

Books

London. 1808-1870. The Infernal Wen. By Francis Sheppard. *Secker and Warburg*. £4.50.

THE LONDONER, interested in the history of his city, has been handicapped by the lack of an up-to-date introduction to the history of London's growth, in social as well as physical terms, during the 19th century. Francis Sheppard has now given us a first rate survey for much of this period, which not only steers a course through the vast primary documentation available, but takes account of the results of the post-war interest in urban studies. The population of London grew from under a million in 1800 to well over three million in 1870. As a result London erupted outwards, building transport networks, particularly railways, and cleansing itself with magnificent sewers, but equally impressively, failed to provide adequate centralised local government. This expansion did not stop in 1870, when this volume ends but continued until the *Green Belt* of the 1930s changed the pattern. However, even in 1822, William Cobbett felt constrained to describe growing London as "nothing but a great festering sore, an infernal Wen, a smoking and stinking WEN."

It is with quotations like this that Francis Sheppard skillfully blends his text framed with hard facts, whether based on official reports or unpublished historical research, altogether presented in an impressively readable style, while retaining a compact encyclopaedic value on the bookshelf. Victorian London and Victorian Institutions are a complex subject that has presumably deterred such a synthesis before, but Francis Sheppard is a sure guide in the chapters of this volume, and he achieves the task with a picture of people under pressure, as London became metropolitan. The tensions developed by economic growth and changes of political climate; growth of radical thought and trade unionism, the combat between church and state over education, and much else is clearly described.

Not surprisingly the construction and social influence of railways (built through poor areas for cheapness and lack of vocal complaint, rather like modern slum clearance) is prominent, but the development of estates and growth of industry and commerce are described, as are the slow reactions to sanitary reform (even when pushed by cholera outbreaks) and even slower growth of local government. We also learn much about simply living in London during the period. While the illustrations naturally form a small part of the whole, the 49 plates are very carefully chosen. There are a number of useful maps in the text, showing expansion of railways, great estates and

urban area growth. The publishers must bear the whole responsibility for printing one map of London upside down. There is an extensive bibliography.

This volume is the second to appear in Secker and Warburg's new history of London and follows on chronologically from George Rude's *Hanoverian London* noted last Autumn. I certainly look forward to the forthcoming volume by H. J. Dyos on *London 1870-1914 The World Metropolis* and cannot do better for the earlier part of the century than to recommend *The Infernal Wen* as standard reading to anyone wishing to have a background history of 19th century London.

Windmills in Lambeth, An historical survey. by Michael Short. *London Borough of Lambeth*. £1.95.

THAT A TOWER windmill can still be seen on the north slope of Brixton Hill must surprise many Londoners. How much more of a surprise, therefore, it must be to learn of the former existence of the fine structures that once dominated north Lambeth and that are brought to life by Michael Short in this monograph. The surviving Brixton Windmill naturally has a pride of place, but the text and illustrations set out to describe eleven other lost mills, which are now often no more than a memory retained in a street name. The author has been able by careful research of original sources, not only to recount the history of each of these mills, but to correct many old established inaccuracies concerning them.

Prefaced by a short introduction to the English windmill (unfortunately without diagrams) the reader is conducted from the marsh-land giants of the Thames-side to the lesser known and much more elusive country windmills on the higher ground of South Lambeth. The position of each site is shown on a key map and there is the fine series of some 70 illustrations. Those of the Thames-side smock-mills delight the eye, and in most cases are from the hands of well known topographical artists. Today it is necessary to travel to Cranbrook to see an urban mill like one of these dominating the houses and workshops. (The fine Upminster mill having a rather suburban situation). While a paperback, this book is well produced in A4 size and available at a price that compares very favourably with other recent publications from the same printer without the backing of Lambeth Council.

JOHN ASHDOWN

Man and his Ancestors. A. H. Brodrick. *Hutchinson*. £2.75.

HUMAN EVOLUTION is a subject which fascinates many people, and this includes most archaeo-

logists. There are many books on it and apparently an inexhaustible market for them. With new discoveries being made so often but is impossible for any book to be at all final, but each new book has a small advantage over its predecessors in that it can mention new evidence. In *Man and His Ancestors*, A. H. Brodrick, the professional author of several non-specialist books on prehistory, has done well to include almost all the major discoveries of recent times. Probably the book had already been finished before news of the well preserved skull from East Rudolf in Kenya was announced. This is of the robust sort of Australopithecus and is about 2½ million years old; from the same site and period come the earliest known stone tools. Yet earlier remains of Australopithecus (over 5 million years old) have also recently been announced. These apart, surprisingly little of fossil man has been omitted.

The accounts of the individual discoveries are among the most complete I know of, and the number of inaccuracies is small. Many new anecdotes and snippets of information are included, and these will make the book more palatable to the general reader.

One of the main problems with popular books is that they tend to perpetuate the ideas current a decade or a generation before. This, of course, is because they are not usually based on the author's original research so much as on existing textbooks or even popular works, already a year or more out of date when they appear. In many ways this book is remarkably up to date, no doubt because the author wisely consulted with Dr. Oakley.

