

In a further edition (which will surely be called for) certain proof-reading errors need correction. On p 96 'compliments' should surely read 'complements'; on p 130 'effect' is printed where 'affect' must be intended, and on p 159 'threefold' should be 'threshold'.

Dr Mitchell writes that he has sought to make his book not only instructive, but also interesting and enjoyable. He has succeeded.

Stress in industry. EDITED BY J. F. L. ALDRIDGE, M.B., M.R.C.P., D.I.H., J. L. KEARNS, M.B., D.I.H. and R. F. TREGOLD, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.M. London. International Committee on Occupational Mental Health. 1971. Pp. xviii + 106. Price 50p.

These proceedings of a seminar held last year at St George's House, Windsor Castle, contain much of importance to the general practitioner. The seminar was arranged by the International Committee on Occupational Mental Health (an independent and autonomous body) at the suggestion of the World Federation for Mental Health. There were 33 participants from Europe and the United States representing industrial medicine and psychiatry; senior personnel and line management; the trades unions; psychology, sociology and social psychiatry.

General practitioners, familiar with the effects of stress on their patients, will be encouraged to read of ideas for improving mental health through and at work. The editors give a fascinating account of the development of the seminar and, as the various strands are woven together, a rich fabric of potential value for health appears. The description of the national mental health campaign in Sweden, started late in 1968, of a company campaign in Holland using a comprehensive computer-based information system and of problems of education in mental health in Yugoslavia give valuable practical evidence of what can be achieved. The last chapter attempts to summarize the conclusions of the seminar. The preceding four chapters cover four main concerns of the participants: Who deals with stress? (a wide task not limited to doctors); communication (the doctor must have a wide interest in management); society's responsibility ("we are our brother's keeper"); and the release of tension, delightfully illustrated by Hector the Hedgehog who curls up and becomes inaccessible under stress within the prickly spines of defensive symptoms.

Counselling and T-groups are familiar in medicine and it is salutary to read of their application in industry. At the modest price of 50p this report should be read by those who wish to see progress in positive mental health and by doctors, especially general practitioners with part-time appointments in industry.

This international committee has woven a rich fabric. Unfortunately, in the present climate of

general, political and medical opinion about the meaning of work and its relation to health, attempts to fashion a useful garment from this fabric may seem as insubstantial as the Emperor's clothes. General practitioners could give substance to the garment by helping to promote positive mental health, in co-operation with industry, in the ways suggested in this far-seeing report.

Sociology in medicine. Second edition. M. W. SUSSER AND W. WATSON. London. Oxford Medical Publications. 1971. Pp. 428. Price: £3.50 with paper covers. £5 with board covers.

Susser and Watson's first edition was published in 1962 and soon established itself as one of the best books available on medical sociology. Professor Susser is an epidemiologist and Professor Watson a sociologist. The second edition has just been published in August 1971. It contains a number of important improvements in sections on social class and the organization of the medical professions.

The importance of medical sociology is being progressively recognized in the various new undergraduate curricula, general-practitioner teachers who are coming new to the subject can be advised to use this book which is easily readable and acts as an introduction and a textbook simultaneously.

An admirable feature is that the chapters are not inter-dependent and it is quite possible to read chapters out of order or select topics of special interest. For general practitioners the sections on "Social class and the disorders of health" and "The cycle of family development" can be especially recommended. The advent of a major new system of health service administration makes the chapter on "Medicine and Bureaucracy" particularly topical and relevant. This section should be read by all doctors concerned with medical administration and is a classic exposition of this subject.

