

These are trivial criticisms of a book which is almost uniformly good and of commendably small size. It is rightly extremely popular with medical students, and will continue to be so. The author deserves hearty congratulations for compressing so much accurate material so readably into a small space.

R. S. ILLINGWORTH.

## Relief of Human Suffering

**The Impending Medical Revolution.** By Deryck Taverner, M.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P. (Pp. 190; illustrated. £1 12s. 6d.) London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1968.

Doctors are preoccupied with diseases when their proper concern is the relief of human suffering, which the great triumphs of modern medicine have done little to alleviate. A child is saved from early diphtheritic death to suffer more in later life. The sum of human suffering is little changed. Dr. Taverner's attractive thesis leads him to suggest that diseases are not things (did anybody say they were?) but altered bodily

states—the result of interplay between environmental factors and the genetic make-up of the individual. So far so good. But then the argument takes a questionable turn. Since little can be done to improve the environment, eugenics are not particularly promising, few diseases can be cured, and people tend to get ill again anyway, it may be better to concentrate on relief of suffering. "The value of mass screening for presymptomatic disease has not yet been clearly established." Just so, but to the author "it seems probable that the early, convenient and efficient treatment of every symptom would be more widely beneficial." Even allowing for the possibility that something more than mere symptomatic treatment may be intended, this is the nearest the book comes to its revolutionary title.

If the aim of *The Impending Medical Revolution* is to be safe and unobjectionable, what of the means for its accomplishment? Here, the author descends from the sublime to the mundane (scientific method, automation) and merely parochial (reform of the N.H.S.). He considers that all health services should be combined under a single National Health Authority acting through regional and area boards. The level of care provided should depend on the requirements of the individual patient. Thus, beds would be

tied not to particular consultants but to the patient's need for intensive, intermediate, specialist, general hospital, or geriatric care—as the case might be. Resources would then be deployed to the best advantage, but much would depend on new hospital building and on reform of medical education. Unlike the recent Royal Commission, Dr. Taverner recognizes that all this costs money, which taxation alone is unlikely to provide. He proposes a State lottery. Yet his plan sounds somehow familiar—certainly more familiar than revolutionary. Can reform of hospital management really be directly related to unproved notions of the nature of disease? It seems unlikely. If our whole concept of the role of medicine in relation to illness is wrong—as it may well be—solutions must be sought in many lands and in almost every branch of human activity, and not confined to administrative reorganization of the British National Health Service.

Dr. Taverner has written two persuasive essays. One is a reflective account of suffering humanity; the other a plea for the sort of health services the Ministry of Health seems to have in mind anyway. The connexion between them is tenuous in the extreme, and based in part on a plea for more scientific objectivity.

GEORGE BIRDWOOD.

## Books Received

*Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.*

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—1. Mode of Action of Antiparasitic Drugs.** Edited by J. Rodrigues da Silva and M. J. Ferreira. (Pp. 119+x; illustrated. £3 10s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—2. Pharmacology of Reproduction.** Edited by E. Diczfalussy and A. Kovarikova. (Pp. 126+vi; illustrated. £3 10s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—3. Clinical Pharmacology.** Edited by R. K. Richards. (Pp. 113+vi; illustrated. £3 10s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—4. Mechanisms of Drug Toxicity.** Edited by H. Rašková. (Pp. 104+vii; illustrated. £3 10s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—5. The Control and Growth Processes by Chemical Agents.** Edited by A. D. Welch. (Pp. 91+vii; illustrated. £3.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—6. Drugs in Relation to Blood Coagulation, Haemostasis and Thrombosis.** Edited by G. V. R. Born. (Pp. 126; illustrated. £4.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—7. Physico-Chemical Aspects of Drug Action.** Edited by E. J. Ariëns. (Pp. 385+ix; illustrated. £5 15s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—8. Salt and Water Balance.** Edited by K. H. Beyer and V. Trčka. (Pp. 109+viii; illustrated. £3 10s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—9. Pharmacology of Pain.** Edited by R. K. S. Lim, D. Armstrong, and E. G. Pardo. (Pp. 250+vi; illustrated. £5.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Proceedings of the Third International Pharmacological Meeting—11. Immunopharmacology.** Edited by H. O. Schild. (Pp. 167+ix; illustrated. £5.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1968.

