

describes difficulties in obtaining ship fittings, masts, timbers, and artillery. The author finds that Charles II's ministers had some successes in reducing frauds and in creating a system for supplying timber and masts.

Aside from the use of green wood in lightly framed and fastened hulls, the chief fraud discovered in this study was the alteration of the measurements of the hold of the galleons so that they carried far more tonnage than had been decreed in the contracts or than was declared when they were measured. Generally, this was done by raising the first deck (while holding other dimensions constant), thereby increasing the volume of the hold and also the draft. Such huge ships could not cross the bar at San Lúcar without being lightened, and sometimes not even then. The intended results were frauds against the treasury at the time of lightening or when the galleons were forced to use Cádiz as a port. The Council of Indies and the *maestros mayores* sent from Seville to the building yards in Vizcaya tried to remedy this situation, but with little success.

This volume has many useful illustrations, tables, and graphs summarizing a large volume of information mostly drawn from a limited number of legajos in *Indiferente General* at the Archive of the Indies. It makes available details of practices previously known only in general terms, mostly from Veitia Linage's *Norte de la contratación*. More might have been said about the links between foreign merchants interested in the use of Cádiz as the terminus of the *carrera* and the ship builders. The chief defect of this book is the lack of a final chapter to sum up or to state conclusions about how this struggle over building better galleons illuminates what is already known about the administration of the Spanish empire in the late seventeenth century. One wonders too whether a book was the proper form of publication; a carefully constructed article could have adequately stated the chief findings.

In sum, there is a promising beginning on the author's scholarly career and a useful, if limited, addition to the literature on ship building and imperial administration during the late seventeenth century.

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*The Royal Protomedicato: The Regulation of the Medical Professions in the Spanish Empire.* By JOHN TATE LANNING. Edited by JOHN JAY TEPASKE. Durham: Duke University Press, 1985. Glossary. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 485. Cloth. \$37.50.

This comprehensive study of the regulation and politics of the medical profession in colonial Spanish America, published posthumously, represents the culmination of years of archival research by the late cultural historian of the Spanish Empire, John Tate Lanning. Edited with style and grace by his student and col-

league, John Jay TePaske, it offers not only a synthesis of the institutional history of colonial medicine, but also a fascinating look into the workings of corporate society through its analysis of self-government in the medical profession.

The royal Protomedicato in colonial Spanish America, the focus of this study, was a board of physicians appointed by the crown and charged with safeguarding public health and regulating the medical profession. Its story, told here with insight and amplitude, encompasses not only the Protomedicato itself, but a broad range of topics, from foreigners and *limpieza de sangre* to specific chapters on pharmacy, surgery, and obstetrics. Lanning rightly warns in his preface that this is not a history of medicine as such (indigenous and folk medicine are seldom mentioned). While the narrative is rich in anecdotal material, it contains little on the actual practice of medicine, and less in the way of social analysis of physicians as a class. Nevertheless, this volume is one of the most comprehensive histories of medicine at an institutional and intellectual level yet written.

Colonial Spanish medicine faced two related problems: a severe shortage of physicians and surgeons, and a wealth of poorly trained, ignorant practitioners, many mere quacks, who found they could fill the gap. Not surprisingly, the Protomedicato, whose primary worry was the lamentable prestige of the medical profession, was more concerned with weeding out incompetents, those who practiced medicine “without fear of God our Lord and without a bachelor’s degree” (p. 135), than with increasing the supply of qualified professionals. Given this priority, its well-meaning efforts to compel licensed physicians to serve the poor without compensation were woefully inadequate. The Protomedicato shared in the failure of Spanish colonial society to solve immense social problems through regulation alone: unable to restrain free market forces, it failed in its efforts to enforce rigorous standards on the profession, and never successfully assured minimal medical care to colonial society.

Lanning, however, takes the Protomedicato on its own terms. We see well-intentioned bureaucrats struggling to cope with a situation that sixteenth-century professional priorities left them ill equipped to handle. We also enter the complex, often petty, world of jurisdictional squabbles among colonial governments, New World and peninsular professionals, and higher education in which precedent and concern for privilege reigned supreme. Ironically, the Protomedicato in America was more autonomous from government control than its counterpart in Spain and less divorced from the university, thereby eliminating that separation between the degree and the license to practice that was unique to Spain.

*The Royal Protomedicato* will undoubtedly become the standard reference on the medical profession and a starting point for future research on colonial medicine.

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