

**Value for Money in Medicine.** JOHN and SYLVIA JEWKES. Oxford. Blackwell. 1963. Pp. viii + 66. Price 6s. 6d.

An essay by two eminent economists is not the usual type of reading that is recommended to general practitioners. This booklet is short, very readable, and will probably give most of us a jolt. All general practitioners who are interested in the future and purpose of the National Health Service should read it.

John and Sylvia Jewkes set out to examine one of the basic arguments that was used when the Health Service was brought into being. "That increased expenditure on health services would be sound economic investment because it would increase production and because by reducing ill health it would decrease the cost of the medical services."

Supposing that a certain proportion of the national income is allocated to the health services, how should it be spent? Political expediency suggests that it should be spent on the illness of the individual, who, in gratitude to the state, might be expected to return to work earlier. This, of course, does not happen, and the Jewkes are able to demonstrate that as the national medical expenditure rises so does the loss of working time attributable to sickness. Absence for sickness in the U.S.A. is significantly lower than in the United Kingdom.

The authors show that the cost of the "inpatient day" increases year by year faster than the purchasing power of the pound decreases, and they are led to the conclusion that only high capital expenditure on building modern, efficient, and work-saving hospitals is likely to reduce operating costs. They suggest that expenditure on research and prevention is more likely to benefit the national economy than day-to-day treatment of illness.

In Great Britain more is spent annually on tobacco than on the whole of the National Health Service, and yet many people consider it morally wrong for a citizen to be expected to buy his own drugs. Perhaps it is time that the politicians looked again at the National Health Service and tried to differentiate between national need and political expediency.

**First Aid in the Factory.** LORD TAYLOR, B.S.C., M.D., F.R.C.P. Second edition. London. Longmans. 1962. Pp. xi + 146. Price 10s. 6d.

This book is intended specifically for the factory first aider and those who teach him, but anyone who wishes to learn first aid, or to teach it, will find methods of dealing with minor and severe injury clearly stated and illustrated.

In general, textbooks for first aiders either attempt too much too sketchily, or leave out principles underlying the management of injury. This book manages to avoid these pitfalls. The second edition shows a change of heart from the first edition in that mouth-to-mouth breathing is given first place in the list of methods, instead of being given the brush-off in small print, as in the first. The section on shock would repay the study of all doctors, not only those interested in first aid, and the conduct of first-aid examinations with suggested topics for questions is extremely helpful for those who have to conduct these examinations.