

forms of neurological disorder met by the general practitioner and one where he must inevitably accept immediate responsibility. The ninth edition of this book makes it clear that basic conceptions on this subject have changed greatly in the last ten years. Even the younger among us can afford to look at this subject again.

We are going to need books like this more and more.

The Rewards of Medicine and Other Essays. HUGH BARBER, F.R.C.P.,
H. K. Lewis & Co. Ltd., London, 1939. Pp. 140. Price 15s. 0d.

All except two of the essays collected together in this little book are reprinted from *The Practitioner* and *Guy's Hospital Gazette*. Readers of these journals will already be acquainted with Dr Barber's style and will wish to purchase this delightful volume. The essays cover such subjects as "The Rewards of Medicine", "The Act of Dying", "Waters, Holidays and Cures", and "The Specialization of Age". Dr Barber favours the historical approach and writes authoritatively on doctors' fees, the value of fiction in medical education, and body snatching. Two essays on "Smollett's Contribution to Medicine" and "Jane Austen's Medical Wisdom" point to the value of a knowledge of the classical fiction of the 18th and 19th centuries in assessing the place of the doctor in the social scale.

Your reviewer for one has been stimulated to turn again to the pages of Smollett. Not often do we find so much learning displayed in such a charming manner.

A Handbook of Medical Hypnosis. GORDON AMBROSE, L.M.S.S.A.,
and GEORGE NEWBOLD, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., M.M.S.A., D.R.C.O.G.,
D.C.H. Second edition. Ballière, Tindall and Cox, London,
1958. Pp. xiii + 276. Price 27s. 6d.

Hypnosis has, in the past, been a recurrent disappointment to the medical profession, to the profit of the unorthodox practitioners. Recently there has been a revival of interest in the subject within the profession, and with our increasing knowledge of psychology and psychiatry "The time is ripe for the acceptance of hypnotherapy as a standard and national form of treatment and for its integration into the main stream of medicine".

The subtitle of this book is "An Introduction for Practitioners and Students" and it fulfils this object well. The first part describes the hypnotic state: its history, nature, phenomena, induction and legal aspects. The second part describes its use in general medicine, neuroses, anaesthesia, paediatrics, obstetrics, gynaecology and dermatology.

At first sight it may surprise readers to see such conditions as

disseminated sclerosis discussed. Of course no one suggests that hypnosis can affect the organic progress of this demoralizing condition, but we are treating the patient, not the disease, and we should not neglect the enormous subjective help that we can give him by care of his psychological state.

The general practitioner has a knowledge of the patient's background and a continuity of responsibility that gives him an unrivalled opportunity in this field. The outstanding need of the general practitioner is for weapons with which he can explore and guide the psychological mechanisms of his patients. Here is a remarkable technique crying out for investigation, which requires no team, no laboratory, and no apparatus beyond a chair and one's voice.

The factor most likely to be lacking is time, but Drs Ambrose and Newbold can at least show us something of the possibilities, and limitations, of hypnosis.

The Organic Psychoses. JOHN G. DEWAN, M.A., M.D., PH.D.(CANTAB.), D.P.M.(ENG.), F.R.C.P.(C), F.A.C.P., F.A.P.A. and WILLIAM B. SPAULDING, M.D., F.R.C.P.(C). Toronto University Press: Oxford University Press, London, 1959. Pp. 166. Price 48s. 0d.

This is a useful and interesting little book which covers the subject of organic psychoses with commendable brevity in its 170 pages. A very generous list of references will satisfy those who wish to study the subject more deeply. When senile dementia and other chronic degenerative psychoses present, one is apt to assume the attitude that the disease must run its course and nothing radical can be done to stem the downward path. This book with its excellent case histories should make one think again. Things are not always what they seem to be and the apparently hopeless case can occasionally be shown to have some treatable organic basis. Even if the apparent dement turns out to be an inoperable cerebral tumour, there is some satisfaction in making a more accurate and precise diagnosis.

The reviewer did not like the style of the book. Had he not been reviewing it, he would never have reached part three where the volume came to life. In his opinion this section made the book. The introduction of a few illustrative cases would have made the first part much more readable. There were a few omissions from the long lists of diseases and syndromes. More might have been made of vascular insufficiency in the aged with the "drop syndrome" and the flashing lights of basilar insufficiency. No mention is made of the stupor which can occur as a result of a mid-brain lesion. One final point. There should always be some explanation even of the most obvious abbreviation, especially if the book is to be sold abroad. The meaning of H.M.C. on page 101 is still a complete mystery to the reviewer!