

insurance, the problems and anxieties of the Medical profession, the part to be played by "Medicare," as to the quantity as well as the quality of medical service.

Medicine is more than a science; it is also an art, and thereby it has been related to social and cultural development at large. The term "Medical history" involves not only the history of disease but attempts to promote health and prevent, cure or ameliorate illness. The concept includes past trends in "social medicine" and medical sociology, such as medical institutions, personnel and costs of medical care. In short, medical history involves social, economic and biologic content.

The writer divides medical history into five eras: 1620-1720; 1720-1820; 1820-1870; 1870-1920; and 1920-1965, in each of which, early American, the Middle Period, The Modern Pathology and Clinical Studies, the Germanic Epoch, and the Recent Era, indicate the progressive growth of American Medicine. While many people will never read all the biographies, comments and discussions in such a history of medicine, yet most will want to know particular facts about the science, the delusions, the history of certain phases of medicine. To satisfy these wishes, the author tries to supply them in a logical, historical and interesting manner. He has managed to bring these various objects together in one small volume of 332 pages. For anyone who wishes to cover the varied phases of Medicine, especially the historical side, he will find his time well spent in reading this volume.

Pittsburgh

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Here's to Thornburg. By ALICE CRIST CHRISTNER. (Pittsburgh: Thornburg Community Club, 1966. Pp. xi, 140.)

One of the most interesting aspects of social history during the nineteenth century was the development of suburbia as a result of urban expansion and improved methods of transportation. It was chiefly because of the latter factor that this new type of residential existence also became intimately connected with the history of land speculation in America. As a dormitory adjunct to the city, the suburb was the child of transport and the land agent. That it was often in the last century a dreary bastard, neither city nor country, and in our day, a faceless monster, should, considering the numerous shortcomings of the parents, occasion no surprise. When this has been said, however, how pleasant it is to be reminded that the American suburb could, and

can be also a place of human cooperation, of kindness, of goodness, and charm. This book is a record of one such place.

The book aside, this reviewer must say, as one who is concerned with the landscape of man, that he has always been impressed with the physical presence of Thornburg, without knowing anything of its essential quality. He was not acquainted with anyone there, and therefore not in possession of any "inside" information. The situation of the borough has always been strangely remote, and — preserved by some trick of fate, or time, or circumstance — remote it has curiously managed to remain. In the past one visited the place with one's observational eye "pitched," one might say, at its highest angle, to take in what the bland presented streets could give one. One got, on several occasions, sufficient evidence that here was an architectural and social phenomenon — quiet, homogenous, solid, and imperturbably gracious (if one dare any longer use that much tried word) — a phenomenon that had managed to escape the usual mire and stain of the great world around it.

This is, one thought (taking it very enormously on its own terms), some ideal locality (and the American cult of the suburb, for all its egregious and horrendous failures, has always been a search for the Ideal, the Good Life), like the Green Pastures of the Psalmist. These quiet roads — named for Ivy League educational institutions — these houses of a fine Edwardian amplitude, these trees that merge into groves upon the hill, are surely augurs of the best in American existence. Here there is no false and meretricious artiness or middle-class pretentiousness, no Hollywood "side." Everything is calm, understated, informal, and even a little homely — this is a true artifact of the American dream.

And our book has providentially proved it. In the way of ideal suburbs, the Pittsburgh area is fortunate, historically speaking, in possessing almost intact, one of the first of all Romantic idealistic suburbs, Evergreen Hamlet (for an account of this fascinating settlement see the article in this magazine by Charles C. Arensberg (Fall-Winter, 1955, vol. 38, nos. 3-4, pp. 117-133). This upperclass, communitarian community failed shortly after its inception, although it continued under other auspices. Christopher Tunnard, in speaking of these idealistic suburbs, has said that they could work only as long as businessmen could run them.

Thornburg, its dulcet image aside, seems to be a case in point. This small suburb, situated on a wooded hillside above the "water meadows" of Chartiers Creek near Crafton, was established on the

erstwhile farm tracts of the Thornburg family who settled there in 1806. The moving spirit, the author tells us, was one Frank Thornburg, who in 1899 contracted with his brother David to establish the town of Thornburg on the family acreage. The Thornburg Land Company was formed and lots were offered for sale.

The sale of these lots was restricted in the interest of forming a "high class residence district." Much also was made of that suburban *sine qua non*, transportation facilities — in this case not only the railroad but a trolley line as well. Frank Thornburg was said not only to have been a good salesman, but also to have fostered an agreeable community life among the new residents. Early on, a rather cohesive social existence seems to have developed among the Thornburgers which appears to be still viable today.

Frank Thornburg also kept an architectural eye on the houses built in the settlement. He spent his winters in California and was always returning with "ideas" for the Thornburg dwellings. Since California was, in the early part of this century, the seat of considerable experimentation in domestic architectural form, the rather "original" aspect of many Thornburg houses is thereby explained.

The Depression of 1907 brought troubles to the Thornburg Land Company which became bankrupt in 1908; Frank Thornburg moved permanently to California, but his brother continued to live in the community which went on to prosper in its own quiet way. In June 1909, it was incorporated as a borough.

Mrs. Christner who has lived in the community all her life has given us, beyond these essential community facts, a very warm and personal as well as an accurately factual account of a locality which obviously has meant a great deal to her. She has filled in admirably the historical background of the area in which the town is placed. She has not scanted on the facts relevant to the town's existence, but she has as well charmingly revealed its body and spirit. There can be no doubt that her work was a labor of love.

It is an agreeable sign of American cultural maturity that more books of this type on towns, neighborhoods, or even separate buildings, are being produced. It is well that they should be, for only by knowledge of the separate parts can we comprehend the total landscape that we now inhabit.

The format of the book has not been scanted either and its handsome green binding, its well-designed layout, and its tasteful typography stand as ambassadors of the borough itself.

In these dark days when the social climate of America is faced

with steadily enlarging problems, this chronicle of the calm and steady course of the little borough of Thornburg perhaps may strike a small but hopeful note in the face of the Medusa mask of our dilemmas.

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The First Oil Rush. By FRANCES G. CONN and SHIRLEY S. ROSENBERG. (New York: Meredith Press, 1967. Pp. 141. Index, illustrations. \$3.95.)

This story of the early days of the oil excitement in northwestern Pennsylvania is a good summary for younger readers. The authors commence their history with the knowledge that the Persians, Romans, and Chinese had of petroleum in various forms and then carry the tale through the work of the American promoters Bissell and Eveleth, the scientific investigation of Benjamin Silliman, Jr., and the heart-breaking work and final success of Edwin L. Drake.

The wild excitement generated by Drake's success is well told and the history is carried into the 1870's when John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil Company were coming rapidly to the fore as leaders in the oil business. But then the writers shift their story at that point and offer a quick resumé covering the development of gasoline, the automobile, the importance of fuels in war, the fear of limited crude oil reserves in this country, the development of the Middle East as the great production center of the world, and the growing importance of the petrochemical field.

There are several errors that the true history buff will find difficult to understand. "Cornplanter's Reservation" is given as the early name for Oil City; originally the place was called Oil Creek Furnace about 1823, then in 1840 the post office name became Cornplanter, and finally in 1860 Oil City. There never was a "Cornplanter's Reservation" in the state; his lands in Venango and Warren Counties were outright gifts from Pennsylvania and were known as "The Cornplanter Grant." There is a great difference between an Indian reservation and a grant.

The photographs and index are adequate but not a single source of material has been indicated and even some young readers find a bibliography of interest and sometimes of considerable help.

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