training of ambulance crews is a recurring theme throughout and one hopes this plea will fall on fertile ground.

In the second part of the book in which the author turns his attention to other accidents including mountain, cave, water, and industrial situations he is on less sure ground. I do not think I am being unduly parochial in criticizing Dr Snook for giving too little credit to occupational medicine. Before 1955 the coal and petroleum industries had, for example, designed and built ambulances on much the lines he is now advocating. Most large factories, chemical plants, and oil refineries in this country have well organized rescue services which are given only a passing reference. In a section on the treatment of chemical poisoning there is no mention of the National Poisons information centres in London and elsewhere, although the telephone numbers are given in Appendix 4. The list of chemicals likely to be encountered on the roads is very brief. The Draeger multi-gas detector kit, although it may be used to determine the concentration of known gases, is not designed to identify unknown hazards; its use is therefore likely to be of little value in these circumstances.

The illustrations, many in colour, are on the whole excellent, but there is no good illustration of the Tynemouth spinal splint. Many of the more gory colour photographs could safely be omitted because they do not serve any useful purpose, but the line diagrams are of a very high standard. I doubt the need for so much detail on tracheostomy and transfusion techniques which are procedures best learnt by practical experience. The suggestion of spending time with an anaesthetist to learn the techniques of tracheal intubation, intravenous infusion, and resuscitation is much more to the point.

The book is well printed but the format rather cumbersome for what is essentially a work for ready reference. The index is comprehensive and the appendices contain useful lists of books and addresses for the purchase of equipment, etc. One hesitates to criticize the poor use of English because the enthusiasm of the author for his subject shines through all the split infinitives, but occasionally bad grammar does interfere with understanding. This book deserves a second edition with fewer illustrations and the text rewritten in a concise style more suited to the subject.

W. M. DIXON


Recent medical manpower projections suggest that in ten years' time we will still be as dependent in the National Health Service upon overseas doctors as we are today. These projections were made before the recent report of the Merrison Committee and it may be that the doctor/patient ratio in a decade will be even higher than the projections predict. In many branches of medicine, manpower shortage has been minimized by delegating increasing responsibilities to non-medical colleagues. In the United States, physicians' assistants are being trained to improve the position in primary care, and laymen and women are now prepared in periods as short as three months for specific clinical functions. In many parts of the world in which doctor shortage is endemic, nurses play an increasingly important role; the attachment of health visitors and district nurses to general practice in Britain has created an interest in the primary care team.

In Russia none of this is new. This WHO Public Health Paper describes the origins of the feldsher in 1872. After the October revolution it was hoped for a while that all medical care could ultimately be provided by fully trained physicians. When this hope had not been realized by the 1950s, training programmes were expanded and there are now in USSR something of the order of 200 000 feldshers in primary care, 20 000 feldsher...