

minor maladjustment to the stresses of daily living. Although the number of symptoms about which the sick person may complain are many, they may be classified into a few large groups—chest pain, wind, constipation and headache are perhaps the commonest. It is from these presenting symptoms that the doctor works out his diagnosis. Of all the various complaints that a patient may make the group vaguely described by the patient as headache is probably the most common and has the greatest number of causes, nearly all of which are insignificant from the point of view of pathology. Cerebral tumours seldom occur but their importance makes their exclusion from the diagnostic field the first thought of the clinician. There are a myriad of other causes—occasionally a temporal arteritis will present—essential to spot early to prevent the onset of blindness—but the majority fall into the unsatisfactory categories of migraine and stress. The patient is often unclear as to what he means when he says he has a headache. The doctor has to think rapidly through the whole gamut of pathology to exclude the killing diseases before passing on to the more common causes, and of these migraine is the most disabling and the least amenable to treatment, and it is the least understood. There is much literature on the subject which the student may consult. Unfortunately nearly all has been written by specialists who are, quite understandably, unaware of the true incidence of the complaint. A recent addition to these is *The mechanism and management of headache* by Dr James W. Lance, who is a neurologist. However, Dr Lance has written a very good account of a difficult subject and on many occasions remarks that being in specialist practice his impression of the frequency of the various syndromes may be falsified by the fact that he only sees those patients who are referred to his hospital outpatient department.

Dr Lance gives a short introduction on the causes of headache and a sensible classification according to their source; intracranial, extracranial, vascular, muscle contraction, cranial nerve disorders and local cranial disorders. He has a chapter on referred pain mentioning the common cause, cervical spondylosis, and deals briefly with psychogenic headache. All that he has to say is well-written and worth reading. The book is well-produced and though short is by today's standards not expensive.

Simpson and Syme of Edinburgh. JOHN A. SHEPHERD. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone. 1969. Pp. xv+288. Price £2 2s. (£2.10).

This is a study in contrasts. All that these two men had in common were their christian names and the fact that they spanned roughly the same period of history. The Edinburgh School of Medicine was famous before Simpson or Syme came to it. The Monros, Cullen, the Bells and many others had added distinction to the school before them. Edinburgh throughout the eighteenth century had

provided many of the most distinguished practitioners in London. In the hands of Mr John Shepherd, Syme comes forth as a dour, uncommunicative Scot whose operative skill and ability to teach, advanced surgery at a time when medicine itself was moving slowly forward. Simpson stands out as the brilliant and dazzling obstetrician and gynaecologist who, discovering after many trials the benefits of chloroform, proceeded on to triumphs in many fields. It is not surprising that for long stretches of time Simpson and Syme were not on speaking terms. It is not surprising that their quarrels were bitter and prolonged. They seem to have inherited some of the vitriol which came naturally to their predecessors in the chairs that they occupied.

One of the fascinating and little understood ventures of James Simpson was his advocacy of acupuncture, that is, the controlling of haemorrhage by using the pressure of long needles which were left in the wound for some time after the operation. It was Simpson's belief that this was his greatest contribution to surgical practice and he felt rather bitter when Lister produced the soluble catgut ligature. In other ways Simpson was quick to adopt the antiseptic practices of Lister and was himself an advocate for the improvement of hospital buildings. Indeed he suggested at one time that temporary buildings be erected for hospitals which could be moved to new sites, or fresh ones erected after about ten years of use, thus diminishing the fatality from hospital gangrene. Syme's daughter married Lister and it is probable that had not Lister been his son-in-law he would never have adopted antiseptic or aseptic principles. He was essentially a conservative where surgery was concerned.

One of the great advantages in describing two such opposite characters in one book is that it enables the biographer to portray very accurately medical life in the mid-nineteenth century in the city of Edinburgh. Mr Shepherd has done this well. His book is well-illustrated, and, for an Edinburgh graduate, an ideal present. At two guineas it is cheap.

Introduction to psychology. D. E. JAMES. London. Panther Books (Science). 1970. Pp. 400. Price 10s. 0d. (50p.).

