

and to the R.C.O.G. and their book will be more useful to students than to the general practitioner. It is one of a series of "University Medical Texts" under the general editorship of Selwyn Taylor, whose opinion that it is comprehensive enough to guide the student through his M.B. examination is a clear indication that obstetrics and gynaecology are subjects for which vocational training is required before entering general practice.

**Diseases of the nose, throat and ear.** Eighth edition. I. SIMPSON HALL, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S. and BERNARD H. COLMAN, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.S. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1967. Pp. xii + 424. Price 30s.

This popular and useful book was first published in 1937. In spite of being brought up to date it is still contained within the limits set for the first edition. This triumph is achieved by a brevity and clarity of expression which makes attractive and easy reading for the student and general practitioner, for whom the book is designed.

There is an appendix which covers Instruction for the Preparation of Patients for Operation, Notes on Local Anaesthesia and Formulae of the preparations in general use in E.N.T. work. The index is good.

Any adverse criticism is small stuff. The use of steroids in dealing with recurrent attacks of nasal polypi is not mentioned. Yet this is popular in some quarters. Under Migraine Headache it suggests that halos and diplopia are common prodromal symptoms. Surely they are rare. Under Trigeminal Neuralgia surgical treatment alone is mentioned. Here and there names are put in brackets after some statement—e.g. "Tartar emetic has been used with some success (Wright)". As no further reference follows, the name is unhelpful. This is an excellent book for its purpose and these minor criticisms do not disturb its excellence.

**The amphetamines. Toxicity and addiction.** ORIANA JOSSEAU KALANT, PH.D. Toronto: University Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1966. Pp. xii + 151. Price 48s.

The author has undoubtedly taken a great deal of trouble to review the literature on amphetamines (there are 202 cross references) and the first part of the book is largely a list of case histories of amphetamine poisoning, without any real pattern of diagnostic symptoms coming to the surface. As such it is not an easy book to read and is more likely to appeal to the academician rather than to a practising doctor.

The view is confirmed that most 'addicts' are immature or psychopathic personalities and, in fact, some show up as true schizophrenics. The difficulties of diagnosis of amphetamine poisoning is revealed and the conclusion is drawn that addiction to amphetamines is on the increase. Some of the patients were admitted to hospital with acute psychotic symptoms and improved rapidly after withdrawal of amphetamines without any side-effects.

Generally speaking the taking of amphetamines is confined to people in and under the 35 age group and moreover the majority are men. The danger is stressed that most of the people who abused their consumption of amphetamines obtained them on prescription from doctors who stand to some extent condemned because of the lack of care and thought they gave when prescribing amphetamines—this is a valuable contribution and should be underlined.

### LARGE PRINT BOOKS FOR THE PARTIALLY SIGHTED

IT IS NOW TWO-AND-A-HALF years since the publication of large print books for those with defective vision first began. The project had been at committee stage for 20 years when it won the interest finally of Mr Frederick Thorpe, of Ulverscroft, a retired publisher. The scheme was supported by the Ministry of Health and all public libraries in Great Britain and Northern Ireland were circularized and strongly recommended to buy these special books, which were to be known as the Ulverscroft Large Print Series.

It was decided that the print should be twice as large as in a normal book, and that the books should be 11 in. x 8 in. to allow for this with an average length of 256 pages. Jet black ink was chosen, to give greater density to the letters, and special lightweight extra-absorbent paper. A list of suitable titles was made with the help of a librarian's survey of the type of books most often requested by elderly people, who would be the main readers. Books of a light nature with happy endings were found to be the most popular. The consent of authors and previous publishers was obtained; most of them were very co-operative. The first four titles came out in September, 1964, and in the first few weeks 400 letters of appreciation were sent in by grateful people who had been enabled to enjoy reading for the first time in many years. There are now over 170 books in the Ulverscroft catalogue.

The firm is non-profit making. By reducing his costs to a minimum Mr Thorpe has been able to produce a book half the price but twice the size of an ordinary volume. There is no advertising and no sales staff to maintain—the books can be purchased through all organizations interested in the welfare of the blind, or direct from the publishers, F. A. Thorpe (Publishers) Ltd, Station Road, Glenfield, Leicester. They are on loan at most public libraries. The chief problem is that many of the elderly people who need the books most are no longer members of libraries. Some of the public libraries have been obliged to cut down their orders. The demand has not been as great as was hoped, and it is feared that the project may fail if this does not increase. A sale of 3,000 copies of each book is necessary, if the low price and continuity of production is to be maintained. It is essential that the books should be made known to all those who visit old people in their own homes, i.e. general practitioners, district nurses, voluntary visitors, local authority welfare officers, meals on wheels staff, etc. (In a circular sent out by the National Old People's Welfare Council, old people's welfare committees throughout the country were informed that a sum of money had been allocated by the National Corporation for the Care of Old People to be given in the form of small grants to enable committees to purchase an initial supply of these books.) This service could give pleasure to countless housebound and lonely people. It would be a great loss for such people if the future success and continuity of this long-needed series could not be assured.

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