohabiting couples to legalize their union. From 1870 onwards, fears about depopulation prompted the State to assume increasing responsibility for public assistance programmes designed to prevent infanticide and child abandonment. As questions of hygiene replaced questions of morality, protecting the health of poor mothers became more important than reforming their morals, leading to the expansion and modernization of La Maternité, Paris's most important childbirth institution, the provision of financial support for new mothers, and the establishment of well-baby clinics and of day care facilities for children.

Fuchs is anxious to restore poor mothers, a group notoriously "hidden from history", to the centre of the stage. Despite the paucity of the evidence, she manages to get some insight into the difficulties that confronted the poor in an urban setting, highlighting the discrepancy between public discourses about the poor and pregnant on the one hand, and women's lived experience of maternity on the other. Thus while nineteenth-century doctors claimed that poor women had abortions out of fear of dishonour and to protect their reputations, women tried for abortion revealed that it was poverty, not shame, that forced them to take this desperate measure. Child abandonment, which was widely condemned as a heartless and inhumane action, was a difficult and painful decision for many women, made in the belief that it offered the best chance of survival for the infant rather than out of a desire to shirk maternal responsibility.

Although the general themes of Fuchs' study will be familiar to historians of the nineteenth century, its detailed description of charitable initiatives and welfare provisions for poor mothers provides a wealth of material that is especially valuable for comparative purposes. Historians working on Britain will be interested to learn how a different country addressed similar problems, particularly in relation to the establishment of the workhouse system in Britain.

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MILTON LEWIS, *A rum state: alcohol and state policy in Australia, 1788–1988*, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1992, pp. vi, 231, Austral. \$24.95, (9–780644–220248).

There are many books which discuss alcohol control policies, but few which do so in the light of an historical perspective. One of the advantages of Milton Lewis's survey of the development of alcohol policies in Australia is its broad chronological sweep. The book covers two centuries from the late eighteenth century to almost the present day. The focus is a dual one, dealing with both the control and the treatment aspects of policy.

Early settler society in Australia had a hard drinking reputation, although, as Lewis shows, levels of consumption were declining from mid-nineteenth century until the 1930s. Australia experienced a strong temperance movement during the nineteenth century; and, as in Britain, the movement changed its focus from moderation to total abstinence. There were demands for local option and the Maine law. Greater state control during the First World War and the advent of early closing undercut temperance support. In the inter-war years, and in particular post World War II, licensing laws were gradually liberalized (although those in Queensland remained distinctly stiffer).

As Lewis notes, this liberalization and the move away from state responsibility for the consumption of alcohol through control policy took place at the same time as the focus of alcohol policy shifted towards treatment. The broader approach gave way to one focused on the individual. Disease views of alcoholism had their impact in Australia in the late nineteenth century as they had in the U.S. and in Britain. As in Britain, inebriates legislation failed to deal with drunkenness in any significant manner. But it testified to a period of optimism about the possibilities of treatment, an optimism, which, as the author notes, was not borne out by the results.

Optimism did not revive until after World War II. Drugs such as antabuse then seemed to offer a physical "cure" for alcoholism. The advent of Alcoholics Anonymous (Australia was its first established location outside the U.S.) offered a form of neo-temperance to keep drunkards "on the wagon". Disease was rediscovered and state organizations such as the N.S.W. Foundation for Research and Treatment of Alcoholism, founded in the 1950s, pressed for state action. The role of the newly established WHO, as in other national locations, was important in putting alcohol

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treatment on the agenda. Gradually state policies on facilities and prevention of alcohol problems emerged. The 1980s saw a federal plan put in operation, its focus, as elsewhere, primarily on illicit drugs, despite the much greater degree of social harm occasioned by alcohol consumption. Lewis's "lesson" for the future is an optimistic one. Drinking, he argues, like smoking, could follow the same path of declining public acceptability. Prohibition, tried with the Australian aborigines, did not work as a control option.

With such a broad sweep, this book can only touch on many of the fascinating issues raised by the study of alcohol policy. Lewis's coverage of the post war period is one virtue. In encompassing the recent history of alcohol he covers ground on which British historians are only beginning to work. Let us hope that this Australian example helps stimulate further research on the history of alcohol policy both there and in Britain.

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GEORGETTE LEGÉE, *Pierre Flourens, 1794–1867: physiologiste et historien des sciences*, 2 vols, Abbeville, F. Paillart, 1992, pp. xvi, 662, illus.

Pierre Flourens (1794–1867) was a prominent member of the scientific establishment in nineteenth-century France. The *éloges* for deceased colleagues that he composed as Perpetual Secretary of the Académie des Sciences were regarded as outstanding exemplars of the genre. Flourens is, however, chiefly remembered for his highly influential experimental investigations into the functions of the brain. His researches on the cerebellum are regarded as marking an epoch in the understanding of the functions of that organ. Flourens' work on the cerebral hemispheres is, in contrast, usually seen as reactionary in its effect because it delayed the general acceptance of the doctrine of cerebral localization.

The present work is a curious production which defies easy classification. It is not a biography of Flourens although it does contain what might be considered notes and materials for such a life. These two volumes are in fact a series of essays on various aspects of Flourens' life and career, some of which have appeared previously. Perhaps the most interesting are those which deal with the early parts of both. The discussion of the role that concepts drawn from Montpellier vitalism may have played in framing his problematic are especially stimulating and suggestive. There are also some valuable new insights into Flourens' relations with such contemporaries on the Paris scientific scene as Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and Georges Cuvier. Ultimately, however, this attempt to place Flourens in his intellectual and social context leaves too many crucial questions unanswered. In particular, Flourens' dramatic shift from enthusiasm for Gall and Geoffroy to an equally pronounced opposition remains unexplained. This is especially disappointing in view of the access to previously unexplored archive material that Legée evidently enjoyed.

There is also a surprising neglect of relevant secondary literature. For instance Legée's extended discussion of the relations between Geoffroy and Cuvier proceeds without any reference to Toby Appel's definitive study of the controversy between the two men. There is, more generally, more than a whiff of historiographic archaism about these handsomely produced volumes. The comprehensive bibliography of Flourens' works that they contain is, however, a genuine asset.

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J. TREVOR HUGHES, *Thomas Willis 1621–1675: his life and work*, Eponymists in Medicine, London and New York, Royal Society of Medicine Services Ltd., 1991, pp. xiv, 151, illus., £12.95 (hardback, 1–85315–162–9), £7.95 (paperback 1–853150–161–0).

Thomas Willis's medical writings have attracted attention for three centuries. In this most recent biography of Willis, J. Trevor Hughes provides readers with a cursory cradle-to-grave account of the life and work of the seventeenth-century Oxonian physician in sixteen brief chapters. As this volume was written for the Royal Society of Medicine's series of 'Eponymists in Medicine', the author duly addresses Willis's eponymous immortality via anatomy's Circle of Willis, *Chordae Willisii*, the