This book sets out to be an elementary but comprehensive introduction to psychology for students who have everyday experience only on which to draw—particularly student nurses and student teachers. Great care is taken to keep the language and illustrative examples very simple. The people at whom the book is aimed should find it most useful, though perhaps not all will appreciate such a marked emphasis on neuroanatomy and neurophysiology.

How far it will be of value to doctors is another matter. Though teaching in psychology varies in depth from one medical school to another, most

general practitioners would be likely to find the text too elementary. The references and bibliography are very good, and would certainly offer a sound basis for further study.

Certain omissions are surprising. In dealing with the psychology of small groups there is a fair discussion of leadership, but virtually none on group dynamics; in the section on communication, the non-verbal aspects are largely ignored.

Medical readers may find themselves irritated by some of the statements about illness—for example, anxiety states are said to be particularly prevalent in persons who worry a great deal, and gastric and duodenal ulcers to be common in people who suffer from anxiety states.

The difficult task of defining mental health is attempted, but is probably beyond the scope of such an elementary book. It is stated that a mentally healthy person is one who sets himself a socially acceptable goal and successfully works towards it. While this contains the key notion of adaptation, serious criticism of both halves of the proposition could easily be made.

The book may be useful for a general practitioner to recommend to interested patients, but unless he feels unusually insecure in his knowledge of psychology, he will gain little from it himself except a good bibliography.

New editions

A paediatric vade-mecum. Seventh edition. Edited by B. S. B. WOOD, D.M., F.R.C.P. London. Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd. 1970. Pp. xiii+178. Price 25s. (£1.25).

For its small bulk—it really does fit in the pocket—this booklet contains an astonishing amount of detailed information on matters paediatric. The compression required to achieve this means that much of the material is in the form of tables and there is no undue straining after literary style in the text. All major paediatric problems are covered and there are particularly informative sections on normal data, the newborn, paediatric emergencies, accidental poisoning, and a miscellaneous chapter covering, amongst other matters, the indications for electroencephalography and for nuclear sexing.

This work was originally intended for students and housemen at the Birmingham Children's Hospital, and it must, indeed, be an invaluable help to any hospital resident with paediatric responsibilities. Diseases tend to be looked at as

presenting in the hospital milieu, and much of the detail on therapy would be of academic interest to the average general practitioner, unless he had access to hospital paediatric beds. On the other hand, as a work of reference it is rather scanty and the more conventional textbooks would be preferred.

A laboratory guide to clinical diagnosis. Second edition. R. D. EASTHAM, B.A., M.D., D.C.P., DIPL. PATH., F.C. PATH. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1970. Pp. viii+268. Price £1.

That a new edition of this pocket-sized synopsis of the whole range and content of clinical pathology should appear four years after its last re-issue is testimony both to the value of the work and to the advances being made in laboratory medicine. Over eighty new headings have been added, many of them dealing with the specific enzyme deficiencies. Under each disease heading are listed in order of decreasing helpfulness diagnostic and other tests. From Alder's anomaly to Zollinger-Ellison syndrome, the spectrum is wide and remarkably complete. The trouble, from the general practitioner's point of view, is 'first catch your disease'. Perhaps it's not so much a question of needing support for our hypotheses as framing them in the first instance; and having framed them, the repertoire is usually concerned with a small number of relatively familiar entities. If that stage is not reached, or if the hypothesis includes a rarity, most general practitioners will wish to call in consultant help. However, there is likely to be an increasing number of general practitioners having access to hospital beds; for them, and for those who wish to 'work-up' the more baffling problem before calling in the specialist this booklet has something to offer.

Books received

Nosology of psychiatry. Written at the invitation of the Society of Clinical Psychiatrists by JOHN G. HOWELLS, M.D., D.P.M. Ipswich. The Institute of Family Psychiatry. 1970. Pp. 37. Price 3s. 6d. (17½p).

At home with multiple sclerosis. London. The Multiple Sclerosis Society. 1970. Pp. 62. Price 5s. (25p).

Dental health education. World Health Organization Technical Report Series No. 449. Geneva. World Health Organization. 1970. Pp. 28. Price 4s. (20p).