

Miller's brilliant quoted summary of Prinshorn's views directs those who are more concerned with the individual than with statistics to the latter's works especially to his Psychotherapy. Horney's views have been somewhat modified in her most recent book but they show a refreshing departure from orthodoxy.

This book is stimulating and helpful especially to those whose interest in the individual is paramount, in addition it is comprehensive in spite of being short and is always readable.

S.M.W.

#### VITAL STATISTICS AND PUBLIC HEALTH WORK IN THE TROPICS

By P. GRANVILLE EDGE, O.B.E., D.Sc., Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1947. Pp. 265. Price 15s.

This is a most readable, instructive and entertaining account of vital statistics in relation to tropical populations. It deals with the importance of keeping health records, with the difficulties that native beliefs and superstitions may put in the way of obtaining such records, and with the methods that knowledge and experience have shown to be of value in approaching primitive peoples. Methods both orthodox and unconventional for estimating populations are discussed. A chapter on health records then follows with many interesting observations on how the superstitions associated with conception, pregnancy and childbirth may adversely influence such work. Similar chapters on sickness records and death registration are given. The importance of the nomenclature of diseases, especially in medical reports and statistical surveys, is discussed; and the necessity for unambiguous and accurate reporting is stressed. In the last chapters the value of vital statistics not only to provide knowledge necessary for the efficiency and smooth running of a health administration but also to provide the necessary administrative and sanitary sign-posts to further development are discussed. There is also a good bibliography and subject index given. Finally there is an interesting appendix on the development and genealogy of vital statistics in general. The book is well written, moderately priced and of convenient size. It is singularly free from typographical errors and it is well printed and bound. It will obviously be read by all vital statisticians, but over and above this it should have

a wide appeal; and no one interested in tropical health or working with tropical peoples should omit to read it. It is no 'dry-as-dust' account of vital statistics and, while it gives a clear and direct account of the essential recording necessary to understand the health of primitive populations, it is, at the same time, packed with fascinating observations and general comments on native customs that give it an entertainment value as admirable as its technical excellence.

#### MEDICAL DISEASES IN TROPICAL AND SUB-TROPICAL AREAS

The War Office. 8th Edition. His Majesty's Stationery Office, London. 1947. Price 7s. 6d.

The eighth edition of this work follows the form of the previous editions in that adequate accounts of the commoner conditions encountered in the Tropics are given under an alphabetical arrangement of diseases. Such an arrangement may have certain disadvantages in the systematic presentation of diseases but it has the advantage of giving the practising physician in the field a ready means of reference to any condition about which he may wish to read. In this new edition chapters have been added on infective hepatitis, nutritional diseases, tropical eosinophilia, the sulphonamide drugs and D.D.T. On the other hand, certain related conditions, which were previously separated, have now been brought together under single headings. In addition, new advances in knowledge have been incorporated into some of the older chapters and the result is that a first-class handbook has been produced which will maintain the valued position that previous editions have deservedly earned. At the same time the pace of modern advances in medical knowledge has so far outstripped the facilities for printing, in these days of delays, that certain of the more recent discoveries appear under-emphasized. For example, about 12 pages are devoted to the treatment of malaria but less than one of these is given to paludrine.

The book contains very few typographical errors and the printing and binding are excellent. In fact it is printed throughout on art paper which must be the admiration and envy of many less fortunately placed authors and publishers struggling to conform with the economy standards of today.

F.M.