Nevertheless in other respects *Man and his Ancestors* reflects ideas that are now out of fashion. The use of the term *Homo sapiens* to include modern type man plus skull bits from Swanscombe, Fontéchevade and Vertesszollós, but specifically excluding Steinheim, Mount Carmel and other Neanderthal fossils seems quite unsatisfactory. Almost no mention is made of the results of the 1962 Wenner-Gren Foundation conference on Classification and Human Evolution, when it was decided that two valid species of *Homo* could be recognised—*H. erectus* (Java and Peking man) and *H. sapiens* (including all fossils from Swanscombe and Steinheim down through the last glacial Neanderthals to modern races). I deeply sympathise with any author trying to find terms which conveniently describe our present evidence, but continuing to use *H. sapiens* to mean modern type non-Neanderthal man and *Pithecanthropus* for Java and Peking man is not permissible or even convenient.

Incidentally names like australopithecine, pithecanthropine and habiline are also incompatible with

the 1962 classification because they are vernacular names for groups at the subfamily level of which none are necessary or acceptable. Good vernacular names are still badly needed for the groups of fossil men, and we might do worse than redefine Neanthropic, Palaeoanthropic etc., the fashionable names of the 1920's.

Other aspects of this book that might be criticised are the treatment of the Neanderthal-Cromagnon problem, the lack of stress on *Ramapithecus*, which is now usually regarded as a Miocene and Pliocene ancestor of man, and the preference for a branching theory of human evolution. All in all, however, this book is better than most other popular books on the same subject.

DESMOND COLLINS

The Handbook of Scientific Aids and Evidence for Archaeologists, 50p. Archaeological Site Index to Radio Carbon Dates for Great Britain and Ireland. 65p. Council for British Archaeology, 8 St. Andrew's Place, London, N.W.1.

The *Handbook of Scientific Aids* replaces the earlier *Notes for Guidance of Archaeologists in Regard to Expert Evidence*, which appeared in 1947. Since then numerous new scientific techniques have been applied to archaeology and this handbook explains the basic principles of many of these. The potential evidence available from such analyses is set out and there are comprehensive notes on the collection of samples. This book should, therefore, be helpful to the field archaeologists wishing to make full use of scientific techniques now available.

The *Index of Radio Carbon Dates* covers all dates published up to December, 1970. Sites are listed according to their period, and for each, the date of every sample is given. Although the absolute date for prehistoric samples may now have to be reassessed in the light of the Bristlecone Pine, this publication provides the fully comprehensive set of radiocarbon dates which gives the necessary material for the establishment of relative chronologies.

CHRISTOPHER GILES

Short Notices

SO MANY BOOKS of interest are published in a year like 1971, that only a few can be noted here, but the following should not pass unnoticed and without comment. *Prehistory* by Derek Roe published by Granada as a Paladin paperback (80p) makes available an excellent introduction to Old World Prehistory at a reasonable price. Well illustrated with maps, figures and photographs, it should be compulsory reading for the beginner in archaeology, for it provides the up to date summary on which to build more local interests.

A new British Museum handbook by Catherine Johns is *Arretine and Sam*

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE C.B.A., 8 ST. ANDREWS PLACE, N.W.1.

The Erosion of History: Archaeology and Planning in Towns £1.25

Gazetteer of British Lower and Middle Palaeolithic Sites £2.48

Romano-British Coarse Pottery: A Student's Guide 28p

Public Inquiries: Presenting the Conservation Case 20p

Archaeological Site Index to Radiocarbon Dates 65p

The Iron Age in the Irish Sea Province £1.50

The Iron Age in Northern Britain £1.50

Rural Settlement in Roman Britain 80p

Current and Forthcoming Offprints 80p

British Archaeological Abstracts £2.50

Archaeological Bibliography £1.50

Handbook of Scientific Aids 50p

Calendar of Excavations 80p

Annual Report 20p

ian Pottery (37½p). This short essay on the red gloss and related Roman earthenwares can be placed alongside the Hartley reprint from Collingwood and Richmond. (L.A. p.166 - now £1). Uniform with other new B.M. handbooks it has the advantage of two colour, sixteen black and white plates and a map showing the position of the main manufacturing areas.

Another important pottery book is Peter Brears' *The English Country Pottery. Its History and techniques*; published by David and Charles (£3.15). This is an archaeologists' approach to the handmade coarse-earthenwares of the post-medieval and more recent past, and is particularly valuable for the insight into methods and customs of the 19th and 20th century country potters. Peter Brears is in fact at his very best when describing potting, decorating or glazing techniques and the firing of kilns, and he also provides lists of terms and names of vessels. The plan of the book can, however confuse, as does some of the terminology, and others will perhaps find the chapter heading of Urban Potteries at odds with the title. Much new or dispersed information has been brought together in the county Gazetteer but the Londoner looks in vain for Middlesex (perhaps another case of the erring piano), and Cheam, rather

surprisingly, crops up under the Hants-Surrey border sites.

The Second edition of the *Industrial Archaeologist's Guide* 1971-3 also from David and Charles (£2) and edited by Neil Cossons and Kenneth Hudson is a must to those interested in the subject. Well produced it presents a collection of data, essays and comment; which ranges over legislation, the National Record of Industrial Monuments ("Greater London has been almost stagnant"), sites lost or preserved, technological museums, societies, marine archaeology, photography and I.A. abroad. While on this subject I missed Denis Smith's important article on *The Industrial Archaeology of the Lower Lea Valley* when it first appeared and others may have also. A background report to the Lea Valley I.A. Survey it appeared in Volume 12 No. 2 of *East London Papers: Winter 1969-70* (60p) from History Department, Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, E.1.) Shipbuilding, main drainage, water supply and associated pumping equipment, water mills, transport facilities and general minutia are some of the subjects of this short study. It is the best piece of writing I have seen on the subject of London's Industrial Archaeology. It is sobering to note that a number of the items discussed no longer exist.

JOHN ASHDOWN