

tumour may be governed by rather different mechanisms. B. and E. R. Fishers's use of labelled tumour cells for the study of influence of anticoagulants on metastasis is a case in point.

There is probably enough that is unique to this book to make it essential reading for those working in the specialist fields covered by its title. Certainly it is good medicine for armchair cancer theorists, for it records some of the difficulties that block the seemingly more straightforward approaches to the understanding of cancer.

F. J. C. ROE.

Guidance for the New House Officer

Handbook for Obstetric House Officers. By A. C. Fraser, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.O.G., and Mary Anderson, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.O.G. (Pp. 117+vii. 12s. 6d.) London: Edward Arnold. 1968.

This book aims at easing the obstetric house officer into a new discipline. His decisions can have far-reaching effects, and a concise guide to the management of emergencies and day-to-day problems should be of value. This book sets out to be that guide.

Its 10 chapters cover the whole range of likely problems, but not unexpectedly can barely touch on aetiology or differential diagnosis. Rules of management are often given, but the authors also wisely advise when to obtain the help of seniors, and stress the importance of having and following an established policy in any unit. This handbook is a useful introduction to the subject before getting to grips with formal textbooks. It is particularly valuable for the new resident with minimal senior cover.

D. L. MORRISON.

Sterilizing Equipment

Principles and Methods of Sterilization in Health Sciences. By John J. Perkins, M.S., LL.D., F.R.S.H. (Pp. 560+xii; illustrated. \$16.50.) 2nd edition, Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1968.

The new edition of Dr. Perkins's book is certainly to be welcomed, for there have been substantial changes in sterilizing techniques since 1956. As a textbook of pressure-steam sterilization, this book is extremely valuable.

It discusses, in intelligible detail, the principles on which the working of an autoclave is based, and sets out the facts from which the proper time and temperature for sterilization must be estimated. The functioning of autoclaves, both downward displacement and high pre-vacuum, are described in considerable detail, although the difficulties that have

been encountered with the high vacuum autoclaves receive scant mention. The necessary safety checks on autoclaves in use are described, though it would have been useful to have a more explicit schedule of the requirements for commissioning a new autoclave and for routine testing.

There are, in addition, long chapters on the packing of soft goods for sterilizing, and on the organization of a central sterile supply department. Curiously, there appears to be no mention of the Edinburgh preset tray system for operating-room instruments. In contrast chemical disinfection is dealt with very briefly and without any of the array of practical detail that is set out for steam sterilization; the only chemical method described at length is that for ethylene oxide gas. The chapter on skin disinfection is contributed by Dr. P. B. Price; it makes only the slightest concession to the new work on the subject published in the last 10 years: hexachlorophane may be used if the surgeon desires but should be followed by an alcohol rinse.

R. E. O. WILLIAMS.

"Revolving Door" of the Mental Hospital

The Mentally Abnormal Offender and the Law. An Inquiry into the Working of the Relevant Parts of the Mental Health Act, 1959. By Henry R. Rollin, M.D., D.P.M. (Pp. 139+xvi. Hard cover, 30s.; flexi-cover, 20s.) Oxford: Pergamon Press. 1969.

I once wrote of a book on psychiatry which was so colourless that "I longed for the author to call a spade a bloody shovel." No such demand need be made of Dr. Rollin. His happy use of a telling phrase—for example, "that the strong arm of the law (should) know what the weak hand of the psychiatrist is doing"—lends colour to a text which, packed with statistics and tables, could easily have been dry and difficult to read.

The figures bear out Dr. Rollin's thesis that there is no hard and fast rule "mad or bad" but people can well be both. A series of his patients alternated frequently between prison and mental hospital. He rightly points out that the permissive regimen and open-door hospital is unsuitable for dangerous offenders, as illustrated by the number of absconders. In this context Dr. Rollin is justifiably scathing of the value of a restriction order "which has as much substance as the paper on which it is written." He argues the case for more security hospitals. Many of the offenders were schizophrenics, and as the power of self-control of the mentally ill is likely to be impaired, clearly hospitalization on an indefinite basis, rather than a fixed term of imprisonment, is better for both public and offender. He

stresses that such units should be separate from ordinary psychiatric hospitals, as the emphasis in the latter is primarily therapeutic, whereas security is the first consideration with the offenders.

For those who like to view these problems through rose-coloured spectacles, this is not the book; but for those who like a realistic appreciation of the problem based on solid fact and scientific observation, this book will have a strong appeal.

W. LINDSAY NEUSTATTER.

Famine and Abundance

Food Resources, Conventional and Novel. By N. W. Pirie. (Pp. 208. 5s.) London: Penguin Books. 1969.

A foreword for this interesting book has been contributed by Professor C. A. Coulson, chairman of Oxfam, to which worthy organization the author is donating his royalties. Food, population, and war in Coulson's opinion are the three great, interrelated problems of our century, and food is in some ways the most important of all.

Pirie points out that the crying of "Wolf, wolf!" may have blunted the hearing of the world to warnings of imminent starvation in ever widening regions. "But there is a wolf somewhere, and it would be wise to make arrangements to cope with it before it is actually at our door." His contribution in this book is to provide information in depth for those who are prepared to think and to play their part in averting calamity. The shrewd business man, for example, is told that he is sometimes less clever than he thinks. Thus for the big business of margarine manufacture whales have been killed off so efficiently that their breeding rate has been exceeded, so that both whales and profits have almost disappeared. As much appeal, however, is made to philosophers and historians as to practical men. The author's own important work on the manufacture of protein concentrates from plant foliage gets no more prominence than the sanitary arrangements in Cambridge during the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries. It is emphasized that the problems solved in the advance of hygiene, starting with man's natural desire for cleanliness and culminating in the scientific approach of the public health officer, have been replaced by other problems. For every life saved several tons of food must be produced for consumption during the years by which life has been prolonged.

Social, medical, and technological problems tend to become inextricably intermixed. The author is to be congratulated for his erudition in blending successfully scientific facts with historical and literary allusions.

T. MOORE.

Books Received

Books noticed here may be reviewed later.

Fluorosis and Dental Caries. By Charles Dillon, D.D.S. (Pp. 170; illustrated. \$4.50.) New York: Carlton Press. 1969.

Mental Illness in Four London Boroughs. By P.R.A. Research Unit. (Pp. 62; illustrated. No price given.) London: Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association. 1969.

The Nervous System. By Peter Nathan. (Pp. 391; illustrated. 10s.) Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books. 1969.

Public Relations for Hospitals. By Harold P. Kurtz, M.S. (Pp. 150+xiii. \$8.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1969.

The Normal Human Endometrium. Edited by Professor Dr. H. Schmidt-Matthiesen. (Pp. 303; illustrated. 110s.) London: McGraw-Hill. 1969.