

them as a "radical fringe of Saturday Sabbatarians," who "carried fourth commandment literalism to the extreme" (8).

*Holy Time* is a defense of the Sabbatarianism of "moderate Puritanism." This "was not a radical movement with a hidden revolutionary agenda spawned by frustrated Presbyterians but was an honest, well-meaning effort on the part of moderates basically loyal to church and state to bring about spiritual and moral improvement in the lives of the people and hence to the nation." On the other hand, Primus criticizes anti-Sabbatarianism as "an unnecessarily harsh response to this moderate movement. It was a reactionary move to the right, a deeper and more conservative retrenchment into conformity rather than reformation" (98). Anti-Sabbatarianism, he feels, drove Sabbatarianism into the Puritan camp and was equally responsible for the increasing polarization of English Protestantism in the seventeenth century" (99).

Primus gives the Sabbatarians' arguments in favor of Sunday worship: Sunday was the Resurrection day, the apostles' day of worship, the Lord's day, the first day of creation, the first day of manna, the day of Jesus' baptism, the day the five thousand were fed, and the day of Pentecost. However, clear NT support for these arguments is lacking and one looks in vain for a NT command that supports the Sunday absolutism of English Sabbatarianism. Therefore, one should not be surprised if readers would concur with the judgment of anti-Sabbatarian Thomas Rogers, that "the Lord's day is not enjoined by God's commandment but by an human civil and ecclesiastical constitution" (86, 87). In the absence of any New Testament injunction it seems that Primus is unduly harsh in his criticism of the opposition against Sunday absolutism.

In spite of its weaknesses, the book makes an important contribution to the understanding of the Puritan experience. It is required reading for anyone with an interest in the Sabbath-Sunday question.

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Prioreschi, P. *Primitive and Ancient Medicine*. A History of Medicine, 1. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991. xix + 642 pp. n.p.

One can only admire the breadth of coverage which P. Prioreschi has attempted in his book entitled *Primitive and Ancient Medicine*. The indefatigable author has, indeed, canvassed what is known about the elements and practice of medicine in the ancient world of China, India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Israel, and the pre-Columbian Americas. Inevitably, the endeavor turns out to be too vast for one author to encompass. Thus, the strength of this work, i.e., its nature as a broad survey, also leads to its weakness in omissions, generalizations, and lack

of depth and detail. The value of the work depends, therefore, upon the use to which it is put: As a survey of the field it is excellent, but as a series of in-depth technical treatises it falls short.

Each chapter of the book opens with a historical survey of the country involved, followed by a study of the development of medicine there. Such a skeletal introduction is helpful to the amateur. The specialist, however, may see these reviews as extremely abbreviated and even occasionally inaccurate. For example, Prioreschi somewhat exaggerates the pessimistic overtone of Egyptian literature (314). While such pessimistic pieces were written, they came out of times of chaos and political disruption far from typical of Egyptian society, since only three such major recorded disruptions occurred in more than two millennia of history. In fact, specialists like John A. Wilson consider the Egyptian psyche to have had, on the contrary, a very optimistic view of life and existence (*The Culture of Ancient Egypt*, 145-146).

Prioreschi places considerable emphasis upon distinguishing between naturalistic and supernaturalistic types of medicine, although he admits interaction between the two. He holds that these two streams of medicine ran contemporary with each other throughout Egyptian history (341). However, it has recently been argued that Egyptian medicine began in a naturalistic fashion and was mythologized only later, by New Kingdom times in the second millennium. As for Prioreschi, he sees this New Kingdom period only as a rigid and closed attempt to preserve the past. But, surprisingly, his own listing of papyri suggests that, indeed, such a transition did take place: The four papyri which he lists as dating from 1900 to 1550 B.C. are naturalistic in content, whereas the four papyri listed as dating from 1550 to 1250 B.C. are liberally laced with incantations and charms!

Furthermore, Prioreschi spends 10 pages on mummification, followed by a four-page discussion of mummy (*mumia*), the resin used for the embalmed in Egypt, as also in medieval and postmedieval Europe. All of this seems somewhat irrelevant to the topic at hand. Since the ancient Egyptians learned next to nothing about anatomy and pathology from the process of mummification, this belongs more in a discussion of funerary customs than in a treatise on the practice of medicine. Far more pertinent would have been a discussion of paleopathology from the modern medical study of mummies, but the only mention of this subject, at the beginning of the book (14-20), does not include the Egyptian evidence.

In his study of the subject of biblical or Israelite medicine (chap. 7), Prioreschi correctly highlights Israel's distinctive practices as compared with those of her neighbors in the ancient world. "The supernaturalistic medical paradigm of the Bible is entirely religious, as incantations and exorcisms, the basis for magic paradigms, were strictly forbidden: those

who consulted exorcists were cut off from the community, and the exorcists themselves were to be stoned to death" (512).

The author's humanistic approach to ancient Israel's health laws is evident in his treatment of the dietary legislation. For instance, Prioreschi holds that the laws of clean and unclean meats were not given for health reasons because the Israelites could not have associated the eating of pork with the symptoms of trichinosis, since these appeared only several weeks after ingesting the pork (519). And this is, according to Prioreschi, too late for a cause-and-effect association. Prioreschi's argumentation, however, seems to overlook another more important cause-and-effect association: that of a God who would have revealed these laws for the good of His people.

Also, Prioreschi's discussion of motives for these laws is fore-shortened in terms of the literature on this subject. At least nine different reasons for these laws have been suggested, but only two are addressed. His ultimate reason for rejecting the health motivation of dietary laws borders somewhat on the bizarre theologically. "The strongest argument, however, against the interpretation of those laws as public health measures is a theological one: if God was responsible for health and disease, if he alone decided who was sick and who was not, what would have been the sense of taking measures that would have interfered with his will? To a certain extent it would even have been blasphemous." (520) Prioreschi's perspective here sounds more like a caricature than a characterization of the relationship between health and disease in the Bible and resembles more the fatalism of Hinduism or Buddhism.

A final point about the book has to do with its concluding chapter. The latter does attempt to sum up the accomplishments of ancient medicine; but the following exaltation of the Greeks as the scientific pioneers who led to better medicine, although true to facts, is somewhat distracting. This type of evaluation really belongs as the introduction to volume 2 of the series, rather than as a conclusion to volume one. Indeed, the ancient world should have been allowed to stand on its own merits in its own terms.

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Richey, Russell E. *Early American Methodism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991. xix + 137 pp. \$25.00.

In line with its title, *Early American Methodism* treats the denomination's history between 1770 and 1810 in what Richey admits "is self-consciously a revisionist endeavor" (xi). The volume's six essays center