

**Health, Its Nature and Conservation.** F. A. E. CREW, F.R.S., M.D., F.R.C.P.E. Oxford, London, Edinburgh, New York, Paris, Frankfurt. Pergamon Press. 1965. Pp. xx + 201. 17s. 6d.

This is volume 1 of the Nursing Division of The Commonwealth and International Library and is commended in a foreword to "the nurse, health visitor, midwife, social worker and the doctor". It sets out to analyse and define the biological concept of health and the factors that maintain or disrupt it. The author confesses that "ill health and disease receive much more attention than health itself", and indeed as something to be explored, exploited and enjoyed, health is but little considered.

Given this static conception and the analytic approach the task is well done. Genetic, infective, parasitic, nutritional, climatic and occupational diseases are briefly considered in turn as examples of biological discord, there are chapters on personal and on public hygiene and one on measuring health in a population. Facts and statements much outnumber comments and reflections but these when they occur stimulate thought. Here and there a few statements may be questioned.

A nurse or health visitor bent on a scientific approach to her work— anxious to be well grounded in genetics, blood groups, rhesus mechanisms or nutrients and daily doses of vitamins—will find the facts here; one more concerned with things humanistic and practical may find the book less helpful. The doctor, though he may have forgotten some details, should surely have learnt the facts already.

Many intended aids to the understanding of synthesized technical terms are given in brackets but few are enlightening and some are sadly inaccurate. '(Gk. anti, against; genos, birth.)' sounds like 'contraceptive' and does not illuminate 'antigen'. '(Gk. gamos, marriage; genesis, descent.)' scarcely helps with 'gametogenesis' and when 'cholera' is Greek for 'the cholera' (see Liddle & Scott) 'Cholera (L. bile)' seems superfluous as well as unhelpful.

**The Normal School Child.** R. S. ILLINGWORTH, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.C.H. London. William Heinemann Medical Books Ltd. 1964. Pp. xii + 237. Price 18s.

The author has packed into the 229 pages of his book a wealth of general information about normal school children, their problems, cause, effects and treatment. The material is up to date and written in a non-technical vein making it particularly useful for parents and teachers, although most general practitioners would derive benefit from browsing through it. Easy reading, excellent presentation, plentiful headings and references, and a rather attractive cover, will all help to sell this book in an age when the quest for medical knowledge among the layman is increasing. Most of the problems in the otherwise normal school child are attributed to 'insecurity'—a word which crops up with an increasingly monotonous regularity in almost every chapter (except perhaps the one on infectious disease) this may be the author's shrewd way of disguising a moral. A great deal of time and thought must have been used in preparing this venture, and one can but hope that the public will justly reward Professor Illingworth by buying his book.