

ing the treatment of neurotic disorders as part of their work, felt themselves inadequately trained and equipped to deal properly with these conditions, and experienced more difficulty and embarrassment in handling neurotic illness than any other type of disorder . . .'

'Administrative and medical logic alike suggest that the cardinal requirement for improvement of the mental health services in this country is not a large expansion and proliferation of psychiatric agencies, but rather a strengthening of the family doctor in his therapeutic role.'

There are two barriers to this development, however, one in organization, one in attitude. 'If the family doctor is to function as a key-member of a medical team in a community, he will have additional requirements, of which a reduced patient-load and better access to ancillary services are probably the most important.' The second barrier is less tangible and involves a change in role, attitude and image for the general practitioner himself—away from the active, decisive, authoritative figure of tradition.

No discussion of this subject can be complete without at least a brief reference to the teaching function of the physician . . . Most practitioners still make little attempt to correct their patients' faulty perceptions in respect of health problems . . . such a neglect of the doctor's teaching function, of the all-important need to communicate effectively with patients, has inevitably a deleterious effect on the doctor-patient relationship and ultimately on public perceptions of the medical profession . . . The practice of medicine, as Ellis has said, can move only in one of two directions—it must become more psychological or it will become a technology.

Psychiatrists never doubt the value of the generalist's role in a health service. This study strongly confirms it.

The book is an important one. It is very well written, well produced, not too long and has a bibliography of great interest.

**Doctors and the state: The British medical profession and government action in public health, 1870-1912.** JEANNE L. BRAND. Baltimore. The John Hopkins Press. London. Oxford University Press. 1965. Pp. xiii + 307. Price 64s.

The National Health Insurance Act of 1911 was one of the greatest turning points in the medical care of the people of this country. The events which immediately preceded its introduction have been told often enough, but no really satisfactory attempt has been made to draw together all the strands which made a State which prided itself on its freedom of thought and action accept so revolutionary an idea. This book fills a gap in the medical literature of the period. Written by an American with a wide knowledge of the habits and customs of the people of these isles, it is remarkably free of bias. The N.H.I. Act did not come out of the blue, and although Lloyd George rushed it through parliament it was received by a nation already prepared, and was a culmination of events. *Laissez faire*—the philosophy of live and let live had for a long time been discarded as an impossible doctrine in a modern state. Laymen and doctors alike had become used to government interference in many matters. Medical care for the working man was inefficient and sometimes

lacking. This was recognized by the doctors as well as the administrators; it was not the principles at which the doctors protested but the way in which the Bill was introduced without any previous consultations having been taken with them. When the Act was passed their quarrel was about the level of remuneration rather than the substance of the Act.

Dr Brand starts her thesis with the Medical Act of 1858. Of necessity much of the book deals with the development of the environmental health services, for these had a conditioning effect on the government, the people and the doctors. With the turn of the century the state was interesting itself more and more in the personal health services, health visiting and child welfare and school inspections were all well established. The dis-closures of the recruiting offices during the South African war and the findings of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law had made it abundantly evident that something should be done. The description of events during the passage of the N.H.I. Act through parliament is extremely well done.

**An introduction to psychopathology.** Second edition. D. RUSSELL DAVIS, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.M. London. Oxford University Press. 1966. Pp. x + 158. Price 16s.

This book was first published in 1957 and was written "to bridge the gap between the psychiatric clinic and the psychological laboratory"; it was to be a service to psychiatrists and psychologists. The new edition, entirely re-written claims to be not only for the medical student and the general practitioner, but for all those who are professionally concerned with problems of mental disorder in children or adults. Your reviewer found it difficult to read because of the special approach, which seemed to be disjointed and perplexing. Professor Russell Davis is right when he says it is more profitable to talk about problems rather than about 'schools' of psychiatry. A great deal of time is still taken up with the search for 'perfectionist' definitions. Psychology in its early days was involved with philosophical speculations. Later developments emphasized the experimental method so as to be able to measure objectively what was observed like the other exact sciences. But when abnormal behaviour, sexual conduct in its widest sense—a suckling at the breast, and affective behaviour were approached in 'a scientific manner' the results did not make sense.

We are still bogged down in our thinking when we speak of 'mental illness' using an analogy of 'physical illness', i.e. seeking an organic basis for disorderly irrational behaviour.

There are large numbers of unresolved problems of diagnosis and treatment related to clinical neurosis and their origins in childhood experience. Professor Russell Davis' 'Ten rules for therapists' are good, provided that the therapist has had some reliable experience and training. This book is not suitable for the medical student or for an inexperienced general practitioner, but it will be of value to the advanced student in psychology or the young doctor working in the mental hospital service.