

unprofitable for him, and a few articles are concerned almost entirely with these.

Discussion or comparison of individual articles is clearly not practicable or desirable; inevitably they differ much in their practical usefulness, in the quality of their content and, not least, in the manner of its presentation.

Some of the contributors have clearly found the intricacies of medicine and surgery easier to master than those of the English language. A literary editor, given the needful authority, could do a signal service to such writers and their readers by putting into plain words the thoughts and facts they cannot so express.

Principles of Epidemiology. IAN TAYLOR, M.D., D.P.H., and JOHN KNOWELDEN, M.D., D.P.H., London. J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1957, pp.viii and 300. Price 30s.

This book should be useful to those doing a hygienic course. It is written from the point of view of a medical officer of health rather than a family physician. There is as much about what one might call "endemiology" (or the study endemic diseases) as about epidemiology in the old sense. Indeed the authors intentionally leave behind its definition as "the science of epidemics" without offering anything in its place.

The reader must not be put off by the introductory chapters, heavy with medical statistics. The general practitioner will find an increasing amount to interest him in the later chapters. He will unfortunately find no distinction made between the "incubation period" of an infectious disease and the "serial interval" between primary and subsequent cases, which must surely be one of the basic principles on which future progress in classical epidemiology is based. Nor may our first president entirely agree that the technique by which he studied epidemiology in a country practice for so many years was "delightfully simple."

Challenges to Contemporary Medicine. By ALAN GREGG, New York 1956. Columbia University Press, London: Oxford University Press, pp. 120. Price 24s.

These five lectures—the Bampton Lectures in America—were delivered at the Columbia University in 1953. In them Dr. Alan Gregg, Vice-President Emeritus of the Rockefeller Foundation, gives his impression of the way that American medical practice is progressing, and, in particular, on the needs for the future. An authority himself on medical education, the author's views on this are of

great interest. He is alarmed by the length of time that it takes a student in the States to become established—seven to ten years—and makes a point that the cost of medical education is part of the cost of medical care and that any form of prepayment scheme must take this into account.

He is sure that the only solution for medicine in the States is some form of prepayment scheme and he himself favours a voluntary scheme. He points to the high cost in terms of money of medical treatment at present, and the relatively cheap cost in terms of lives saved and of invalids returning to work which would accrue from a prepayment scheme. He thinks the next turning point of our understanding of disease will be an increased emphasis on the ecological approach which will first show itself in a greater interest in convalescence and rehabilitation. This is, of course, already happening in this country. There is much wisdom packed into this little volume and much of interest to us on this side of the Atlantic.

Annals of General Practice, Vol. 2, Part 1 (March, 1957). Published by the College of General Practitioners in Australia.

This welcome periodical reflects the Australian scene, and makes a stimulating comparison for our use. A leading article presses the arguments for general-practitioner beds in district hospitals, putting the case (with natural bias) as the general practitioner sees it. It would help if the specialist's view was added, for the future depends on a happy marriage between general practitioner and specialist; the alternative being a war of conquest.

Four pages are devoted to discussion on entry to the College by examination, and on the award of fellowships. An academic article supports the Grantly Dick Read method of "producing babies" with almost religious fervour, and has unkind things to say about the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists; though the author recognises that the method is not for every mother, and provides a Small's ether machine for those not sufficiently affected by suggestion.

Another section deals with the development of the College in Australia, and has reports on the history and activities of the faculties. Studies of infective hepatitis, penicillin allergy, and anaemia, continue; and on the social side, the New South Wales Faculty held a Christmas party at which about 80 members and their ladies were present. They hope to repeat this annually.

A list of members and associates, and four book reviews, complete an interesting edition.