

## *Book Reviews*

**The hazards of immunization.** Sir GRAHAM S. WILSON, M.D., LL.D. F.R.C.P., D.P.H. London. The Athlone Press. 1967. Pp. x+324. Price 45s.

This is no anti-vaccinationist's treatise but an authoritative study of known as well as unforeseen dangers which beset the paths of makers, users and recipients of immunizing products, written by someone who has been in the thick of it.

The author postulates that "it is thoroughly wholesome for long-adopted practices to be submitted from time to time to critical scrutiny . . ." and he does this in 26 chapters, starting with classification and normal toxicity, several chapters follow on various aspects of faulty production, several on different allergic manifestations, general anaphylaxis and abnormal sensitivity of the patient. The chapters are enlivened by descriptions of many historical occasions when 'something went wrong', from the transfer of syphilis by arm to arm vaccination in 1861 to a toxic diphtheria prophylactic at Dallas in 1919, through virulent BCG at Lubeck in 1930, to Cutter's poliomyelitis vaccine in 1955 and on to more recent events.

This is perhaps not so much a book to read right through as to dip into, but its fascination is such that the reader will not easily put it aside until several more chapters have been passed. Here is a book for the library of every medical centre and for every doctor or health visitor and others concerned with immunization. ". . . unless we know and can benefit from the mistakes of our predecessors we are liable to make even greater mistakes ourselves".

**Psychiatry.** Medical Outlines Series. MERRILL T. EATON, JR., M.D. and MARGARET H. PETERSON, M.D. 1967. London. William Heinemann Medical Books Ltd. Pp. 564. Price 42s.

From the point of view of the practising general practitioner, this book has three outstanding merits. It is comprehensive, easy to read, and thanks to being a paperback, reasonably priced for a long, detailed, and up-to-date textbook. It is divided into four parts. The first with its description of dynamic psychiatry and personality development is largely based on Freudian psychopathology, but the authors in fact steer a very sensible middle of the road course through their subject. Part two on clinical subjects is extremely well written with a delightfully revealing and pithy style. It may surprise some to know that before ECT was available, some 20 per cent of involuntal melancholics died by suicide, often despite intensive care, or to realize that most children at some time in life observe parental intercourse. The thumb nail sketch of such rarities as autism and childhood schizophrenia are just right for a book of this size. The description of the various depressive disorders, reactive, involuntal and manic depressive are of a high standard, and hypomania is clearly described with a proper emphasis. On the other hand minor depressive swings, while recognized, are not given the full description they deserve. Most clinical psychiatrists in Britain are now agreed that the minor depression is one of the most common psychiatric syndromes and indeed by sheer weight of numbers, a major problem. This, however, is only one criticism of an excellent book which is recommended to the family doctor as a very useful reference book. In the third part of their work, the authors recognize the importance of the subject to the family doctor, and have