

## Books received

- Biological Interfaces: Flows and Exchanges.* Proceedings of a Symposium sponsored by the New York Heart Association. Pp. 326, illustrated. Boston: Little, Brown; London: J. & A. Churchill, 1969. £3 5s.
- Spontaneous Pneumothorax.* By D. A. KILLEN and W. G. GOBBEL. Pp. 289, illustrated. Boston: Little, Brown; London: J. & A. Churchill, 1969. £6 5s.
- The New Dimensions of Medicine.* By A. NORTON. *Twentieth Century Studies* (Edited by DONALD TYERMAN). Pp. 288. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1969. £2 10s.
- Acro-Dystrophic Neuropathy.* By J. D. SPILLANE and C. E. C. WELLS. Pp. 109, illustrated. London: Oxford University Press, 1969. £2 10s.
- Central Pain: A Neurosurgical Survey.* By V. CASSINARI and C. A. PAGNI. Pp. 192. Boston: Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1969. £3 3s.
- The Hypertensive Vascular Crisis. An Experimental Study.* By F. B. BYROM. Pp. 131, illustrated. London: William Heinemann Medical Books, 1969. £1 10s.
- Anovulatory Infertility.* By D. FERRIMAN. Pp. 114, illustrated. London: William Heinemann Medical Books, 1969. £1 5s.
- Endocrine Aspects of Diseases Processes.* Edited by G. JASMIN. Pp. 456, illustrated. London: William Heinemann, 1969. £10 5s.
- A Clinical Guide to Intravenous Nutrition.* By P. C. ALLEN and H. A. LEE. Pp. 174. Oxford and Edinburgh: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1969. £2 5s.
- Removable Intracranial Tumours.* By L. OLIVER. Pp. 168, illustrated. London: William Heinemann Medical Books, 1969. £2.

- Studies in Clinical Enzymology.* By D. P. MULLAN. Pp. 238, illustrated. London: William Heinemann Medical Books, 1969. £2 2s.
- Modern Trends in Obstetrics.* Edited by R. J. KELLER. Pp. 370, illustrated. London: Butterworths, 1969. £3 15s.
- Fears and Phobias.* By I. MARKS. Pp. 302. London: William Heinemann Medical Books, 1969. £2 5s.
- Depression. Clinical, Experimental and Theoretical Aspects.* By A. T. BECK. Pp. 370. London: Staples Press, 1969. £3 5s.
- Modern Trends in Gynaecology.* Edited by R. J. KELLER. Pp. 274, illustrated. London: Butterworths, 1969. £3 4s.

### New Editions

- Brain's Clinical Neurology.* Revised by R. BANNISTER. Third edition. Pp. 436, illustrated. London: Oxford University Press, 1969. £3 (paperback, £2 2s).
- Pye's Surgical Handicraft.* Edited by J. KYLE. Nineteenth edition. Pp. 820, illustrated. Bristol: John Wright, 1969. £3 5s.
- Shoulder Lesions.* By H. F. MOSELEY. Third edition. Pp. 318, illustrated. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1969. £12.
- Recent Advances in Neurology and Neuropsychiatry.* Edited by the Late LORD BRAIN and MARCIA WILKINSON. Eighth edition. Pp. 252, illustrated. London: J. & A. Churchill, 1969. £3.
- Disorders of Voluntary Muscle.* Edited by J. N. WALTON. Second edition. Pp. 941, illustrated. London: J. & A. Churchill, 1969. £10.

## Book reviews

### Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity

By ERVING GOFFMAN. Pp. 173. London: Pelican Books, 1968. 5s.

### Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates

By ERVING GOFFMAN. Pp. 336. London: Penguin Books, 1968. 8s.

### Social Psychiatry in Practice

By MAXWELL JONES. Pp. 183. London: Pelican Books, 1968. 5s.

Cripples and Jews, negroes and homosexuals, blind people and ex-mental patients share one important feature—they commonly possess a stigma in the eyes of society. A stigma is an attribute which is deeply discrediting. This may concern blemishes of the body, of individual character, or membership of an unpopular social group. Stigmatized individuals are not accorded the respect and regard which most people regard as their due, and engage in many social manoeuvres to cope with their diminished acceptability to society. Similarly, normal people themselves behave in stereotyped ways towards people who appear to have a blemish. *Stigma* is a brilliant and penetrating analysis of the social processes which come into play when stigmatized and normal people meet face to face. These processes are closely allied to certain problems of prejudice, that pervasive source of contemporary pathology. Professor Goffman's lucid essay is definitive reading for all students of human nature.

*Asylums* is a much less mature work but worth reading despite its lack of balance and perspective. The book is a collection of four essays about the kind of life led in institutions which are insulated from the outside world, be they monasteries, ships, concentration camps, gaols or mental

hospitals. Special consideration is given to life in mental hospitals, based partly on the author's experience of living with patients for a year in St Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D.C. A clear outline is presented of the characteristics of total institutions, the way they appear to inmates and staff, and the ceremonies which bind inmates and staff together. The social course of mental patients is outlined before, during and after their stay in hospital. The flourishing under-life of hospitals and prisons is drawn meticulously. Finally the author tries to show how the care provided by mental hospitals falls short of that one would expect from a medical ideal. Throughout this book the discussions of general themes are excellent, but are hopelessly biased and naive on psychiatric topics. ECT is equated with physical assault, and functional illness is not understood. The view is taken that admission to a mental hospital is simply a punishment for social misdeeds and not the consequence of mental disorder.

*Social Psychiatry in Practice* is also uneven in quality. Dr Maxwell Jones deals with the social environment of the psychiatric patient and his family, and discusses this both in hospitals and in the community. Relationships of psychiatric hospitals to their communities are well described, with a succinct summary of the different arrangements that are possible. Equally valuable is a chapter on social psychiatry in prisons, which reviews experimental work on the treatment of offenders. Critical faculties tend to fade, however, in the sections on therapeutic communities and on training. Therapeutic communities are rightly espoused as places for social learning, but the question of which patients these are suitable for is hardly raised, let alone the problem of evaluation of results. The usefulness of living learning experiences is frequently asserted but not tested.