which proves that historical narrative can be at least as intriguing as the best fiction ever written.

Pittsburgh

Edward G. Williams

John Morgan, Continental Doctor. By Whitfield J. Bell, Jr.

This first full-length portrait of Dr. John Morgan is worth taking into one's own life because it pleads for a good man who was, as Gamaliel Bradford might have called him, a damaged soul. Perhaps it was because he had "exquisite sensibility" that he was painfully hurt so often. When it is remembered that he was "tough enough" to survive only 54 years while Washington lived 67, Jefferson 83 and John Adams 91, it becomes evident that his weakness, whatever it was, must have been lethal as well as cruel. Some of his intimate contemporaries, obviously, were less susceptible to suffering.

But Morgan possessed sources of strength, too. He was a physician not by accident. The records of his career, still in process of being retrieved, show fixity of purpose and notable capacity for labor. From 1750 to 1756 he served in his native Philadelphia as apprentice to Dr. John Redman from Edinburgh, Leyden and Guy's in London. The work was "hard and confining," including as it did being "servant, coachman, messenger-boy, prescription-maker, nurse, and assistant surgeon." Meanwhile, he studied such classics as Boerhaave, Van Swieten and Sydenham, "writing summaries of some portions, memorizing others," and gained experience bandaging and dressing wounds, visiting private patients in their homes and "the poor sick" with his master and sometimes alone as his substitute. At twenty, he was engaged as apothecary of the Pennsylvania Hospital, in which post "he could observe the practice of other physicians . . . and gain insight from their treatments." Further, he was a student of liberal arts and a candidate for a degree at the College of Philadelphia, and was attending lectures in pure science by Provost William Smith. Coincidentally, he had the advantage of being a member of Redman's family, privileged to meet his friends and neighbors.

Such was the background from which Morgan moved into service in the world war which exploded at the Forks of the Ohio in 1754. He
met Washington and Benjamin Franklin and was commissioned an ensign with medical duties — at 4 shillings a day. During 1756 he was with Clapham's battalion on the Susquehanna. Promoted to lieutenant in 1758, he was busy with smallpox and measles at Carlisle, Raystown, Bedford and Ligonier until the American aspect of the conflict ended in 1760.

That summer, Morgan, now 25, went to London under the sponsorship of Franklin to study with John Fothergill and at St. Thomas's. Soon he was enrolled with William and John Hunter and William Hewson. Subsequently, at Cambridge and Oxford he had opportunities to hear and watch Charles Collignon and William Smith. Still later he was at Edinburgh, where his teachers included Robert Whytt, Hugh Blair, William Cullen and Joseph Black. It was among such mentors as these that Morgan developed his decision to improve existing conditions in medical education in America. Before returning home, however, he toured with his friend Samuel Powel the medical centers of Holland, France, Italy and Switzerland, meeting among other celebrities James Boswell, Angelica Kauffmann, Abbe Peter Grant, David Garrick, Laura Maria Catherina Bassi, Giovanni Battista Morgagni (teaching at 82), Voltaire and Pope Clement XIII.

By this time Morgan was a person of distinction himself. Five years of tireless endeavor in Europe had earned him the M.D. degree at Edinburgh and significant professional recognition of the same sort in London, Paris and Rome. Unquestionably, he was qualified for the position of Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine to which he was elected by the trustees of the College of Philadelphia, May 3, 1765. But "the climax of his career" was not his high employment but rather his Discourse Upon the Institution of Medical Schools in America which he read May 30 and 31. The theme and his presentation of it perhaps were more drastically revolutionary than anyone fully realized at the moment. Dr. Bell says: "Never again would he be so famous or his audience so friendly. His whole life had been in preparation for this moment, while from the address a train of consequences flowed which affected him, the medical school, and the profession in Philadelphia for more than a quarter of a century . . . In the hour of his greatest triumph Morgan unwittingly created causes for the frustration and failure of much that he aspired to accomplish."

Probably it was his insistence upon higher standards for physicians, surgeons and apothecaries that created the worst mischief. It is plain that much, if not most, of his opposition came from practitioners of medicine who lacked adequate training and experience. His cam-
ampaign for reform prospered and was appreciated most among people best informed about it. But the number of his enemies increased, especially after 1766, when he published *Four Dissertations on the Reciprocal Advantages of a Perpetual Union between Great Britain and her American Colonies*. The fact that he was at heart a patriot did not help him. On the contrary, when Congress chose him Physician-in-Chief of the American army, troubles multiplied. By January 9, 1777, he was removed "without explanation." The sensitivity which was innate in him led him to feel disgraced irretrievably. He withdrew from public life, confining his endeavors to his private practice and his commitments at his college and the Pennsylvania Hospital. In the end he was alone and poor, broken in health of body and mind. Dr. Bell has told the whole story as it never has been attempted by any other writer. The result is Greek and Shakespearean, but, in common with the greatest of tragedies, it is noble and inspiring — a good book, deserving of gratitude unqualified.

*Pittsburgh*  
JAMES WALDO FAWCETT


To bring accuracy, order, and meaning to romantic myths of the past is one of the great joys of the historian. Unfortunately, in doing so, he all too often does not match research skill with writing skill. Wayne Broehl's book on the Molly Maguires is an exception. His style has suspense, clarity, and continuity, and the book represents the first serious attempt to separate fact from fiction in the story of the violence perpetrated in the Schuylkill coal fields by the Irish secret society. The murders committed, the involvement of the Pinkerton detectives, and the resultant trials and hangings of the Mollies in the mid-1870's have been the subjects over the years of numerous non-fiction accounts, novels (Arthur Conan Doyle wrote a Sherlock Holmes novel based on the affair), and Sunday supplement articles; a scholarly look at the Mollies was definitely in order.

Previous writers on the Mollies have not had Broehl's devotion to meticulous and skeptical scholarship, nor have they had access to both the letterbooks of Allan Pinkerton and the files of the Reading Railroad, another of the major participants in the drama. Nor have