In deciding whether a specific result is to be ascribed to this or that factor, or whether it may simply be a chance effect, a statistical analysis is essential. No statistician of course contends that mathematics can decide what is cause and what is effect, but that they only reveal whether two factors are more closely related than might occur by mere chance. The matter of cause and effect depends on the application of logic and biological knowledge. But the application of statistical methods to our observations is like the application of the foot-rule and the scales in the measurement of height and weight and disposes of that arch enemy of all scientific work—the general impression.

The book is, as its title implies, a discussion of the general principles of statistics as they are applied to medical observations and not a text-book on the subject, but it nevertheless shows how the simpler calculations can be made and gives information where instruction on the more advanced mathematical processes entailed may be found.

DRUG ADDICTION.

By E. W. ADAMS, O.B.E., M.D. Oxford University Press. London. 1937. Price 8/6.

As a Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health and joint Secretary of the Departmental Committee on Morphine and Heroin Addiction, Dr. E. W. Adams is well qualified to undertake a survey of this difficult problem. Dr. Adams has succeeded in compressing into a book of 150 pages a vast amount of information about addiction, with special reference to morphine and heroin, and the extensive bibliography and good index provided help to make this a most convenient and useful reference book on the subject.

Not the least interesting chapter is that on the history of narcotic drugs, from the early days of poppy cultivation by the Sumerians to the plethora of synthetic compounds of modern times. The international character of the problem is considered as well as the special difficulties of individual countries. The author emphasizes the comparative youthfulness of the great mass of the addict population in all countries, and the greater prevalence amongst men.

Most authorities agree that the genuine drug addict is almost invariably a psychopath, mostly of the inadequate personality type. A warning is sounded as to the rôle played by medical practitioners themselves in creating addiction, and Lambert is quoted as saying that whereas morphine will produce a habit in 23 to 25 days, heroin takes only 7 to 10 days. A clear account is given of the diagnosis and symptomatology of morphinism, but mention might have been made of the trophic changes in the nails which are so commonly present. The diversity of the views of the mechanism of tolerance is well illustrated as no less than nine different theories are given; similarly, the reader has a wide choice of explanations of the withdrawal symptoms.

Treatment is described under the headings of Disintoxication and Rehabilitation. Short accounts of the chief methods in use under the former heading are given, but we are allowed to form our own conclusions as to the efficacy of each.

Finally, the importance of the patient's re-education is stressed, although, wisely in a book of this size, no attempt is made to go deeply into the psychological problems involved. Those who are interested in the prevention and treatment of Drug Addiction will be grateful to Dr. Adams for the facts and figures he has collected and for his lucid presentation of modern views on the subject.

OPERATIVE OBSTETRICS.

By J. M. MUNRO KERR, LL.D., M.D., F.C.O.G. Emeritus Regius Professor of Midwifery, University of Glasgow. London. Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1937. Fourth Edition. Pp. 847 with 338 illustrations. Price 45/-.

It was in 1908—almost thirty years ago—that the first edition of Munro Kerr's "Operative Midwifery" appeared, and its publication established the Author as a leading obstetrician of international status. This status was enhanced by the appearance of two subsequent editions, the last being in 1916. In the present—the fourth—edition the title is altered to "Operative Obstetrics," and we are glad to note that it is dedicated to his British Colleagues, past and present, whereas the last edition was dedicated to his French Confrères.

As Professor Munro Kerr has relinquished the Regius Chair in Glasgow this work can be regarded practically as his final word on the subject which he has so much adorned, and it therefore is an important publication, not only as summarizing his own views and vast experience, but as a general and critical review of this branch of obstetrics. He has had the assistance of Dr. Donald McIntyre and Dr. D. Fyfe Anderson, both of Glasgow, while Dr. Rowden of Liverpool is responsible for the description of pelvic and cephalic radiography.

The fact that this edition comprises 847 pages of a larger size than the 725 pages of the previous edition indicates the degree to which the subject has extended, and this is appreciated by the author when he remarks in the preface ". . . . to do the subject justice, the work had to be rewritten," while later he summarizes the whole subject by saying "Herein lies the complexity of Obstetric practice—the knowing *when* and *how* to interfere." It is a problem that has perplexed many of us.

The arrangement of the work is, as in previous editions. After a general discussion on dystocia the various factors responsible for that condition, such as faults in the powers, the foetus or the passages, are discussed exhaustively in 17 chapters, while consideration of the indications for, and the technique of individual operations, occupies the rest of the book. The illustrations are numerous and clear, and many new ones have been added in this edition.

By his numerous references Professor Munro Kerr demonstrates how well he has kept abreast of the mass of current obstetric literature, and his method of putting such references as footnotes to individual pages makes for easy reading, while it avoids the long lists, so often seen in foreign books, at the ends of chapters. The index is comprehensive, but, as so many authors and papers have been referred to in the text, it is perhaps a pity that a separate Author's index was not included.

Regarding the text in general, the author's concern for the well-being of the mother and child is evident in every page, and all his considerations are influenced by these two factors: in this way his previous monograph on "Maternal Mortality and Morbidity" is freely drawn upon with

advantage. Another point that emerges is his consistent conservatism and his desire to avoid operation if this is possible and advisable.

The clarity of the text and the good illustrations make the steps of the various operations easy to follow: while the discussion of the pros and cons of alternative methods of treatment and the inclusion of statistics from the main clinics in Britain, America, and Europe are of great value.

The book is essentially one for the post-graduate reader, and its value can be appreciated only by those who have a background of practical obstetrical experience. But to such, and especially to the specialist obstetrician, it represents nothing short of a valuable possession to which reference may be made, and seldom in vain, regarding the appropriate management of cases of doubt or difficulty.

It will for long remain a standard book of reference, probably the best in the English language, and will reflect the greatest credit on its distinguished writer and on the Glasgow school with which he was associated for so long.

The illustrations, type and general format of the volume are on the high level that one would expect from the publishers.

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

By F. W. W. GRIFFIN, M.A., M.D., B.Ch.
Oxford University Press, London, E.C.4.
203 pp. 1937. Price 7/6 net.

The perusal of this book was begun with a prepossession in its favour, impressed by the bibliography, upwards of 270 references, text-books and articles in many languages, all of which the author has presumably read or consulted. This conveys no implication of offensive scepticism, for notwithstanding the realization that such an attack upon the literature must have been the work of many years, the possibility of the achievement is supported by frequent excerpts in the text. But we confess that we nearly threw down the book in despair and disgust on reaching page 27, where the author deploring the pathetic sight of "young men in training for sports plodding along with their chests contracted so that