

most of the papers and part of the discussions that took place at an international symposium at Aberdeen University in July 1969. The many contributors range from Finland to Philadelphia, from Geneva to Tasmania.

The volume opens with a wide-ranging view of the landscape by Professor Mechanic of Wisconsin. Psychiatry as an exact science is probably in its infancy, and one of the difficulties psychiatrists have is in standardizing their observations. For instance, Dr J. E. Cooper notes that American psychiatrists diagnose schizophrenia more frequently than do British, who in their turn diagnose affective states more than do their American colleagues. Thus, rightly, many of the papers in this book are devoted to projects for standardization of diagnosis and evaluation of methods of research.

Much of the details of this are necessarily laborious reading, but the book is well designed and printed. This volume will be of no great interest to the average family doctor, but to the psychiatrist it will give an excellent opportunity to observe the present rudimentary state of one of the growing points of psychological medicine.

Do something about that middle age. DAME ANNIS GILLIE. London and New York. Wingate-Baker. 1969. Pp. 111. Price 21s. 0d. (£1.5p).

This book is one of a series in which doctors, experienced in their own subject, help the reader to understand some common problems. Those who look on middle age as a time of special doubts and difficulties will find here much helpful advice.

The outlook of the author is immediately evident in the arrangement of the chapters for she deals first with 'fears in middle age' and ends with 'opportunities and enjoyments'. The reader is considered as a whole person. Emotional changes are explained as a possible cause of symptoms. Physical ailments are discussed with the mental adjustments they may demand.

In the very challenging chapter on 'care in middle age' emphasis is on seeking early advice for symptoms yet avoiding preoccupation with disease. Habits of eating, smoking and exercise are discussed and each reader called to review these against his particular background. Middle age can then be seen as an opportunity to seek optimum health of mind and body, to widen life's horizons and continue in conscious enjoyment of it.

In the foreword Dr G. F. Abercrombie says "it is as though, by some miracle, your own doctor had an hour to spare in conversation with you". Here, certainly, the reader feels that the author shares rather than judges all the problems. This is to be expected from one who has filled with wisdom, dignity and courage so many rôles in private and public life. Could all family doctors give such sound advice? Why should it need 'a miracle' to have a conversation with him? Perhaps doctors should be the first readers remembering that "fear of doctors is a serious hazard in these middle years".

Ten year obstetric and gynaecological clinical and educational report of Chelmsford and District Hospital Management Committee.

Mr David Brown is to be congratulated on this very short but most interesting tabular review of the obstetric results in his area in the last ten years.

Chelmsford is now famous as a centre which pays special attention to the rôle of the general-practitioner obstetrician and the layout of this pamphlet provides clear evidence of what can be achieved. For example in three general-practitioner obstetric units in the last five years the perinatal mortality rate has been 8.5/1,000, 3.5/1,000 and 2.5/1,000 total live births. Even the home confinement perinatal rate in the whole of the last ten years, a figure based on over 10,000 births, has been less than 9/1,000. Other data of interest reveal the rising pressure on consultants through a rising new consultation rate and a steadily rising rate of terminations of pregnancy.

It is sobering to reflect that even in this area the perinatal mortality rate for uncomplicated breech delivery means that more than 1 in 20 babies die and the uncorrected perinatal mortality rate is 11.5 per cent. It is a pity that these figures are not subdivided for primigravidae and multigravidae.

This most useful booklet should serve as a stimulus to obstetricians and general practitioners in many other areas.

Self aids. WENDY M. DAVIS, S.R.O.T., M.A.O.T. Edinburgh. Thistle Foundation, 22 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, EH2 4DF. 1970. Pp. 84. Price (37½p) 7s. 6d.

This booklet is a valuable contribution in the field of aids for the disabled or handicapped patient. Numerous well-drawn sketches illustrate ways in which patients can make ordinary tasks easier for themselves. Written originally for use in Edinburgh, it will be found that the addresses of shops and suppliers relate chiefly to that area. It is to be hoped that a second edition will soon appear with many more addresses. The book is remarkably good value and should be recommended to every handicapped patient.

Electronic instrumentation theory of cardiac technology. LAURENCE W. PILLER, F.S.C.T., A.M.I.T.E. London. Staples Press. 1970. Pp. 224. Price £4.50 net.

This interesting book should be studied by intensive-care-unit technicians, especially by technicians working in intensive-coronary-care units: its appeal to doctors, other than those manning such units, is more limited. The subject of medical electronics is vast and highly specialized and the non-technical reader will often find himself out of his depth.