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G. Rosen. Economic and Social Policy in Public Health, in Journal of the History of Medicine, 1953 [photocopie]

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Références bibliographiques

- [\[anonyme ou collectif\] Journal of the history of medicine](#)
- [Rosen, Economic and Social Policy in Public Health, in Journal of the History of Medicine, 1953](#)

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Références éditoriales

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made possible the more precise recognition of diseases. At the same time, the possibility and importance of applying scientific knowledge for the improvement of human health and welfare were given philosophical form by Francis Bacon. These trends are already evident in the ideas and proposals of Hartlib, Winstanley, Petty, Grew, Bellers, and Mandeville, but they assumed a concrete form in the hospital and dispensary movement of the eighteenth century.

The mere accretion of medical ideas and knowledge cannot of itself assure application. Social environment and intellectual milieu must provide favorable conditions and patterns of behavior in terms of which knowledge can be put to use. Precisely this, however, characterized England during the eighteenth century, particularly during the latter part of the period. The tempo and character of economic life had been changing in England before the middle of the eighteenth century, but by comparison the industrial and agricultural changes during the latter half of the century were both rapid and revolutionary. Not without reason have these developments been designated as the Industrial and Agricultural Revolutions. These profound alterations in the economic life of the country necessarily disturbed its social structure and gave rise to a new attitude of mind toward problems of community life. Representing essentially the views of the middle classes, this distinctive ethos was characterized by two dominant facets: an insistence on order, efficiency, and social discipline, and a concern with the conditions of men. Appreciation of the social aspects and effects of disease led merchants, physicians, clergymen, and other public-spirited citizens to undertake ameliorative efforts. It is significant that the hospital and dispensary movement, the infant welfare movement, and others originated in urban centers, first in London, then in other cities and towns. Wealth, commerce, and industry were largely centered there, and at the same time it was much easier for the middle class, many of whose members were Dissenters, to make themselves felt. They fostered the growing social conscience, but it was a humanitarianism coupled with a firm belief in the sober and practical virtues of efficiency, simplicity, and cheapness.

Despite various ameliorative activities, however, the problem of the laboring poor as a fundamental social and economic question remained unsolved. By the end of the eighteenth century, augmented by agricultural and industrial change, poverty and

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