

Diets for Sick Children. DAPHNE J. W. DIXON, B.S.C., S.R.D. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1965. Pp. x+111. Price 12s. 6d.

This excellent book is intended as a practical guide, as well as reference manual, for any who are concerned with providing or advising on special, in addition to ordinary diets, for sick children. It is not meant for parents of children on special diets, as these diets should be adjusted to suit the individual.

The wide experience gained from the material passing through the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, even for the rarer diseases, has provided the dietetic staff there with unique opportunities for developing attractive, varied and palatable diets based on scientific principles. However, no matter how good a diet may be on a scientific basis, it is completely useless if the child will not accept it. Mrs Dixon underlines the basic principles in dealing with such problems.

The book opens with recommended dietary allowances and normal diets, adapted to children's requirements, for different age groups. This is followed by special diets for various common, as well as, uncommon diseases—those for diabetes and coeliac disease being extremely well presented. In recent years the recognition and treatment of many inborn errors of metabolism has necessitated much new thought in this most important field—not the least of which has been the working out of correct dietary regimes. These have been adequately covered in separate sections for each metabolic disorder and form a large part of the book. Much of this material was hitherto unpublished. A unique and helpful suggestion is the invitation to the interested reader to write to the senior dietitian at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London, W.C.1 with any queries arising from the diet sheets given in the booklet.

The handbook is thoughtfully and very clearly laid out, and there is little to criticize in either its presentation, or in the accuracy of its contents and text. Its publication undoubtedly fills a long-felt need in the general care of sick children, and as Dr Barbara Clayton says in her foreword, Mrs Dixon should be most warmly congratulated on her achievement.

Waiting in Outpatient Departments. A Survey of Outpatient Appointment Systems. A survey made by the Operational Research Unit of the Nuffield Provincial Hospital Trust. London, New York, Toronto. Oxford University Press. 1965. Pp. ix + 69. Price 5s.

This is a remarkably thorough survey, begun in June 1963 and completed in March 1964, of approximately 12,500 outpatients and 900 doctors at 474 clinics in various specialties at 60 hospitals; but it is not an evaluation of the general theory of queueing.

Some of the findings are startling. Thus, the average time waited by patients after appointment time before seeing a doctor was 25 *minutes*; on the other hand, the time which doctors had to wait during clinics, because patients were late or failed to arrive, was negligible, on average over the whole sample 41 *seconds*. Only one clinic in five started early or on time, and on average clinics were 12 minutes late in starting. The late-

ness of doctors and the poor design of appointment systems, due to block bookings being too high, appeared to be the two major causes of patients waiting. Waiting time can be measured and reduced by quite simple methods, particularly in clinics where the appointment systems are grossly inaccurate.

This slim volume should be studied by all who control or work in hospital clinics, and doctors in charge ought to be reminded of Beatty's comment to a brother officer, "Don't be late Admiral; anything but late".

Nurse and Patient. GENEVIEVE BURTON. London. Tavistock Publications. 1965. Pp. xi+220. Price 21s.

This book is No. 10 in the series *Mind the Medicine Monographs*, edited by Michael Balint, and though directed at the student nurse is worthy of attention from a much wider field, including both established and intending general practitioners. Medical practitioners have traditionally given tacit recognition to the emotional and personal problems relevant to medical care, but the pressures of advancing scientific knowledge in the past few decades have tended to push this side of medicine into the shadows. This book, like many others now appearing, is evidence of the current reaction, and the study of personal relationships as they apply to medical and nursing care is becoming a subject for formal study. No general practitioner can afford to neglect advances in this field.

One of the book's outstanding merits is its clarity: it is exceptionally easy to read and free from jargon. Genevieve Burton is an American, but her text has been altered where necessary to bring it into line with current English usage. The text is heavily larded with case-reports, which successfully illustrate the perils of neglecting the patient's emotional difficulties and problems; and the nurse's need to understand her own emotional reactions and attitudes in professional relationships. Almost everything demonstrated could apply with equal force to doctor-patient relationships, and this easily read, small book is well worth inclusion in the general practitioner's reading list. It should be particularly helpful to students during their clinical training, and is recommended to them.

Transactions of the World Asthma Conference. London. The Chest and Heart Association, 1965. Pp. 9+223. Price 37s. 6d.

In this volume, the Chest and Heart Association has brought together over 50 papers, delivered in nine sessions and six group discussions.

In *The Natural History of Asthma as seen in General Practice*, Dr