

seeking higher honours, this virile little volume packs into its 450 pages a systematic approach to medical practice without which our efforts would be sadly wasted.

This book was never intended as a textbook of medicine; true to the intentions of its original authors, it still adheres to the principle of stressing, above all things, the simple but careful steps that the clinician should take in his investigation of the human problem facing him. It is this approach to the patient that is all too easily forgotten in the midst of the increasingly complex diagnostic features of contemporary medicine, and it is in reminding us, throughout this book, to consider the real basis of clinical investigation, namely the details of history taking and the critical observation of the patient, that the authors perform their greatest service.

Such a guide is indispensable to the student, whose whole future depends on the quality of his first lessons by the bedside; it is also a gentle reminder to all practitioners not to ignore the obvious, nor to take unwarranted short cuts which seldom save time in the long run. To those who choose to pursue their medical studies for higher examinations or who are returning to clinical medicine, this book is excellent both for the quick revision which is required initially and for helping to retain a stable and simple outlook on medical practice, at a time when so much knowledge has to be acquired.

The text of this edition has been substantially revised and together with the progress already made in the last edition, the style is now contemporary and pleasantly readable. The detailed revision of the neurological section is excellent and the new illustrations here are a great improvement on those published previously. Equally satisfactory are the additions and alterations made to the chapter on the cardiovascular system, and the inclusion of greater detail in the interpretation of electrocardiograms should be of considerable value. Altogether the many improvements of this edition will give *Clinical Methods* new life and enhance its already well established reputation.

What has this book to offer the industrial medical officer? Certainly this is primarily a clinician's guide, but to those medical officers whose duty it is to protect employees in the toxicological field or who are engaged in the routine inspection of employees as part of a positive health scheme, this book still carries its important message. Routine investigations and examinations are useless if the clinical methods employed become in any way sloppy and ill-defined. Here then is the industrial physician's conscience for scrupulous attention to those standards which he must set himself in his work amongst the potentially healthy members of society. In addition this book will provide him with most of the details of those techniques which he can well employ to advantage in the medical centre of his own particular industry.

P. R. BOYD

National Coal Board Medical Service: Research on Medical and Cognate Problems. Annual Report, 1955. (Pp. 19.) London: The National Coal Board.

This annual report for 1955, produced in a smaller

format than that for 1954, appears in Cambridge blue—*e tenebris lux*, as the motto on the crest on the cover puts it. The contents, however, follow the main lines for the previous report and indicate the extent of the National Coal Board's research interests. These range from the accuracy of the description of jobs on death certificates to miners' rescue breathing apparatus; from field surveys of pneumoconiosis to the physiological and psychological effects of work in hot and humid atmospheres; and from dermatitis and epidermophytosis in coal-miners to lung and bladder cancer in coke-oven workers. The cognate problems include statistical studies of the factors affecting attendance, investigation of compensatable accidents, and the mobility of mining populations. Some of the research described in this report has been carried out by outside organizations receiving financial and other assistance from the National Coal Board. This is clearly indicated in the text and references to published work are given under the appropriate sections.

Certain important administrative changes are described. Two new committees concerned with human problems and technical research and development are expected to lead to an increased interest in research in these fields and the replacement of the Interdepartmental Research Committee by a new Advisory Committee on Human Problems under the Board member for science and the medical service should ensure coordination of these services. The report ends with a list of the members of the four advisory panels on epidemiology, industrial medicine, physiology, and psychology.

I. T. T. HIGGINS

Surgery of the Hand, 3rd ed. By Sterling Bunnell. (Pp. xv + 1079; 1047 figures, 9 colour plates. £7 7s.) London: Pitman Medical Publishing Co. 1956.

There is now widespread recognition that work in this field demands special study and application if worthwhile results are to be obtained. All over the world there has been a general improvement in hand surgery, especially over the last 10 years. Much of this progress is due to the dissemination of knowledge and experience gained by such pioneers as Dr. Sterling Bunnell. It is fitting, therefore, that we should welcome the third edition of Dr. Bunnell's book. First published in 1944, and appearing again in 1948, it now emerges in a larger and more complete form, though retaining its original format and style.

The book is a complete treatise on all aspects of disease and injury of the upper extremity, set against a background of the relevant anatomy, physiology and pathology. Every conceivable aspect of the subject receives thorough and complete consideration. Each procedure is adequately illustrated by case notes and diagrams or photographs; a complete bibliography is appended. Thus the book can be described, without irreverence, as the "Bible" of hand surgery. It is certain that anyone whose work involves the surgery of the upper limb cannot possibly be fully equipped if they have not read it.