

tionate amount of space has been given to subjects such as sleep, hypnotic states, and the experience of pain. The preclinical student should be aware of individual and cultural differences, of the difficulties connected with saying what is normal or abnormal at various ages and times, of what constitutes stress and its advantages and disadvantages, and of difficulties concerning human communication. It is a pity that these topics were not discussed in greater detail. More and fuller clinical examples would also have made the book more tempting for the preclinical student hungry for clinical material.

PETER DALLY.

Urinary Fistulae

Urologic Injuries in Gynecology. Including Vesicovaginal Fistula, Stress Incontinence and Ureteral Injuries. By Henry C. Falk, M.D., F.A.C.S. (Pp. 299; illustrated. 72s.) Oxford: Blackwell. 1964.

Now that distance travelled by jet aircraft is measured more in dollars and pounds than in miles and time it is strange to read in the foreword of this excellent little book that "the obstetric fistula of a hundred years ago has almost disappeared." In a few hours the reader in London or New York could be in Africa, where a multitude of miserable ostracized women wait from one end of the continent to the other for someone to come and repair their fistulae. It is of course correct that where standards of obstetric care are high in the more favoured countries fistulae of the urinary tract are more commonly due to gynaecological trauma. Where the standard of surgery is equally high, urinary fistulae become a rarity.

Dr. Henry Falk is one of America's foremost gynaecologists and writes from a wealth of experience of his subject. His teaching is clear, concise, comprehensive, and beautifully illustrated. He deals with general principles, covering the prevention of fistulae, their detection, and their treatment. He notes the importance of careful individual preoperative assessment and emphasizes Counsellor's view that accurate investigation and preoperative preparation are essential to success in this type of surgery. Details of what this means in care of patients are summarized.

The book opens with a historical review of the subject, and there are thirteen chapters, each with a list of references of particular value to readers anxious to study in further detail particular aspects of the subject. The book is lavishly and beautifully illustrated, and will be of particular value as a guide to surgeons working in isolation. This is unfortunately still necessary in so many parts of the world where fistulae are most common.

J. STALLWORTHY.

Backache

Backache. From Occiput to Coccyx. By Gerald L. Burke, B.Sc., M.D., F.I.C.S. (Pp. 189; illustrated. No price given.) Vancouver: W. E. G. Macdonald. 1964.

This book is quite good fun because it provides medical satire in eighteenth-century style. It is both irritating and stimulating. Therefore it should be in the hands of all who

are prepared to think again about this great disorder of man's posture—not the erect posture of the active individual who is well trained in mobility and control. Modern man's posture is so often sloppy because of his sessile habit at desks, in front of television screens, and behind the steering-wheels of motor-cars. There are also the backs of the careless labouring man, the untrained apprentice, the bored housewife, and the mindless minder of machines.

Dr. Burke's book is controversial, but there is a lot of horse-sense in his advocacy of manipulative treatment based upon proper diagnosis and carried out intelligently. His views on lesions of the intervertebral disk are debatable. He tends throughout the book to emphasize these lesions without adequate consideration of the stress problems in the spinal musculature and periarticular tissues. He pours scorn on many cherished ideas—for example, spinal sprains, kissing spines, sprung back, foraminal compression, and osteoarthritis (which he regards as a myth as the cause of pain). He rightly has some harsh things to say about psychoneurosis in relation to back-ache, and he is generally critical about the significance attached by radiologists to minor variations of structure. Strangely, Dr. Burke does not mention the shibboleth of to-day, "the slipped disk": perhaps this has not yet reached Canada. It is surprising how ready we in medicine are to accept peculiar names for something about which we are not clear. This for long has happened for such things as rheumatism and fibrositis, and the present name is similar. Burke quotes a significant phrase from Job, "What is this that darkeneth council by words without knowledge?" This book is excellently produced with beautiful illustrations.

NORMAN CAPENER.

Sensitive Chests

Sensitivity Chest Diseases. Edited by M. Coleman Harris, M.D., F.A.C.P., F.C.C.P., and Norman Shure, M.D., M.S.(Path.), F.A.C.P. (Pp. 359; illustrated. £7.) Philadelphia: F. A. Davis. Oxford: Blackwell. 1964.

This book has been compiled by a number of American authors. An attempt has been made to collect together in one volume basic information about external allergens, and to integrate this with clinical aspects of hypersensitivity chest disease. Almost a quarter of the book is devoted to a description of the distribution of allergens and the role of food, insects, and air pollution in the development of "sensitivity chest diseases." Much of the detailed environmental information is of little use outside the U.S.A.

A major criticism of this work is the absence of a critical evaluation of the numerous diagnostic and therapeutic procedures advocated. To mention but two—the interpretation of divergent results obtained from skin and bronchial-inhalation tests in the same individual, and the value of desensitization procedures as assessed by controlled trials—are highly controversial issues that can no longer be dealt with dogmatically without substantiating evidence. References to detailed studies in such fields are essential in a book of this kind, but are notably absent.

It is also surprising that many pulmonary diseases such as aspergillosis, farmers' lung, and even pulmonary tuberculosis, on which much recent work has been done, relating hypersensitivity phenomena to their pathogenesis, have received scant attention, while others in which the role of allergy is far more doubtful—for instance, allergic diseases of the coronary arteries—have been discussed in considerable detail. Nevertheless, it is gratifying to find a book which attempts to correlate immunological observations with clinical problems, and to bring together two important disciplines that have too long remained apart.

M. TURNER-WARWICK.

Human Biology

Health, Its Nature and Conservation. By F. A. E. Crew, M.D., F.R.C.P.E., F.R.S. (Pp. 201+xx; illustrated. 17s. 6d.) Oxford, London, Edinburgh, New York, Paris, and Frankfurt: Pergamon. 1965.

This book is the first volume in the Nursing Division of the Commonwealth and International Library of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Liberal Studies. As Miss Elsie Stephenson, of the Edinburgh Nursing Studies Unit, indicates in her foreword, it has been written with the educational needs of nurse, health visitor, and midwife in mind. In it man is presented as at one and the same time a "constellation" of inherited potentials, a multicellular organism, and a member of an ecological system; and disease as a disharmony in any of those systems. Professor Crew, in 200 pages of concise and lucid writing, crowds an impressive amount of accurate and interesting information into that framework. As would be expected, he describes the machinery of mitosis, meiosis, and particulate inheritance simply and clearly, but perhaps too much emphasis is placed on the few rare diseases for which there is a straightforward genetic or chromosomal explanation. Achondroplasia, Huntington's chorea, fibrocystic disease, phenylketonuria, erythroblastosis foetalis, haemophilia, mongolism, and Klinefelter's and Turner's syndromes are all dealt with in some detail. (The frontispiece consists of a photograph of an achondroplastic dwarf and a mongol.) In the same way from the point of view of the nurse and health visitor in training in the United Kingdom the section on communicable disease is also a little long, although in the world context the length is of course entirely appropriate. The focus on communicable disease is emphasized by the picture on the cover of the book, which shows an enlargement of the body louse superimposed on the body beautiful (Michelangelo's David).

After precise and informative chapters on nutrition, climate, and occupation in relation to health and disease, and useful sections on personal and public hygiene, Professor Crew concludes (again as would be expected) with a masterly account of the arithmetic of disease—a chapter on the measurement of the health of populations. In this he demonstrates with numerical illustrations how and why our death rate has declined since the middle of the nineteenth century, and how