

looking at the mind to see exactly what it is, is that pain and unconsciousness are recorded in the mind and, as such, these recordings are not confrontable. Having discovered this simple truth he has found a way around this difficulty which now enables us to examine the mind in detail.

The most important outcome of this examination has been the undisputed establishment of Man as a spiritual being and that, in fact, the mind is a manifestation of Man's spiritual being and not a function of the brain.

The medical profession has moved into the unenviable position of being regarded as the authority in the field of mental health without being in possession of reliable information about the human mind, and has not unnaturally hoped to fill this gap by intensifying studies of the brain, about which it has a great deal of reliable information, and which is not the mind.

Many doctors will be greatly relieved to be released from this difficult situation of attempting to explain so many phenomena with which they are familiar, in terms of some hidden apparatus inside the skull. Many of us have, for example, been aware of the rôle played by a will or a lack of will on the part of an individual in recovery from an illness, and how unpredictable this makes the purely physical practice of medicine.

The technical achievements of the medical profession in the field of physical illness and the high standard of their application on a very broad front, has won for the profession a place high in the esteem of their fellow men. It is only natural that they should be the first to evaluate the new discovery of dianetics and assess the potential benefit which Man can derive from using its technology of clearing the mind of aberration.

Man has so long been baffled by the mystery surrounding the nature of the mind, that it is understandable that the truth when exposed should be hard to take if it is very, very simple. The research which led to this truth was long, arduous

and dangerous but the end result is simplicity itself.

Dianetics has given us a precision tool of great simplicity that works exactly. With this tool we in the medical profession can move forward into a new era for Man which has unimagined possibilities for his advancement in our lifetime.

Devonport.

E. C. HAMLYN.

[*Dianetics is here spelt in this way at the request of the writer of this letter. The first known use of the word 'dianoetics' meaning appertaining to the mind, was in 1677. Dictionaries, including the Shorter Oxford, the British Medical and the American "Stedman's", use this spelling. There seems to be no valid reason why a new spelling should be used or a new word be incorporated into current jargon. EDITOR.]

Oral ulceration in general practice

Sir,

In his interesting review article on Oral Ulceration in general practice (*Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, 1970, 19, 191) Dr E. C. Fox states that the prevalence of oral ulcerations in the population is fairly high and it is probably higher than is generally realized. However, he gives no figure to support his statement.

In 1966 I carried out a pilot study of the incidence of certain conditions and symptoms in 104 randomly selected 14-year-olds. Mothers reported the occurrence of mouth ulcers in 24 per cent. Although these children had an excess of symptoms of emotional disturbance such as headaches, faints, billiousness, limb pains and tearfulness, this excess was not significant and there was no correlation between mouth ulcers and any particular symptom or group of symptoms.

St. Pauls Cray, Kent

E. TUCKMAN

Book reviews

Self-poisoning. G. R. BURSTON, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.P. London. Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd. 1970. Pp. 168. Price 30s. (£1.50).

This book is intended for junior hospital staff, including nurses, and deals with the details of treatment of the self-poisoned after they have reached hospital, where (ideally) they should all be treated. Little is offered for the general practitioner who cannot at once get his patient admitted owing to distance from a hospital or because of emergency conditions.

Important principles of management are

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stressed by repetition in different chapters, and the efficacy of modern treatment is made clear. Some details require elucidation, for example on page 109 it is stated that monoamine oxidase inhibitor-induced convulsions should be controlled with paraldehyde, but on page 87 the reader will have learned that paraldehyde is a drug which should be abandoned, having been replaced by valium.

No doubt the second edition will be improved, and it is to be hoped that the author will take the opportunity of inserting guidance for the isolated

practitioner who may have to deal personally with some of the problems of poisoning.

The place of dynamic psychiatry in medicine.

Edited by John G. Howells. Ipswich. The Society of Clinical Psychiatrists. 1970. Pp. 37. Price 3s. 6d. (17½p.)

