as the 1609 mass expulsion of Spain's "New Christian" Moriscos testifies. Unlike the rapid creation of synagogues for Amsterdam's Jews, no mosques existed in the Netherlands between 1610 and the 1950s (GR, 86–87).

From the mass of miscellaneous information scattered throughout these volumes, readers will extract a few genuinely impressive nuggets. From the first volume comes, for example, the incredibly elaborate process developed by an erudite Mennonite Arabist (who knew no Turkish) to translate an official communication from the Ottoman sultan for the recently autonomous Dutch States-General (GR, 79). From the second comes William Penn's ambitious extension of his proposed European Parliament, printed in 1696: Alongside ten delegates from France, six from England, and several from other Christian states, Penn added "Ten a Piece more" from the Turks and Muscovites, "as seems but fit and just" (RR, 316). Today's European Parliament, now minus Penn's kingdom, dares not dream so high.

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Arts & Minds: How the Royal Society of Arts Changed a Nation. By Anton Howes (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2020) 416 pp. $35.00

This enjoyable and interesting book tells the story of the Royal Society of Arts from its founding in 1754 to the present day. In many ways, it is a microcosm of the course of British society for the past 266 years. The crucial question raised by this study is suggested in its subtitle. It is, paradoxically, both accurate and misleading. The activities of the Society certainly had significant effects on what has happened in Britain, but the subtitle also seems to suggest that the Society mapped out a systematic plan for what should happen to the nation. Nothing could be further from what generally happened. Through the many years of its continual existence, the Society took the lead in quite a few instances. Yet in so many of its campaigns, it was not responsible for the initiative. Rather, it subsumed many of the incredibly varied causes that came to its attention.

Its shortened name, by which it is generally known, is deceptive, implying that its main concern is the arts. In fact, its full name at its founding (the Royal came later) was The Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, which is a more accurate description of what it does, though in its early years, it was much concerned with the arts, particularly through the activities of William Shipley, its first leader. It is an organization very much in the British tradition, effective in many, but not all, cases in reforming society through committees, lobbying, working with other smaller organizations dedicated to a variety of causes. Its approach was generally empirical and nonideological. If it had any overarching philosophy, it was utilitarianism, which befitted its independence. The Society has a respected status, and membership is easily acquired. It was unusual in admitting women from its inception, although not until recently were women

involved in its leadership. Its main activity is to bring an amazingly wide range of schemes forward for the public good.

Throughout the years, it has shown a continued interest in design, but its main concern is not so much to emphasize aesthetics as to find ways to improve the quality of the manufacture and sale of products. Working to reduce the British disdain for industry in the twentieth century, it became active in an impressive array of British activities—chimney sweeping, ensuring a supply of timber for ships, preventing the forgery of bank notes, etc. In the nineteenth century, it was deeply involved in education, setting up a system of national examinations. Among the other disparate things in which it has had a guiding hand are patents, copyrights, public toilets, postage, cooking, international travel, limited liability, girls' schools, and the empty plinth in Trafalgar Square!

In the nineteenth century, Henry Cole was instrumental in helping the Society to create the Great Exhibition of 1851, a triumph in the combination of art and commerce. Some of the designs shown were magnificently ugly. Later, the Society supported the Arts & Crafts movement in revolt against Victorian design. The Society was also clever is using royal backing, notably consorts. Prince Albert, president of the Society of eighteen years, was also an activist on behalf of the Great Exhibition. Prince Philip, who became president in 1952, was an equally active president, following the tradition of having the grandest-possible figure in that position, even though the great majority of the Society's members are from the middle class. Philip involved the Society in matters of the environment, both built and natural.

Howe's book has a wealth of information about the Society's organizational history, as well as its pursuits. Boasting thousands of members, the Society also functions as something of a club—its elegant building in London housing a Great Room, a restaurant, and a coffee shop. Although its leaders have frequently been successful in enacting their own agendas for the public good, more often than not, the Society has been reactive, taking up causes that have originated elsewhere during the past many years. This may well be a better way to improve the world than grander, more sweeping plans. Howe is to be thanked for a story so very well told.

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The Fight for Scottish Democracy: Rebellion and Reform in 1820. By Murray Armstrong (London, Pluto Press, 2020) 296 pp. $99.00 cloth $19.95 paper

On April 1, 1820, a self-styled "provisional government" issued a proclamation from Glasgow, imploring the "inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland" to take up arms. This was no April Fools' day joke. Striking weavers in the city and surrounding industrial towns, numbering 60,000, provided the insurgents with hope, but the rebellion soon petered out following a botched armed rising. Its leaders were arrested, and at summer's end, three met their ends