Although the book contains many references to British work it is disappointing to find such authorities virtually ignoring the numerous theoretical advances in general practice in the last decade. This omission mars the book. For example the writer quite correctly notes (p. 237) that "the goal of treating the whole patient and ministering to all the needs physical, psychological and social that bear on his medical problem is often lost within the restricted aims and authority of the specialist department". They even quote *The Lancet's* (1959) half serious proposal to create a whole person doctor called 'holognosologist'. They entirely omit, however, any reference that this is one of the general practitioner's main rôles and one moreover that only a generalist can fulfil. Similarly in the chapter on the cycle of family development they correctly point out that "The members of a family share a pool of genes and a common environment" as well as common modes

of thought and behaviour, and together these can decide their susceptibility to disease. However, here again they omit to make the point that these very facts justify the advantage to the patient of having one doctor normally concerned with the family as a unit. The family doctor is the main alternative name for general practitioner in this country and family physician the normal title of the generalist in Canada.

General practitioners will read with interest the analysis of the difference between them and their hospital colleagues on page 189, "In sum, the pressures in the community situation of the practitioner directs his attention to the personal needs of his patients, but may isolate him professionally, and preclude constant reference to the scientific judgement of colleagues. On the other hand, the pressures in the hospital situation of the specialist maintain his technical competence, and divert his attention from the personal needs of patients. These orientations among doctors have material consequences for their patients. For, while the mistakes of general practice often seem to arise from technical failures, the mistakes of hospital practice often do so from failures of communication".

All in all it can be said that this is the best book on medical sociology that we know.

Today's drugs 2. New Series. Specially commissioned articles from the *British Medical Journal*. London: British Medical Association. 1971. Pp. 3+204. Price £1.00.

This second volume of a proposed series of three paperback editions maintains the promise, the standard and the usefulness of the first. Nowadays advance of knowledge and the appearance of new valuable drugs is so rapid that standard textbooks of therapeutics are out of date before they appear. Even in these volumes which represent specifically commissioned articles from the *British Medical Journal*, revision has been undertaken before publication in this book form.

The first volume dealt with anti-infective agents, vitamins and drugs on the blood, and psychotropic agents and not only gave an account of the various preparations but had useful articles on the management of common conditions such as urinary infections and epilepsy.

The second volume follows a similar format. In the first section there are articles on hormones and contraceptives, and included are two on

management, one being on the treatment of thyrotoxicosis and the other, a most useful one to the practising general practitioner, on changing oral contraceptives, a prescribing problem with which he is sometimes faced.

The next section deals with cardiovascular agents and perhaps of topical interest is that on drugs for arrhythmias. In this are described the use of lignocaine and the new beta-adrenergic blocking agents.

The final section describes gastro-intestinal drugs. There is perhaps less new in this part of the book, but the articles make useful summaries. The final two subjects depart from the pattern of the description of drugs, the majority of which are in solid form. These two articles deal with fluids for intravenous infusion and solutions for intravenous feeding.

This book can be recommended. The articles are practical, not over-detailed and succinct—and should the third volume, now in course of preparation, follow the same pattern, its appearance will be as welcome as the first two.

Books Received

Illness and general practice. BENT GUTTORM BENTSEN, M.D. Universitets for Laget. Oslo-Bergen-Tronisö. 1970. Pp. 192. Price \$16. Distributed in U.K. by Cannon House, Park Farm Road, Folkestone, Kent.

Drugs, society and personal choice. HAROLD KALANT and ORIANA JOSSEAU KALANT. Don Mills, Ontario. 1971. Paperbacks. Pp. 1+160. Price \$1.95.

The Nuffield Foundation. Twenty-fifth Report. Oxford. University Press. 1971.

Medical Treatment. A textbook of therapy in four volumes. Volume Four. Edited by KENNETH MACLEAN, M.D., F.R.C.P. and GEORGE SCOTT, M.D., F.R.C.P. London. J. & A. Churchill. 1971. Pp. v + 1,073. Price £2.25.

WHO CHRONICLE, special issue on vector control. Geneva. World Health Organization. May 1971. Pp. 199+245. Price 20p.

Health education index and guide to voluntary agencies. Compiled and edited by BRIAN EDSALL. London B. Edsall & Co. Ltd. 1971-72. Price £3.75 hard cover; £2.25 soft cover.