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Review

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have been softened a little with more personal details about these bold capitalists of Exeter who were equally adept at breaking a London monopoly or at keeping in their proper place the pretensions of Topsham.

*University of Bristol*

PATRICK MCGRATH

H. CECIL PAWSON. *Robert Bakewell, Pioneer Livestock Breeder*. (Crosby Lockwood. 1957. Pp. xv + 200. 25s.)

Any study of eighteenth-century agriculture lays heavy emphasis on the contribution of a handful of improvers, notably Tull, Townshend, Bakewell and Coke. There would seem today, however, to be a case for a reassessment of the work of these undoubtedly brilliant men. The turnip and Townshend have in late years begun to part company; once upon a time he 'invented' it, then he 'popularized its use'. Today he is seen as one of many who urged its increased cultivation while it is known that the turnip was widely grown before his day.

As the doyen of livestock breeders and particularly as 'the founder of modern breeding practice' Bakewell has long been pre-eminent. Professor Pawson keeps him firmly on his pedestal. From time to time, though, he does permit the gentle explosion of a popular myth such as, 'Bakewell did not originate the idea of letting sires' or, 'It cannot be claimed that he was the first breeder to endeavour to bring about any measure of this much needed improvement'. This is a book which throws light on the activities and character of the enigmatic and cheery goliath. In it are also reproduced for the first time the many letters which he wrote to George Culley, his ex-pupil, and which occupy nearly half the pages. The author does not attempt to reassess Bakewell's standing and importance—he rather takes his position for granted and goes on from there. Indeed from the material available to him he could hardly have done more. At the end one is still tempted to ask if it was by accident that the Longhorn and improved Leicester were never destined to become great commercial successes. That Bakewell was a brilliant breeder of stock and a great farmer cannot be called into question, but there is a danger that his shadow has, over the years, become so large that many an important contemporary has been engulfed by it. We must look forward at a future date to a comprehensive study of livestock breeding in the period. In the meantime Professor Pawson and his collaborator, Professor Cooper, have performed a service in presenting us with so much material about the man and his work.

*Oxford*

J. W. Y. HIGGS

G. RATTRAY TAYLOR. *The Angel-Makers*. (Heinemann. 1958. Pp. xviii + 388. 42s.)

This is a more serious book than its silly title suggests. Its purpose is to trace and to explain in psychological terms the main changes in social behaviour and moral ideas in England between 1750 and 1850. Its value to historians is in its varied choice of illustrative materials, its occasional illuminating comparisons, and its partially successful attempt to show the unity among diverse aspects of morality and taste. It also demonstrates that psychology may draw attention to important factors in social change which historians have overlooked. But the weaknesses of the book make it a poor support for the large claims that the author and publishers make on this account. Its predominantly