

sample of hospital midwives, matrons and supervisors of midwives. There were 561 midwives and 169 matrons.

The staffing problem was discussed in the light of the Central Midwives Board finding that only half the qualified midwives were practising but that increased numbers of non-registered midwives wanted to return after a period of family life to part-time work.

The midwives themselves state that the work must be made more enticing by enforcing better hours, increasing co-operation between staff, giving more teaching and more opportunities for study and reducing non-nursing duties such as secretarial and menial washing work.

The matrons report that two-thirds of their establishments are not adequate for training. All want more staff and feel more financial support could be given to free nurses from non-nursing duties. Midwifery is made less attractive to practice than any other nursing jobs because of bad working conditions.

The report of the committee does express the view of the hospital maternity staff. It is an interesting record of the feelings of those actually working in the service. It is lamentable that permission was not obtained from the Society of Medical Officers of Health in time for the questionnaire to be submitted to the midwives in domiciliary practice.

**The Control of Diseases. (Social and Communicable). Second edition.**

HUGH PAUL, M.D., D.P.H. Edinburgh and London. E. and S. Livingstone Ltd. 1964. Pp. v + 538. Price 75s.

This second edition of 'Hugh Paul' is to all intents and purposes a new book, since the author has rewritten all those sections affected by the advances of knowledge in the past 12 years, years in which the world of viruses is being opened up and the science of epidemiology is broadening to include the degenerative diseases accompanying man's longer living span. Little of the original can remain.

Communicable diseases still occupy the greater part of the book, up-to-date information being given on each in a findable, readable and understandable way. Those conditions which can be related to some aspect of the environment are described in their appropriate context. Disease is looked at on a world scale, essential in days of rapid air travel, and evidence is gathered in of the similarities—and dissimilarities—in the behaviour of communicable disease in different climates and social situations.

The epidemiology of a sophisticated society is considered in the later chapters. The hygiene of air, cross-infection in hospitals and nurseries and the value of modern techniques of mass immunization are considered at length, and the section in which the epidemiology of cancer is discussed in relation to possible factors in the environment which may cause it or influence its course will be of particular interest to members of our College working in this field. It is encouraging to a young College to see recognition of its research endeavours in a work of such importance and the

studies by its working party on diabetes are considered in relation to other relevant work.

Whether this book is regarded as a source of reference for factual information at time of need, a stimulus to thought and interest, or gratification by one who likes to read clear fresh descriptive narrative, it will not fail the reader. The personality and philosophy of a medical thinker show through its pages so that the acquisition of information is made doubly enjoyable.

**World Health and History.** W. HOBSON, M.D. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1963. Pp. xii + 252. Price 45s.

It is a truism to say that health and disease have no boundaries. None the less, world communications have become so rapid that unexpected disease may be spread anywhere from any quarter of the globe, and the family doctor needs, more than ever, to understand the ecology of communicable illness.

Dr Hobson who was formerly professor of social and industrial medicine at the University of Sheffield and is now the chief of education and training for W.H.O.'s regional office for Europe writes for an educated public on the history of diseases and their effect on world health. The ground he covers is enormous and he writes with great authority in an easy style. His method is to take various diseases, and trace their history to the present day. A more pleasant way of bringing one's knowledge up to date is difficult to imagine. This work is thoroughly recommended. It is copiously illustrated, contains many little-known facts; in particular, his description of the cholera epidemics in Sheffield and Exeter and the various outbreaks of enteric fever between the wars are very well described. There is a good list of references and further reading.

**A History of The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. 1654-1963.** J. D. H. WIDDESS, M.A., L.R.C.P. & S.I. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963. Pp. xii + 255. Price 40s.

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland deserved an up-to-date history. The College had its beginning in 1654 as a fraternity of physicians and was granted its Royal Charter in 1667. It is interesting to read how its troubles with the apothecaries so closely followed the same pattern as the troubles which the Royal College of Physicians of London had had a few years earlier.

Ireland has produced some great doctors. The names of Stokes, Graves and Corrigan are well known to all. Dr Widdess has devoted considerable space to them.

This is a well-written study of a difficult subject. The reader is not, as so often happens, confused by long descriptions of the purchase and sale of buildings, of furnishings and financial transactions, but is given a peep into the life of the College during its 300 years of active life, and