The Other Side of Medical Care, Carol Flemming. New Approaches to Care Series. Pp. ix + 113, illustrated. Macmillan Education, Basingstoke, 1986. £13.50 (hardback), £4.95 (paperback).

This book is the fifth in the series entitled 'New Approaches to Care'. This series aims to demonstrate the individuality of patients, regardless of age or diagnosis, and hence the responsibility of those caring for them, to ensure that not only do they receive high quality care, but also their self respect and dignity are maintained. Each book deals with a specific category of patients; children, the old, mentally ill, surgical patients, and now those with medical conditions. The author, an experienced ward sister, explains that, while nursing is as old as illness itself, new knowledge, research in nursing and an increase in professional self-confidence have combined to produce a situation where the nurse has more to offer the patient than ever before.

The book progresses by using small case histories of patients with a wide range of medical, psychological or social problems and nursing needs. These are used to show how nursing action was, or could have been, used to provide care, comfort and, frequently, physical improvement.

This is an easy book to read and, as such, could be given to new entrants to nursing (or indeed medicine) to help them realize that, while high technology is not to be despised, nursing is essentially the interaction of nurse with patient, both as ideosyncratic individuals.

Line drawings are scattered throughout, illustrating patients and nurses; apart from their function in breaking up the text, they have little value.

References at the end of each chapter and addresses of patient support societies at the end are useful. Nevertheless, this is an expensive book for its size (111 pages including the drawings) and not likely to be bought by many nurses.

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The Oxford Companion to Medicine, 2 vols, edited by John Walton, Paul B. Beeson and Ronald Bodley Scott. Associate editors and principal contributors S.G. Owen and Philip Rhodes. Pp. xxii + 1524, illustrated. Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1986. £55.00 set of 2 vols.

There have been, and are, any number of dictionaries of medicine but the Companion is unique as the medical equivalent of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The entries range from short definitions to about 150 weighty contributions on major topics ranging from aerospace medicine and art in medicine to death, dying and the hospice movement, history of medicine, public health in the USA and women in medicine. There are over 1000 biographies of medical men and women who have attained distinction or notoriety in medicine and other walks of life. The Editors (sadly Sir Ronald Bodley Scott did not live to see the finished product) and contributors are to be congratulated on a splendid book. Notwithstanding its size it is very much more difficult to put

down than to pick up. Our review copy will prove an invaluable addition to our Editorial office library.

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Primary Anaesthesia, edited by Maurice H. King. Oxford Medical Publications. Pp. ix + 169, illustrated. Oxford University Press, Oxford, Delhi, Kuala Lumpur, 1986. £7.95.

This book was produced by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation in conjunction with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kenya. It is an unusual book in that the senior editor, Maurice King, is a community physician, not an anaesthetist. However, his supporting cast of seven includes six anaesthetists and one surgeon. It is also different in that the chapters are not written by individuals. In addition there are 24 other people cited as contributing to the text – it seems that the book has been produced by the committee. The book is aimed at a very wide audience, all doctors who are working in the developing countries, their paramedical and medical administrative colleagues. The committee's succinctly stated aim is: 'to improve the quality of anaesthetic care wherever it is least adequate'. The book will certainly help to achieve this; however because it is written for people of widely differing educational backgrounds, the level of English used will mean that it will be almost incomprehensible for the majority of anaesthetic assistants. The committee would have been better advised to produce two books; one for the medical personnel and the other for the paramedical and administrative staff. It is however a worthwhile addition to the anaesthetic literature and should be available in all the operating theatres in the developing countries. It should be recommended for all doctors who are going to work in the Third World and I am sure anaesthetists in training in the developed world will benefit from the book. Finally, the committee are to be congratulated on producing an excellent book at impressive value for money.

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Psychopharmacology of Sexual Disorders, edited by Mark Segal. Biological Psychiatry – New Prospects: 4. Pp. ix + 171, illustrated. John Libbey, London, Paris, 1985. £26.00, US \$46.00, FF345.

This book is based on papers originally presented at an international conference and now updated and expanded. The book is divided into two sections, one on basic sciences and the other on clinical aspects. In the basic sciences section