Bedside medicine. Second edition. I. Snapper, M.D., and Alvin I. Khan, M.D.
Price £7 0s. 0d.

This book is by American authors for American readers, and it should be
made clear at once that those who find themselves irritated by unexpurgated
American idiom and spelling will certainly have some difficulty with this work,
but perseverance is rewarded by some good medicine and philosophy, and the
personalities of the authors come through clearly in the end.

As its title implies, this is an effort to stem the rather uncritical rush to mechaniza-
tion and the laboratory which has characterized transatlantic medicine for
some decades, and although this laudable effort may not achieve its aim, its
message is at least loud and clear. In an era of increasing sophistication of
method, a return to basic truths is always salutary.

Among much that is acceptable and non-controversial, British eyebrows will
occasionally be raised at some quite basic differences in approach between the
two countries. One reads, for instance, the whole chapter on migraine without
finding the slightest hint that this syndrome might be psychosomatic—allergy
alone is discussed as a cause, and a non-allergic diet—whatever that may be—
is the only suggestion for treatment. Asthma, too, is approached in precisely
the same way, no reference whatever being made to stress factors. It is perhaps
because of, and not in spite of, such differences that this book makes good reading,
and could in fact serve well as 'Bedside Medicine' for those dedicated few who
like to be lulled to sleep by an account of a good syndrome rather than a who-
dunnit—but oh, those sesquipedalianisms! Consider the following: "Thus,
for this group of patients the designation 'dyschondroplasia possibly latent
pseudo-hypoparathyroidism', would seem preferable over the form pseudo-
pseudo-hypoparathyroidism". Yes indeed.

An excellent book this, to borrow from the library and browse through at
leisure, for there is much in it that is wise and well-observed, but it is perhaps a
little too discursive to merit a permanent place on the busy doctor's shelves.

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CLINICAL NOTE

MONONUCLEOSIS IN A PATIENT WITH LISTERIOSIS

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The literature on Listeria monocytogenes, and the human and animal
diseases caused by it, has been reviewed recently by Barber and Okubadejo
(1965) and Ray and Wedgewood (1964). Among the many animal species
that may be affected are small rodents and fowls. In man, newborn
infants appear to be particularly susceptible, meningitis or septicaemia
being caused while the mother may show either pyelocystitis or no evidence
of infection at all (Dungal 1961). In adults, infection with the organism
may complicate chronic disease or appear as a meningoencephalitis.
Genital listeriosis in women may be a cause of habitual abortion (Rapaport
et al. 1960) and the organism has also been isolated from the semen of

J. ROY. COLL. GEN. PRACTIT., 1968, 15, 86