

but does not emphasize the fact that the split is fixed and does not vary with respiration.

In Volume 3, the differentiation between split and reduplicated first sound (p. 8) is merely confusing. The example of irregular systolic click (p. 10) appears to be reversed splitting of the second sound. The width of the gap between the second sound and the opening snap in mitral stenosis (p. 15) is related to atrial congestion; it is more realistic to relate it to the degree of stenosis of the mitral valve and to indicate that the very presence of an opening snap indicates mobile cusps and therefore a case suitable for surgery.

Pronunciation on the record is a minor source of irritation. Systole and diastole rhyme with plug-hole; Fallot is given a final hard 't' and bruit is pronounced 'brute'. The verbal descriptions on the record accompanying Volume 3 have slipped in one place. The example of "heart sounds quieter than normal" is in fact an example of diastolic gallop rhythm and follows the example of pre-systolic gallop rhythm.

In summary, the illustrations and general presentation of these books are good; so are the recordings of the various heart sounds and rhythms. This lengthy criticism is offered in the hope that this educational effort might be improved in subsequent editions.

Medicine in Britain. C. ALLAN BIRCH. London. Baillière, Tindall & Cassell. 1965. Pp. xii + 316. Price 35s.

This book is described on the dust-cover as a guide for overseas doctors and is planned to 'fill in' the visitor who intends to practise medicine in Britain. There are few of those already in practice in this country, however, who could read any ten pages without discovering something new.

At the beginning of the book 100 pages are given to a description of the National Health Service, and the author has courageously attempted a description of the pool with an analysis of some of the consequences of its existence. The functions of regional boards are described, as well as those of the related services, dental, ophthalmic and local authority which must create confusion in the minds of many. The greater part of the book, however, is devoted to matters which have their counterpart in practice in many places overseas, and yet have a British flavour which can be the better appreciated if its origin is understood. The chapter on our medical history will help the overseas visitor here for in it he may find the source of many aspects of practice in his own country.

Few authors can calculate the expected readership of their book accurately, but between 3,000 and 4,000 doctors from overseas come to Britain each year to work in hospital posts. Some of these will stay and enter hospital or general practice. If every doctor-newcomer occupied a sea voyage in thorough study of this book their adjustment would be easier and many of the failures in communication between hospital and general practice would no longer arise.

No failure of communication is likely between the author and his

readers. Each section in each chapter is clear and readable, facts of medical life being made interesting even to the reviewer who has lived with them for years. Whether the facts will remain the same remains to be seen. Perhaps in the next edition the chapter on medical history will be enlarged by much that is present practice. In any event there are sure to be many editions of a work which will be widely valued by the many overseas doctors who will continue to spend some part of their training years with us.

Differential diagnosis—An Integrated Handbook. HAROLD THOMAS HYMAN, M.D. Philadelphia and Montreal. J. B. Lippincott Company, London. Pitman Medical Publishing Co. Ltd. 1965. Pp. viii + 375. Price £5.

Dr Hyman has made an ingenious attempt to computerize medical diagnosis through the use of a synoptic textbook. In an index four thousand signs, symptoms, syndromes and diseases are each referred to appropriate synoptic articles in the main text. For instance, in the index the reader is referred, under the heading of Diabetes to articles on Abdominal pain, Acidosis, Pica, Endocrinopathies, Glycosuria, Metabolic disturbances, Pregnancy complications, and Pruritis. This seems pretty comprehensive, but your reviewer was surprised to find no reference to articles on "Weight, deviations from the normal", or "Micturition, urinary secretions and the urinary specimen, disturbances and abnormalities of".

Some considerable experience of medicine is required to make effective use of this book because space does not allow distinction to be made between common and rare conditions presenting with the same signs. Nevertheless, it can be used as an effective *aide mémoire* to further reading. Readers must have a working knowledge of American spelling, without this they would never find the section on oedema.

Splenoportography. LUCIEN LEGER, M.D. Springfield, Illinois. Charles C. Thomas. 1966. Pp. x + 121. Price \$8.50.

Percutaneous intrasplenic injection of contrast media with serial radiological control was introduced in 1951 by the author, who is the professor of clinical surgery working at the Cochin Hospital, Paris. Since that time, this method of diagnostic phlebography of the portal venous system has been universally adopted, being used as a preoperative method of investigation of cases with portal hypertension. In addition it is used to determine underlying pathological conditions of the liver, spleen and portal venous system, combined with manometric studies. The book makes a comprehensive study of this diagnostic aid. It is well written, in good English, easy to read and well illustrated. Nevertheless, the subject is unlikely to interest many general practitioners, as it requires hospitalization of the patients and a careful selection of cases.