

Live long and stay young. E. J. TRIMMER, M.B., B.S. London. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965. Pp. 159. Price 15s.

Dr Trimmer is a general practitioner with firm and optimistic views on healthy living in the latter third of life. He is also an experienced journalist, so that it is a pleasure to read his clear writing free from redundancies.

He cancels the illusion as to longer individual lives in favour of a greater number of men and women surviving for the normal span of years, and enjoying them actively. The magic of food cults and other pseudo-medical mystique to preserve health without effort is exposed as at best promoting a balanced but frugal diet, and more often promoting profit to the exponents by the sale of fads known by the promoter's name.

He is emphatic in emphasizing the advantages of routine health checks from middle age on, since real rejuvenation is secured only by the diagnosis and treatment of unrecognized chronic and often silent disease.

The chapter on Escaping Coronary Thrombosis is freshly provocative. He shatters the general practitioner's image of sacrificing his own life from high incidence of cardiac ischaemia due to overwork, by balancing it on the hours we spend seated in car and surgery, compared with the activity of consultants "scampering from one examination room to the next . . . ward rounds mean more walking, standing and general movement" and claims that even the paucity of lifts in out-of-date hospital buildings is life saving. Beating Bronchitis is full of serious advice to local authority housing planners as well as to smokers. He re-emphasizes the dangers of obesity (blaming our estimate of chubbiness at all ages as a sign of health), and gives much advice on suitable general exercise as well as planned exercises.

Discussion of the philosophy of ageing with modification of habits, expertness and occupations in retirement is vigorous and constructive. He writes well about the changing religious outlook as years pass and sense of guilt is left behind so that God becomes a comforting rather than an admonitory conception. The book is a useful one both personally and professionally, and all the more stimulating because the author is on the young side of middle age himself.

Pathology of the aged. FLORENCE MCKEOWN, M.D., F.C.Path. London. Butterworths. 1965. Pp. vii+361. Price 77s. 6d.

In this book Dr McKeown from Queen's University, Belfast, describes her autopsy findings in patients over 70 years of age. It has very beautiful and careful illustrations of the pathological specimens and is probably the only book where this particular aspect of pathology is brought together. It seems strange that anyone other than a pathologist or a gerontologist should find this extremely well-produced book interesting. In fact, it continues to fascinate as it discusses right through the developmental point of pathology particularly in relation to ageing. Once the fact is accepted that these are probably hospital patients who come to autopsy, and that this is one side of the picture only, some of the statements which do not completely accord with patients seen through the final stages at home will not be questioned.

Dr McKeown's book is never dry, as the clinical picture and aetiology is constantly related to the autopsy findings. Such often discussed problems,

but rarely adequately discussed, as the absence of pain in coronary occlusion makes spicy reading.

Her cautious discussion of what is normal must find the general practitioner's approval. When reading her chapters and paragraphs on Rheumatic Disease, one was wondering whether this picture will be finally changed when the present generation of children are geriatric patients, having had the benefit of chemotherapy and antibiotic treatment for the frequent sore throat. I hazard a guess that the pathologist will be describing the same lessons but under another name. Unfortunately I shall never know. An excellent, thought-provoking book.

A history of the acute abdomen. SIR ZACHARY COPE, B.A., M.D., M.S., F.R.C.S. London, New York, Toronto. Oxford University Press. 1965. Pp. viii + 123. Price 35s.

Sir Zachary has made the "acute abdomen" his speciality and his textbook on it is a classic—his acute abdomen in verse is a *joie de vivre* which has given pleasure as well as instruction to many students. Sir Zachary who has published many books and papers on medical historical subjects, has now combined his two favourite subjects in producing a clear concise history of the acute abdomen. The relative modernity of abdominal surgery will come as a surprise to many. The decades 1880–1900 may be taken as the period during which nearly all the operative procedures on the acute abdomen became established. Sir Zachary omits to mention Treves' historic operation on King Edward VII and the effect it had on the acceptance of the operation by the *bon-ton*, but may be this was more of a crowd phenomenon of more interest to psychiatrists and sociologists than to surgeons, though surely they benefited by the increased 'practice' they had in opening the abdomen.

A most interesting book.

The medical annual 1965. 83rd Edition. Edited by SIR RONALD BODLEY SCOTT, K.C.V.O., M.A., D.M., R.R.C.P., and R. MILNES WALKER, C.B.E., M.S., F.R.C.S. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1965. Pp. 588. Price 50s.

For the first time, in this, the eighty-third issue, general practice receives a special article. That this should have been contributed by Dr John Hunt with the collaboration of Dr Michael Linnett is right and proper. This article is a good summary of the functions and training of the general practitioner. We are promised a section on general practice in succeeding issues.

The high standard of editorship and production is maintained and this is still the best annual of medical progress for easy reference.