We Are Not Alone: Learning to Live With Chronic Illness. Sefra Kobrin Pitzele. Pp. iv + 306, illustrated. Thompson & Co, Minneapolis, 1985. \$14.95.

It comes as something of a shock to discover a third of the way through this guide that its author and her husband had agreed to a mutual divorce. Ms Pitzele had developed disseminated lupus erythematosus; the aim of her writing was to boost the morale of others with chronic disability, and given the somewhat narrow focus (she deals only with locomotor diseases) her practical common sense and positive attitude born of personal involvement should ensure success. She writes easily and informatively about the frustrating uncertainties of the early stages of illness when diagnosis is often so difficult; about the transition from health to sickness and its accompanying grief and anger; about relationships with family (children especially), friends, and the professionals and carers on whom the sick person may increasingly have to rely. There is a great deal of down-to-earth discussion of coping – with pain, stress, illness, disability, depression, sexuality; and there is plenty of advice about adapting to

illness, both mentally and physically, with a long chapter on aids to daily living, another on practical matters such as rights and finances, and an Appendix giving lists of agencies and services.

In spite of the gravity of the subject the tone is light-hearted and optimistic, and there is never a hint of the intermittent misery which all sufferers from chronic illness must feel. Unfortunately much of the factual information is not applicable to a British audience; this is a pity because Ms Pitzele's message needs to be read by as many sufferers as possible – and doctors would benefit too. Perhaps a publisher in this country could be tempted. If so a new edition would greatly benefit from tighter editing to remove a certain amount of repetition, together with the embarrassing poems, the irrelevant cartoons, and numerous split infinitives.

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Books Received

Advances in Pineal Research: 1, edited by Russel J. Reiter and Michal Karasek. Pp. 238, illustrated. John Libbey, London, Paris, 1986. £25.00, US\$44.00, FF325.00.

An Autumn Life: How a Surgeon Faced His Fatal Illness, Ethel Helman. Pp. 96. Faber, London, Boston, 1986. £2.95.

Davidson and Passmore Human Nutrition and Dietetics, Eighth edition, R. Passmore and M.A. Eastwood. Pp. v + 666, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £30.00 (cased), £20.00 (paper).

The ECG Made Easy Third edition, John R. Hampton. Pp. iii + 95, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York. 1986. £2.75.

Flagyl: The Story of a Pharmaceutical Discovery, J.A. McFadzean. Pp. 117, illustrated. Parthenon Publishing, Camforth, 1986. £9.95.

Mathematical Methods in Medicine, Part II: Applications in Clinical Specialities, edited by D. Ingram and R.F. Bloch. Handbook of Applicable Mathematics Series. Guidebook 4. Pp. xxiii + 514, illustrated. John Wiley, Chichester, New York, Brisbane, Toronto, Singapore, 1986. £29.95.

Proceedings of the 15th European Conference on Psychosomatic Research, edited by J. Hubert Lacey and D.A. Sturgeon. Pp. xii + 372, illustrated. John Libbey, London, Paris, 1986. £35.00, US\$62.00, FF450.00.

Resuscitation: Care of the Critically Ill, Second edition, David K. Brooks. Pp. x + 454, illustrated. Edward Arnold, London, 1986. £72.50.

The Work of WHO, 1984–1985: Biennial Report of the Director-General to the World Health Assembly and to the United Nations. Pp. xvi + 268, illustrated. World Health Organization, Geneva, 1986. Sw.fr.45.00.