

should be some lack of proportion between the different sections, for these disadvantages seem to be unavoidable when the team of authors is so large. But the reader will not fail to realize and appreciate the enthusiasm and hard work that have gone to the making of the book. In this edition appear new chapters on adoption, cardiovascular surgery, pancreatic fibrosis, viral hepatitis, haemolytic disease (erythroblastosis foetalis), and the medical supervision of summer camps. Adolescence—a subject that often receives inadequate attention—is competently described, and there is a useful article on paediatric procedures.

It would be a great help to the reader if the index could be improved in the next edition, and cross-references in the text would also be welcomed. When authors are quoted there should be special care that their names are correctly spelt in the list of references. Many of the illustrations serve their purpose well, but a number (for instance, on pp. 458, 461, 483, and 485) are not good enough. The book is well produced, and will be a valuable addition to medical libraries, especially for postgraduates.

NORMAN B. CAPON.

### AMERICAN EPIDEMIOLOGY

*The History of American Epidemiology.* By C.-E. A. Winslow, Dr.P.H., Wilson G. Smillie, M.D., James A. Doull, M.D., John E. Gordon, M.D. Edited by Franklin H. Top, M.D. (Pp. 190. £1 16s.) London: Henry Kimpton. 1952.

The chapters of this book, written by four leading American epidemiologists, are expansions of their papers presented at the Twentieth Anniversary Session of the Epidemiology Section of the American Public Health Association held in New York City on October 27, 1949. The authors and the editor, in paying tribute to the pioneer work and doctrine of epidemiologists on this side of the Atlantic, express some doubt about the extent of the contribution which their countrymen have made to the sum total of knowledge in this field. The account of epidemiological researches here given, and the many illustrious names cited—Benjamin Rush, J. S. Billings, C. V. Chapin, Theobald Smith, Milton J. Rosenau, for example—clearly prove that there is ample material for a much larger work on American epidemiology, to which this little book would form the best of introductions.

Professor Winslow writes the history of the colonial era, when the wrath of God and miasma were both held responsible for epidemics of yellow fever, cholera, typhoid, and malaria, and doctors disputed (as they do in our own day) about Sydenham's "epidemic constitution" and contagion. Noah Webster, better known for his dictionary, was interested in the problem. He collected essays and letters from ten physicians, and in 1799 published a two-volume work on the *Epidemic and Pestilential Diseases* which sided with the anticontagionist majority. It is an admirable summary of the state of knowledge of the time. Professor Smillie describes the period of great epidemics in the United States (1800-75), though in so brief a space he can hardly do justice to them all. The same criticism applies to Professor Doull's chapter on the bacteriological era (1876-1920). There is only a brief reference to industrial hygiene, which the co-operation of public health experts and employers of industry have so greatly advanced in the United States. Of special interest, though incomplete, are the long list of American contributors to the aetiology of microbiological diseases, and the work of Flexner and others on healthy carriers of disease. Concerning progress in professional education (p. 83), it might have been mentioned that Welch secured the help of Sir Arthur Newsholme in planning and developing the School of Hygiene and Public Health at Johns Hopkins University. It is stated that the first epidemic of anterior poliomyelitis to be described in the United States occurred in Rutland, Vermont, in 1894, but George Colmer (*American Journal of Medical Science*, 1843, p. 248) mentions an earlier outbreak in West Feliciana, Ind., in the fall of 1841, and the disease possibly occurred in Albany in 1795.

The concluding chapter, "The Twentieth Century—Yesterday, To-day, and To-morrow," is from the pen of Professor John E. Gordon, who came as epidemiological ambassador from Harvard to help the Ministry of Health with his wisdom and friendship in the early days of the war. Readers will enjoy his masterly analysis of modern epidemiology, which he points out "should escape its still too common restriction to communicable diseases to find application in organic diseases of non-infective nature, in mental disorder, and in the problems associated with trauma."

ARTHUR S. MACNALTLY.

### THE PSYCHIATRIST AS WITNESS

*Forensic Psychiatry.* By Henry A. Davidson, M.D. (Pp. 398. \$8.) New York: The Ronald Press. 1952.

The contrasting attitudes of the psychiatrist towards his patient and of the lawyer towards his or another lawyer's client have their origin in the different objectives of the training for each profession and their very different professional usage. When two interpretations of the same evidence are seriously at variance, lack of an adequate common language often militates against mutual understanding. The lawyer often rails with good reason against the speculative explanation and excess of terminology of the psychiatrist who has been temporarily translated from the consulting-room to the court, and the latter is apt to deplore the lack of interest shown by lawyers in abstract values and the complexities of human motive. Judgment of right and wrong plays no great part in the normal relationship between doctor and patient, but it underlies the whole procedure of the criminal court, and the psychiatrist who is only an occasional visitor must adapt himself to its strange conditions if he is not to be demonstrated in cross-examination to be a vague creature who uses his *expertise* to introduce complexities where none existed before.

Dr. Davidson, as the result of long experience as an expert witness and a full appreciation of the legal point of view, is able not only to give clear-cut guidance on how to examine the patient, write the report, and answer cross-examination, but to make a real contribution towards a common language between the two professions. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the differences in procedure between British and American courts are so great that only the sections on general principles will be of use to psychiatrists in this country. The schemes for the examination of patients for different legal purposes are, however, of great value and could readily be adapted to British usage.

The differences in the penal codes, and the persistence in some States of immature, prejudiced, and somewhat experimental legislation as revealed in this book, are of great interest, as are the great variations in such matters as the power of the juvenile courts, the control of adoption, and the evidence necessary to establish the fact of intoxication. Psychiatrists in the United States are fortunate in having such a guide, but its use as a handbook for the expert witness in Britain is considerably limited by its local application.

ALEXANDER KENNEDY.

Love of the strange and rare, which sends some people to the zoo on Sunday afternoon and makes others concentrate on the small type in textbooks, is as prevalent in our own profession as elsewhere. And doctors whose taste for rarities is still unsullied by frequent contact with the commonplace will find something of interest in the latest collection of papers by Dr. Parkes Weber (and collaborators) entitled *On Naevi and Miscellaneous Subjects* (London: H. K. Lewis. 12s. 6d.). The "miscellaneous subjects," which comprise eleven of the twelve papers, include reports on unusual disorders of the skin, bone, and nervous system, and some notes on Osler indicating that he shared Parkes Weber's interest in uncommon syndromes. The book concludes with a neat lecture on epigrams—laudatory, sceptical, and critical—on medical themes.