The list of contents alone indicates the author’s bias towards psycho-dynamic explanations, and Freudian hypotheses find their way into most chapters. Other schools of thought are allowed their say, however, and learning theory is given a fair hearing. Readers with physiological or neurological interests will feel that the book has a disbalance in their disfavour. Experimental neuroses, for example, with their psychological explanations, cover 12 pages, experimental psychoses, requiring a biochemical explanation, cover two. There are few references to ethological concepts, although this is a field of rapidly growing importance, and no mention is made of the work of Konrad Lorenz in this connection. Occasionally a striking example which would form an ideal illustration of the subject matter is overlooked, as, for instance, the concept of protophrenia in discussing acquired mental defect in infancy (p. 121).

These criticisms are those of selection only, which must always be present in a personal and creative work. They do not detract from the obvious merits of the book, which will readily fertilize the seeds of “personal medicine” which Woolderg and Balint have recently sown. It will prove an excellent text-book for D.P.M. students and should be read by all psychiatrists and clinical psychologists. The best book on the subject in print today, it is likely to remain a standard University text for a long time to come.

L.R.C.H.

THE BRITISH ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF MEDICINAL PRACTICE
Medical Progress and Cumulative Supplement, 1956

The medical profession as a whole, and readers of the ‘Encyclopaedia of Medical Practice’ in particular, will have regretted the passing of Lord Horder, generally regarded as the most outstanding clinician of his time. Under his editorship the tremendous task of piloting the encyclopaedia through its second edition was completed and the new work is a landmark not only in a brilliant career, but also in medical publication.

No more appropriate choice of a successor to the editorship could have been made than Lord Cohen, whose reputation as a clinician and a diagnostician is no less brilliant than that of his predecessor’s. Although the foreword of the current edition of ‘Medical Progress’ has been written by the new editor, the choice of subjects for discussion was Lord Horder’s. This reflects, as always, as wise a catholic selection.

Part I consists of critical surveys in general medicine and surgery and in their principal specialities. The section on medicine and the law by the acknowledged expert, Dr. Robert Forbes,