

by making their own translations from the College classification or the I.C.D. Consultation rates and rates of patients consulting by sex, age group and diagnosis can be deduced quite accurately and this volume will be invaluable in showing where international differences, as well as similarities, are to be found.

We ourselves are engaged in the planning of our second National Morbidity Survey to be undertaken in 1970. It is already clear that some of the principles employed in this study by the Dutch College will be incorporated in our planning. It is to be hoped, too, that this survey will act as a further stimulus to such countries as have as yet made no attempt to relate their first-line medical practice to the pattern of disease encountered by their first-line medical practitioners.

#### New editions

**Lecture notes on pathology.** Second edition. A. D. THOMSON, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., F.C.Path., and R. E. COTTON, M.D., B.S., M.C.Path. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1968. Pp. xvii + 1138. Price £3 3s. 0d.

The first edition of this book appeared in 1962, and since then the considerable advances in medical science have merited the addition of new material on, for example, genetics, clinical immunology, electrolyte balance and exfoliative cytology, and the general revision of the existing text.

The format remains the same, and was designed for senior medical students. Each chapter starts with a list of relevant headings, and each heading is amplified in a concise and deliberately didactic manner in the text. Brevity has been essential to the author's purpose: the general practitioner will find here useful outlines of pathological knowledge, and the list of books for additional reading and reference provides fuller treatment of various subjects for those who need it. Numerous diagrams illuminate the text.

Considering the extent of its subject, this book is most reasonable in size and price. The general practitioner will find it a most useful work of reference, since the itemized format is as helpful in general enquiries as in rapid revision.

**Bedside diagnosis.** Eighth edition. CHARLES SEWARD. London and Edinburgh. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1969. Pp. xiii + 517. Price £2 2s. 0d.

Any book which achieves eight editions and translation into four languages must be offering the customers what they want—and this work is no exception. Dr Seward, ably assisted in this edition by Dr David Mattingly, attains his success by putting the horse firmly before the cart and

seeing that it pulls its weight. Traditionally, classical medicine has been taught by taking a disease-entity and describing systematically its aetiology, pathology, symptomatology, treatment and prognosis, so that to diagnose a disease one has first to think of it, and then see if one can match the patient's symptoms with those in the textbook. The author stresses—and like so many brilliant ideas this seems so simple when somebody else has thought of it—that as in our daily work we are presented with a hotch-potch of symptoms, the sensible thing to do is to systematize these and work logically forward to a presumptive diagnosis; at this stage, if necessary, the classical textbook will come into its own.

To fulfil this aim, very shrewd observation of, and clear thinking about, signs and symptoms are needed, and the author gets full marks for both these qualities. Seen from this viewpoint the 'classical disease-entity' begins to look a little old-fashioned, and the patient with a disturbance of physiological mechanism becomes much more the object of study. This is a humanizing process, for as we all know, almost any symptom may arise from either a physical or psychogenic cause, and these difficulties are given their proper weight in the author's classification.

This book should be required reading for every final-year student, if only to disabuse him of the idea that multiple sclerosis cannot be diagnosed in the absence of scanning speech, or that to be sure about thyrotoxicosis one must be able to observe exophthalmos and thyroid enlargement. The practising doctor, too, will find that his horizons are widened by acquaintance with this work, and that were he to study it assiduously, it might even on occasion help him to hit the jackpot in circumstances highly gratifying to his ego.

**Pye's surgical handicraft.** Nineteenth edition. Edited by James Kyle, M.Ch., F.R.C.S. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1969. Pp. xiv + 820. Price £3. 5s.

There must be few practising doctors who are not acquainted with Pye's Surgical Handicraft, and there are certainly only a few textbooks which have survived since 1884. The last edition expanded into two volumes, which have now been compressed again into one, making reference easier. Primarily a book for the senior student and junior house officer, Pye remains an invaluable guide for the practitioner who, in these days of early discharge of patients from hospital, is concerned with their aftercare and may suddenly be faced with an emergency during the days of recovery. Those who are fortunate to work in a general-practitioner hospital will find many useful tips. The advice to house surgeons on how they should deal with the general practitioner seeking to admit a patient is sound and welcome.