This study group was set up to consider the place of dynamic psychiatry in medicine as a whole. The report is readable, not over-burdened with technical jargon, and provides strong and reasoned arguments for their conclusion that—"Dynamic psychiatry, by virtue of its equal concern with the psychological, social and biological aspects of health and illness, has an important part to play in medical practice, in training and in research, as well as in the wider field of preventive medicine and organization of society."

Much of the practical application of these ideas will be in the hands of general practitioners, and for those who find the term 'dynamic psychiatry' a bit terrifying, it is consoling to read (page 19)—"Much of what has been said should follow automatically from common sense and ordinary human concern."

New editions

National atlas of disease mortality in the United Kingdom. Revised and enlarged edition. G. Melvyn Howe, M.Sc., Ph.D. on behalf of the Royal Geographical Society. London. Nelson. 1970. Pp. 197. Price £5 5s. (£5.25).

Family doctors who have practised in several parts of the country are well aware of the different spectra of disease which occur in different places. Much of this is due to the cultural and industrial habits of the people and much of it is confined to that kind of morbidity which is quickly cured and which so often has no pathological basis; but there are differences in mortality also. These have been mapped by Professor G. Melvyn Howe of the University of Strathclyde on behalf of the Royal Geographical Society. The Medical Geography Committee of the society included Dr Robin Pinsent whose great interest in the subject has already stimulated several surveys by the College.

This is the second edition of this work, much enlarged and much more useful as a research aid. The introduction gives a concise history of medical geography. The first part consists of standard maps of the United Kingdom onto which the overall mortality ratios for men and women are plotted for certain specific conditions such as cancer of the lung and bronchus, of the stomach, of the breast and of the uterus, of the circulatory system—the arteriosclerotic diseases including coronary—and vascular disease of the central nervous system; deaths from gastric and duodenal ulcer and from accidents are included. In preparing

the second edition which in effect is part two of this volume and relates to mortality in 1959–63, advantage has been taken of the computerization of statistics. The results are plotted rather differently and are much more illuminating. A study of this atlas will give rise to much thought, and fresh attempts will doubtless be made to unravel some of the imponderables here presented. Why, for instance, should congenital malformation mortality be so high in many small urban areas? Why is it so high in Zeeland and in Pembrokeshire and Caernarvonshire? Some of these apparent inconsistencies must be capable of explanation. More work on these is needed. It is insufficient only to note the facts, there must be a reason for these facts. Other maps will surely set people thinking on subjects in which they are interested.

A few misprints will no doubt be corrected in the next edition and are of little significance. Why, however, a Scottish publisher should allow their English printer to place Perth in Preston will doubtless require an explanation.

Diseases of children in the subtropics and tropics.

Second edition. Edited by D. B. JELLIFFE, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.A.A.P., F.A.P.H.A., D.C.H., D.T.M. & H. London. Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd. 1970. Pp. xx+1011. Price Boards £12 10s. 0d. (£12.50). E.L.B.S. Edition £6. (£6.00)

For those who practise in the tropics or subtropics this book is surely a must. All who are interested in paediatrics will find much information in its pages which is hard to find gathered together in other books. Since publication of the first edition 12 years ago there have been great changes in the pattern of diseases, not only in the hotter climates but also in temperate zones. For instance the section on viral encephalitis brings up-to-date the study of a problem of increasing significance in this country.

The publisher and editor are to be congratulated on the excellence of their presentation, and the illustrations are extremely well-chosen and clear.

Child Psychology. Sixth edition. Arthur T. Jersild. London. Staples Press. 1969. Pp. xiv + 610. Price £3 10s. 0d. (£3.50).

This well-established work has now reached its sixth edition, the first having appeared as far back as 1933. It is a book written more for the student of psychology than for the student of clinical medicine, unless he be a trainee specialist in child psychiatry. The material upon which the book is based is gathered mainly from the study of children in their reactions and behaviour, to a lesser degree the results of similar studies of animals is involved. The work of the psychoanalyst who looks backwards into the developmental past is mentioned virtually in passing only. Freud and Jung—great leaders in the discipline