**Human Transplantation.** Edited by Felix T. Rapaport, M.D., and Jean Dausset, M.D. (Pp. 728+xvii; illustrated. \$38.50.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1968.

**Cross-Reacting Antigens and Neoantigens.** Edited by John J. Trentin. (Pp. 122+xvi; illustrated. £3 2s. 6d.) Baltimore: The Williams & Wilkins Co. 1967. U.K. distributors: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd.

**Bailey & Love's Short Practice of Surgery.** 14th edition. Revised by A. J. Harding Rains, M.S.(Lond.), F.R.C.S.(Eng.), and W. Melville Capper, F.R.C.S.(Eng.). (Pp. 1270+xi; illustrated. £4 4s.) London: H. K. Lewis & Co. Ltd. 1968.

**Éléments de Proctologie Pratique.** By Paul Dissard. (Pp. 121; illustrated. No price given.) Lyons: Simep Editions. 1968.

**Chemical Psychoses. LSD and Related Drugs.** By Leo E. Hollister, M.D. (Pp. 190+xi; illustrated. \$8.00.) Springfield: Charles C. Thomas. 1967.

**Spezielle Neurologische Untersuchungsmethoden.** Georges Schaltenbrand, H. G. Bammer, W. Börner, H. C. Hopf, M. Nadimi, and F. Schwind. (Pp. 193+viii; illustrated. DM. 58.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1968.

**The Birth of the Ego. A Nuclear Hypothesis.** By Edward Glover, M.D., LL.D. (Pp. 125. £1.) London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1968.

**Planning Clinical Experiments.** By Kenneth R. Cox, M.B., M.S.(Melb.), F.R.C.S., F.R.A.C.S., F.A.C.S. (Pp. 312+xxxii; illustrated. \$14.75.) Springfield: Charles C. Thomas. 1968.

**Perspectives in Leukaemia.** Edited by William Dameshek, M.D., and Ray M. Dutcher, Ph.D. (Pp. 302+vi; illustrated. \$12.50.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1968.

**Les Dix Premiers Jours du Nouveau-Né de Mère Diabétique.** By Jacques Picaut. (Pp. 165; illustrated. No price given.) Lyons: Simep Editions. 1968.

**Actualités Cardio-Vasculaires Médico-Chirurgicales.** 3rd in series. Edited by R. Froment, A. Gonin, and P. Michaud. (Pp. 365; illustrated. 90 F.) Paris: Masson et Cie, Editeurs. 1968.

**Éléments de Pathologie Cellulaire.** By A. Policard and M. Bessis. (Pp. 285+vii; illustrated. 57 F.) Paris: Masson et Cie, Editeurs. 1968.

**L'Hygiène des Voyages.** By François Pagès. (Pp. 124+viii. No price given.) Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 1968.

**Actualités de Physiologie Pathologique.** 2nd in series. Edited by Jean-Louis Parrot. (Pp. 200+vii; illustrated. 50 F.) Paris: Masson et Cie, Editeurs. 1968.

**An Atlas of Surgery of the Face, Mouth and Neck.** By Robin M. Rankow, D.D.S., M.D. (Pp. 292+x; illustrated. £10 12s. 6d.) Philadelphia, London, Toronto: W. B. Saunders Co. 1968.

**Le Médiastinoscopie.** By R. Sarrazin and R. Voog. (Pp. 104+viii; illustrated. 21 F.) Paris: Masson et Cie, Editeurs. 1968.

**Progress in Surgery.** Volume 6. Edited by M. Allgöwer. (Pp. 120+vi; illustrated. £4 14s.) Basel: S. Karger. 1968.

**Lydia J. Roberts Award Essays.** No editor given. (Pp. 128+v; illustrated. \$4.) Chicago: The American Dietetic Association. 1968.

**Life Assurance Medicine. Proceedings of the 9th International Congress.** Edited by M. Leffkowitz and H. Steinitz. (Pp. 386+iv; illustrated. £9 10s.) Basel: S. Karger. 1968.