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(‘The vendors of medicines advertised in eighteenth-century Bath’, *Medical History*, 1975, **19**: 352–69; and ‘Medicines advertised in the eighteenth-century Bath newspapers’, *Medical History*, 1976, **20**: 152–68) and also that of J. J. Looney (‘Advertising and society in England, 1720–1820: a statistical analysis of Yorkshire newspaper advertisements’ [Ph.D. thesis, Princeton University, 1983]). One also wishes that Doherty, a literary scholar by training, had been more adventurous in literary analysis of the promotion materials, perhaps using the methods of Roland Barthes. Not least, it is a great shame that the volume reproduces none of the advertisements in facsimile: here was surely an opportunity for the evaluation of visual as well as verbal evidence. These however are minor blemishes. Thanks to Doherty’s diligence, dedication and flair, we now possess, for the first time, an in-depth account of the promotion of proprietary medicines in the emergent commercial society. Let us hope that this exemplary work will provide the model for similar product biographies.

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THOMAS NEVILLE BONNER, *To the ends of the earth: women’s search for education in medicine*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. xvi, 232, illus., £27.95 (0–674–89303–4).

Over thirty years ago, while doing research on American doctors in European universities before 1914, Thomas Bonner was struck by the “remarkable number of foreign women, including Americans” enrolled in medicine at Zurich, Bern, Paris and Geneva (p. vii). Historians of women’s role in medicine have cause to be grateful that he has now been able to follow up this (at the time) intriguing observation. And, as he shows the numbers were remarkable. Bonner estimates that, in the half-century before 1914, “well over ten thousand women . . . took some medical training in Switzerland or France”, three-quarters of them from the Russian Empire and only a handful actually from Switzerland or France (p. 62).

To the ends of the earth provides the first detailed English language account of the opening of these first continental European universities, most importantly Zurich, to would-be medical women in the 1860s and 1870s and a biographical picture of the women who went there. This detailed description is combined with a comparative analysis of the opportunities and constraints facing these women in their home countries, particularly in Germany, Russia, the United States and Britain, as these developed during the following century. One of the strengths of the book is his emphasis throughout on political and institutional factors in the specific countries, particularly of the different forms of state intervention in medical education, as more significant than levels of prejudice alone in shaping women’s opportunities.

Bonner’s book is a valuable corrective to several recent accounts of the campaign for women’s entry to medicine in Britain. These have paid almost no attention to the European dimension, generally supporting Sophia Jex-Blake’s public rejection of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson’s advocacy of the “back-door route” via French or Swiss degrees, as a means of exercising leverage of public and parliamentary opinion at home. Bonner makes it clear that Garrett Anderson’s proposal might have been viable. And Bonner’s detailed and often poignant picture of the thousands of Russian women who sought medical training long before 1917 should go a long way to eradicate the misconception that the high level of women in (erstwhile) Soviet medicine is a specifically post-revolutionary phenomenon.

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PETER MORRIS (ed.), *First aid to the battlefield: life and letters of Sir Vincent Kennett-Barrington (1844–1903)*, Stroud, Glos., and Wolfeboro Falls, NH, Alan Sutton, 1992, pp. x, 231 illus., £14.99 (0–7509–00164).

Possibly one of the least-researched aspects of Victorian philanthropy is its internationalism. The European wars which accompanied the struggles for German and Italian unification from the mid-nineteenth century onwards threw larger and larger numbers of young men into nationalistic

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combat; at the same time they drew disinterested civilians, male and female, of every nationality, into the work of war relief, and gave birth to the Geneva Convention and the modern Red Cross movement.

The career of Sir Vincent Hunter Barrington Kennett-Barrington exemplifies this phenomenon. A young barrister of modest means, he threw himself into the work of the Order of St John and the St John Ambulance Association, the National Society for Aiding and Ameliorating the Condition of the Sick and Wounded in War (precursor of the British Red Cross Society), and other more ephemeral charitable organizations. He administered military-medical relief during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71, the 1874–76 Carlist Wars in Spain, the Balkan upheavals of 1876–78 and 1885–86, and the British intervention in Egypt and the Sudan of 1885. Peter Morris has edited a selection of his letters, diaries and official reports from all these fronts, prefacing them with a long biographical chapter; and he has made the welcome addition of maps and chronologies to the text. He has not, however, compiled an index, which, given the inherent interest of his material and the near-total lack of accessible printed primary sources on this subject, is to be regretted.

First aid to the battlefield illustrates the immense variety of tasks undertaken by this Englishman abroad: from accompanying the transport of wounded soldiers across battlefields to organizing the vaccination of several thousand refugees; from distributing drugs, bandages and surgical instruments to supervising the burial of “hundreds of dead horses, mules, donkeys and oxen”. Although he was to become an instructor for St John Ambulance classes, Kennett-Barrington was not medically qualified, and there is little clinical detail in these pages. We read of impure air and the deaths of amputees, but not of surgical techniques; there are occasional references to “sanitary precautions”, but none to antiseptics.

Kennett-Barrington’s trusty flannel belt may raise a smile, but his descriptions of human misery are neither quaint nor old-fashioned. The Balkan sections make strong reading, and at the present sad juncture in international affairs will be of particular interest. (Among many strikingly contemporary passages is a letter of April 1878, written at the height of the tension between Britain and Russia which preceded the Berlin Conference: “we discovered that a quantity of forage was being landed for the Russians, actually supplied by an English contractor. Is it not too bad when we want them to be as short as possible of provisions?”).

Neither in Kennett-Barrington’s writings nor in the editor’s introduction do we discover quite what made our knight errant choose this over any other philanthropic career. He does not seem to have felt that he should be working for the abolition of war, or considered that voluntary ambulances might be helping antagonists to prosecute their mutual slaughter more economically and expeditiously. He invoked the Good Samaritan and claimed, simply: “when a man is once wounded it is too late to inquire whether or not he was justified in fighting”.

Kennett-Barrington appears cheerfully to have ignored the fact that the Geneva Convention established the neutral status, not of a motley band of international well-wishers, but of disciplined voluntary auxiliaries of national military-medical establishments; and a more narrowly national function had, indeed, been the original aspiration of the St John Ambulance enthusiasts. Officialdom was frequently driven to distraction by the duplication of voluntary initiatives. Kennett-Barrington in turn was infuriated when Surgeon-Major Evatt of the Army Medical Department began to elaborate a scheme for closer collaboration between units of the British Volunteer Force and their military-medical counterparts, following the practice of Germany and Austria. “Why should N[ational] A[id] S[ociety] spend its funds in supplying ambulance materiel to Volunteers?” he fumed in 1885. “No, let the gifts go to their proper destinations. . . and let them be as a sign of the brotherhood of humanity which knows no nations, creed or limits . . .”

He did not live to witness the answer to his, as he thought, rhetorical question: “Are the volunteers likely to be sick or wounded in war for 1,000 years to come?” Between 1907 and 1914, under the aegis of the War Office, St John and the Red Cross, a Territorial Army medical service and a network of hundreds of Voluntary Aid Detachments established patriotic channels for the gallant voluntary impulses of a new generation.

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