

able to consult the original texts he studied 14 languages. More clearly than any previous medical historiographer, to use the phrase which Sigerist seemed to prefer, did he endeavour to weld the history of medicine into the general scheme of things so that in reading his works one learns of the people, the patients, their ways in disease and their ways in health, and in so doing gets a clearer idea of their ideas and theories concerning disease. Sigerist was not only a great medical historian, he had the ability given to so few of being able to convey his meaning in clear, simple and very readable English. Many will welcome this cheap edition of a very great book.

Public health in Glasgow 1905-1946. SIR ALEXANDER MACGREGOR, *K.B.E.*
Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Limited. 1967. Pp. xi + 175.
Price 25s.

The history of public health as usually encountered by its disciples is apt to be dry, a catalogue of legislation with interspersed tables of statistics. Water supplies, drainage and refuse disposal figure with slum clearance and rehousing. The few personalities are portrayed as writers of long and dry reports.

Only occasionally do we get an account of what was really happening during the time when the social services, as we now call them, were evolving. This is why this short book by one who has lived and worked through these momentous years is so important. That it purports to be concerned with the health of Glasgow only is not material. Indeed, Glasgow was one of the worst cities in the country for slums, rickets and consumption. How these and other problems were tackled is typical of what was happening all over the country. Sir Alexander MacGregor has succeeded in showing how the different problems presented and how they were successfully tackled. In doing so he has written a human story which is readable and instructive. It is a pity that a book so packed with information should have no index.

Food fact and figure. MARY E. BECK, *S.R.D.* Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Limited. 1967. Pp. iv + 74. Price 6s.

Plenty of common sense with enough sound science are served up by a dietician in this useful book for laymen. Although the general practitioner may not agree with every detail, he may safely recommend it as a guide for those patients interested in and responsible for their own nutrition and that of infants, children, the elderly or the sick. The relationship between food and dental health is dealt with thoroughly, and there is a section which scotches the mythology of constipation. There are a few practical and acceptable recipes, and even suggestions for a packed lunch. Altogether an exemplary exercise in health education, indexed and wittily illustrated.

A synopsis of ophthalmology. Third edition. J. L. C. MARTIN-DOYLE, *M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.O.* Bristol. John Wright and Sons Limited. 1967. Pp. x + 271.
Price 35s.

This latest edition of the *Synopsis of ophthalmology* is a short, compact, easy to handle book. The type is set well, headings are clear and understandable and the text is written with delightful simplicity. This is a thoroughly pleasant and easy book to study. Despite the fact that there are very few illustrations the

author manages to explain some of the more difficult ophthalmic disorders, particularly of refraction, etc., with great lucidity.

It is possible that too much material has been put into this book; more than would be required by the average student or general practitioner, nevertheless this material does not detract from the proper emphasis on essential and important eye conditions and their different diagnosis. There is an excellent chart showing the differential diagnosis of acute eye inflammations. There are also useful chapters on ocular changes in general disease, and also ocular side-effects of systemic medication.

Nevertheless the price of 35s. 0d. is high for a book of value for only a limited duration, and the use of a limp cover would have reduced the cost considerably.

A guide for staffing a hospital nursing service. MARGUERITE PAETZNICK, R.N., M.A. Public Health Papers No. 31. Geneva. World Health Organization. 1966. Pp. 93. Price 6s. 8d.

This recent addition to the excellent series of Public Health Papers from the World Health Organization aims to be a useful administrative tool for those responsible for the organization of hospital nursing services. For this very reason it is likely to prove of direct interest to only a small minority of readers of this journal. There are some analogies with the running of a large group practice, particularly one to which district nurses are attached, but the book is really concerned with hospitals. The complexity of their problems is at once obvious; an enormous amount of detail is crammed into these pages. Despite this there is constant attention to the needs of patients. At one point nursing is defined as 'the conscious practice of human relationships'. 'The quality of nursing can be judged by the sympathy and understanding shown by the nurses.'

It cannot be easy to write a short book on this subject which will be equally useful in U.S.A. or Nigeria or Albania. This one may well succeed in being so.

PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

WHO Expert Committee on cholera. Second report. World Health Organization. Technical report series No. 352. Geneva. 1967. Pp. 28. Price 3s. 6d.

Joint ILO/WHO committee on occupational health. Fifth report. World Health Organization. Technical report series No. 354. Geneva. 1967. Pp. 19. Price 3s. 6d.

Biology of fertility control by periodic abstinence. Report of a WHO scientific group. Technical report series No. 360. Geneva. 1967. Pp. 20. Price 3s. 6d.

Livingstone Books 1967. Complete catalogue. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Limited. Pp. 66.

Blackwell Scientific Publications Catalogue 1967-1968. Oxford and Edinburgh. Blackwell Scientific Publications Limited. Pp. 90.

