

Patterns of acute head injury. R. HOOPER, M.S., F.R.C.S., F.R.A.C.S. London. Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd. 1969. Pp. 167. Price £2 5s. (£2.25).

The author of this book is a consultant neurosurgeon in Melbourne, and his object in writing it is to bring some order into the confusion which often surrounds the subject of head injuries. In his preface he states "As time passed it became apparent that the majority of head injuries followed a course which was almost predestined. The course taken by the head injury was found to conform to one of a small number of patterns."

This conception is the reason behind the title of the book. The first component of the pattern is the injury, its nature, its severity, its site and direction. The second is the damage caused, to the scalp, to the skull and to the brain, and the third is the clinical course, assessed by changes in consciousness, vital signs, e.g. blood pressure, respiration etc., and neurological signs. If all these factors are known, the march of events can be predicted with considerable confidence.

Each aspect of the pattern is considered in turn, beginning with the mechanical factor of the injury itself, and going on through the effects of this from simple scalp wounds to fractures and the various forms of brain damage and haemorrhage, finally considering extracranial influences as well. Then follows a section on management, from the point of view of first aid, in hospital and in convalescence.

The final part of the book concerns itself with surgical complications. Various operations, e.g. for subdural and extradural haemorrhage, are described in some detail, but this, though interesting is perhaps the least valuable part of the book. The detail is too much for those who already know all about it, and not enough for those who do not.

The book is well set out and easy to read, and there are many interesting case-histories which illumine the text. It throws a useful light on its subject and should be of especial value to those doctors in comparative isolation (I myself am one of them) where no neurosurgeon is immediately available.

Aids to postgraduate medicine. J. L. BURTON, B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.P. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1970. Pp. 130. Price 20s. Od. (£1.00).

This is not a book in the conventional sense, consisting as it does of rapid-fire, no-nonsense lists of the seven clinical features of S.A.B.E. (sic), the six causes of dysarthria (yes, false-teeth are in!), the twelve complications of blood transfusion and so on, with advice on how to avoid the deadly pitfalls awaiting the aspiring candidate to the M.R.C.P. (U.K.). In his aim to provide a compact aid to revision for such candidates, the author has succeeded in amassing a fund of information neatly and pretty accurately tabulated,

which may screw the courage to the sticking place necessary for most examinees. As an indictment of our system of assessment for a higher qualification it is uniquely damning. It deserves to run to many editions.

Practical Psychiatry. A series of articles from the *British Medical Journal*. London. British Medical Association. 1969. Pp. 137. Price 15s. (75p)

This is a collection of articles originally published in the *British Medical Journal*, and covers psychiatry as it applies to general practice. All of the authors are expert and experienced, and the papers are well written. The selection is a balanced one. General practitioners will find considerable interest in these papers. The inclusion of the word "practical" in the title of the collection is a fair description, and the booklet is very good value for money.

Work and disability. MARY GREAVES, M.B.E., M.A., B.Sc. London. British Council for Rehabilitation of the disabled. 1969. Pp. vii + 109.

Every general practitioner comes into contact with disabled patients. Few of us have any real idea of what services are available or, indeed, what are the needs of our patients as far as employment is concerned.

This brief monograph, by someone who is herself handicapped, is worth a place on the shelf of every family doctor. Brief and concise, it has only one failing, the absence of an index, though the table of contents is fairly extensive.

Adolescent nutrition and growth. Edited by FELIX P. HEALD, M.D. London. Butterworths. New York. Appleton-Century-Crofts. 1969. Pp. 258. Price £5 10s. (£5.50).

This is not a book for general practitioners, but is intended for those who have a specialized interest in the problems of nutrition and growth. It comprises papers given at two seminars held in Washington, D.C. in 1966-67. Adolescents were chosen as ideal subjects for the study because of the speed at which growth occurs at this phase of life.

New editions

Underwater medicine. Third edition. SURGEON REAR ADMIRAL STANLEY MILES, C.B., M.D., M.Sc., D.T.M. & H. London. Staples Press. 1969. Pp. 363. Price £3 15s. Od. (£3.75).

The appearance of a third edition of this book only confirms its popularity and its necessity. Since its first edition it has always, quite rightly, been an accepted standard work. It has now been comprehensively revised and re-written, and a new chapter on Saturation Diving added.

With the rapid increase in the popularity of diving and sub-aqua clubs the busy general