the literature on the revolutionary movements of the late eighteenth century. Polasky has mastered a large and complex body of sources in several languages, and provided Anglophone readers with a valuable introduction to a neglected topic.

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Rex Pope, Alan Pratt, and Bernard Hoyle, eds — *Social Welfare in Britain, 1885-1985*. London: Croom Helm, 1986. Pp. 266.

The present study, a worthy successor to Rex Pope and Bernard Hoyle's *British Economic Performance* (1984), significantly extends the literature of accessible source material intended for beginning students. The editors not only cover the conventional era of developments in welfare thinking and provision from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth; but also include the immediate past with its search for new definitions and approaches. Divided into two chronological parts, breaking about 1940, each section begins with an informative introductory essay in which the editors successfully place each document in historical context. A third segment gives useful background information in graph and chart form to facilitate both understanding and initial research. To further aid students, a brief bibliography is appended.

Late Victorian social policy, according to the editors, was largely defined by the deterrent Poor Law and welfare thinking was guided by the ideologies of self-help and laissez-faire. Modest legislative gains were recorded in education and the factories; however, they were hardly comprehensive, touching only elementary education for the working classes in the case of schooling and women and children in the factories. By the turn of the century, mounting pressures — originating principally from the statistical evidence of poverty and its complex causes, the reality of increased longevity, a heightened understanding of unemployment and underemployment, and concern for public order — prompted the state to assume more direct action in matters effecting social welfare. Despite increased intervention, the principles and attitudes governing welfare thought remained unchanged: individuals were responsible for themselves and their dependents. The First World War, with its insatiable demands for manpower, and the veterans, both whole and maimed, it left behind, brought a shift in focus toward the physical and mental well-being of the broader populace. A salutary byproduct of the horror and destruction of modern warfare has thus been a fuller emphasis on the social services the country needed rather than what it could afford. In the interwar period, economic problems and rising unemployment challenged social thinkers and administrators alike. Most services were cut; however, benefit allowances for the unemployed throughout the period remained generous. Unfortunately, relief efforts were never matched by concerted schemes to prevent unemployment. Overall, the expansion of social welfare provision before 1940 lacked coordination and did little to erase the stubborn survivals of earlier deficiencies.

The documents found in this first part are collected under several headings, including political economy and social policy, the administration of welfare, tests of needs and desert, and the role of charity and voluntary effort. Although some entries are extracted from statutes and familiar sources, others are less well known advocacy pieces exploring single aspects of key issues. Geddes 'Axe' and snippets from Hansard on topics such as unemployment insurance are included along with entries less frequently found in standard undergraduate libraries. The editors make no systematic attempt to present a balanced portrait on every question; nevertheless, their selections are sufficiently varied to offer the reader real insight into the evolution of welfare questions.

By the 1940s, there was a clear change in policy, as popular opinion reconciled the states's obligation to guarantee a subsistence level of living to all citizens while preserving an essentially free-market economy. The result was the legislative establishment of the modern welfare state staring

with the 1944 Education Act. From the outset, Conservative platforms attacked increasing public expenditures and their consequent high rates of direct taxation. In contrast, Labour maintained that the social welfare of citizens was the nation's principal priority. In the early postwar years, the interparty debate turned on the question of resource allocation. Labour echoed Sir William Beveridge's view in calling for universality as the basis for service delivery, while Conservatives remained convinced that this approach squandered scarce resources, offering benefits to those who did not genuinely require them. This debate paled to insignificance because the modern Welfare State matures in an environment of full employment, economic growth, and rising real incomes. To Pratt, Pope, and Hoyle the three decades following World War II were among the most successful in Britain' economic history; yet, they did not last long enough to establish a firm foundation for social welfare. The energy crisis of the early 1970s left as its legacy rapid inflation, rising levels of unemployment, and uncertainty regarding the future of the Welfare State. As these harsh economic realities took hold, they supplanted the hegemony of social democracy and Thatcherite conservatism assumed the ascendancy in the political debate.

Part of the difficulty confronting contemporary Labour has been its failure to produce any recent philosophical statement to match Anthony Crosland's classic *The Future of Socialism* (1956), thereby, abandoning the field to groups like the social Affairs Unit, whose *Breaking the Spell of the Welfare State* (1981) is a brilliant assault of public social provision from a liberal, individualistic perspective.

Documents in the second section therefore, illuminate the creation of the Welfare State and current attempts to dismantle it. The editors have captured the determined spirit of Beveridge, Aneurin Bevan and their generation as they implemented programs dramatically altering the essence of postwar Britain. They are equally skilled portraying subsequent conservative assaults against a complacent left.

This volume is a valuable text or supplement for undergraduate courses. The documents trace the evolution of perhaps the most significant domestic issue in modern British history and offer novice scholars a rare opportunity to initiate serious, reflective research. Students seeking only a broad overview of the topic will also find the minutes of evidence, party publications, reports from professional bodies, statutes, and debates which comprise the collection equally rewarding.

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Roy Porter, ed. — *Patients and Practitioners: Lay Perceptions of Medicine in Pre-Industrial Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. Pp. 356.

"The aim of this book," according to its editor, Roy Porter, "is to show that the sick in past time constitute important objects of historical study" (3). Although Porter modestly disclaims any "grand theory" or "grand generalization" (5) this collection provides convincing confirmation and extension of sociologist Norman Jewson's thesis that because eighteenth century English physicians depended upon the patronage and approval of their clients, patients rather than practitioners defined the bounds of medical practice. Drawing on Jewson's insights, Porter and his colleagues demonstrate the extent to which practitioners historically have relied upon the approval of those they have treated not only for compensation, but also for therapeutic confirmation. Only recently have physicians gained the corporate sovereignty that we have come to associate with medical practice, and, as these essays demonstrate, it is misleading to assume that contemporary relations between patients and practitioners have informed wider historical experience.

Although Porter's collection focuses on the English experience in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, three essays provide comparative perspectives. Vivian Newton's on lay attitudes