

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

practitioner must realize all too well that the time is getting shorter before he is called upon to deal with an underwater accident patient. For those who appreciate this possibility and for that matter, the possibility of being asked to give advice by a sub-aqua club to prevent such accidents, this book gives excellent guidance and instructions.

Perhaps not many will have the time or inclination to read the whole book, and indeed there is no need for the general practitioner to do so. However, the three chapters: on Underwater Accidents, Drowning, and the Treatment of the Apparently Drowned are quite essential.

The whole book frequently has the fascination of a new world and I found the non-technical sections absorbing reading; while the concept proposed by Kylstra of 'fluid breathing', that is to fill the respiratory system with a saline solution in osmotic equilibrium with the blood, was positively exciting.

The development of the infant and young child—normal and abnormal. Fourth edition.

R. S. ILLINGWORTH, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.C.H. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1970. Pp. 382. Price £2 2s. 0d. (£2.10).

It is significant that a medical book dealing with a new approach to an old subject has had a fourth edition printed within ten years of the first. It suggests that the subject with which it deals is changing or expanding rapidly and there is an increasing demand for it. These features apply to Professor Illingworth's comprehensive description of infant and child development and the special form of examination required to assess it.

A good case is made to establish developmental diagnosis as a necessary part of the responsible doctor's care of his very young patients. The text is amply illustrated with photographs. Most sections are summarized which helps for quick reference, whilst for the specialist an extensive bibliography completes each chapter.

Now that the family doctor is realizing the value to his infant patient of regular observation of development and few of these doctors have been trained to make such examinations, the book should be on the shelf of every keen general practitioner. It is necessary to read it through to obtain a general approach to the problem and thereafter it will be repeatedly needed for reference.

The fourth edition has a rather less elegant binding and a less acceptable print. Clearly the previous edition has been completely revised and the result does the author credit. Most important of the additions is his factual account of the

limitations of developmental prediction under the heading "What we can and cannot do". Certain headings to paragraphs have been chosen to add emphasis to their content without this being materially changed. A few new illustrations are welcome. A working knowledge of developmental diagnosis and its application in practice enhances interest in the baby clinic, a fact that this readable book conveys to the practising doctor.

Handbook of paediatrics. Eighth edition. HENRY K. SILVER, M.D., C. HENRY KEMPE, M.D., and HENRY B. BRUYN, M.D. Oxford and Edinburgh. Blackwell Scientific Publications. Los Altos, California. Lange Medical Publications. 1969. Pp. vi+682. Price £2.17s. (£2.85)

The three joint authors of this handbook have maintained their previous practice of revising their book and bringing out a new edition every two years. This new eighth edition is essentially the same as the seventh, a handy reference, almost compact enough for the coat pocket, certainly for the consulting room bookshelf rather than for the reference library. As a consequence of the bi-annual review, the contents of this handbook remain as near as is possible up to date. However one important omission occurs in chapter two in the sub-section on drug therapy in children, whilst discussing paediatric dosage no mention is made of the Catzel system, which is now in widespread use, and a good deal easier to use than any of those mentioned by the authors. An important addition has been made to the appendix, with the inclusion of a short section on differential diagnosis of symptoms and signs. Several common symptoms and signs are considered such as hypertension and lymphadenopathy, the possible differential diagnosis being given in list form. There is no discussion.

This remains a most excellent and useful handbook of great value to anyone involved in the treatment and care of children.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Biochemistry. Second edition. S. P. DATTA, B.Sc., M.B., B.S. and J. H. OTTAWAY, B.Sc., Ph.D., A.R.I.C. London. Bailliere, Tindall and Cassell Ltd. 1969. Pp. vi+446. Price 30s. (£1.50).

An introduction to medical genetics. Fifth edition. J. A. FRASER ROBERTS, C.B.E., M.A., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P., F.R.S. London. Oxford University Press. 1970. Pp. xiv+269. Price paper covers 35s. (£1.75), board covers £2 10s. (£2.50).