Common Happenings in Childhood. By Sir G. Frederick Still, K.C.V.O., M.A. Cantab., Hon. LL.D. Edin., F.R.C.P. Lond. London: Oxford University Press (Humphrey Milford). 1938. (5s. net.)

The author commences his preface to this little book with the following statement:—"I am not very sure whether this volume consists of essays, or studies, or stray thoughts. I rather fancy it is something of all three." This summarizes the contents admirably.

There are eight of these very readable essays dealing respectively with crying, laughing, temper, tiredness, appetite, fears and antipathies, sleep and school.

Sir Frederick's great experience turns a searchlight on each of these subjects and there is none whose experience of children is so great that he will learn nothing from the views presented.

Can Psychology Help? By Eleanor A. Montgomery, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S. London: Rich & Cowan, Limited. 1938. (3s. 6d. net.)

Many people in these days seem to believe that "psychology" is the royal road to health and happiness, and some of them, recognizing their own mental instability, ask their physician to recommend literature on the subject. The request is usually, and wisely, declined, but this small book is on the whole by far the best answer to it which we have come across, and is refreshingly different from most of its class. Even a morbidly introspective neurotic patient could get no harm from it, and most practitioners see several patients every week to whom it would give great and lasting help. It relates simple psychological facts to practical philosophy and daily life in a thoroughly healthy way, and, though there is obviously wide knowledge and experience behind it, there are no technical terms and the name of Freud is not even mentioned. The four chapters on how we take life—the superficial and reluctant way, the anxious way, the resistant way, and the acquiescent way—contain much wisdom and enlightenment for any honest person, neurotic or otherwise,
the whole tone of the book is such that readers will be stimulated, not to further abstract study or unhealthy self-absorption, but to a more constructive and hopeful ordering of their own mental lives.

The Construction of Vulcanite Applicators for Applying Radium to Lesions of the Buccal Cavity, Lips, Orbit and Antrum. By Desmond Greer Walker, M.A., M.Dent.Sc., M.B., B.Ch. 1938. London: Published for the Middlesex Hospital Press by John Murray. (5s.)

The author, as Dental Registrar at the Middlesex Hospital, has had three years' experience of making applicators for the treatment of various lesions, mainly of malignant type, which can be dealt with by local methods. In this monograph he gives a detailed account of what has been done, and discusses how applicators may be adapted to the various sites under consideration. These comprise the buccal cavity, including the lips, the orbit, and the antrum. From the descriptions given, as well as the very numerous photographs, an excellent idea may be obtained of how such problems may be approached. Some brief physical notes on radium occupy five pages at the beginning of the book, but it is written purely from the point of view of the dentist who is called upon to collaborate with the radiotherapist. At the same time it emphasizes how many cases can be dealt with by efficient local application of radium, and also forms an interesting record of co-operative endeavour. Lead is largely used to protect surrounding tissues but we feel that distance must usually be the most suitable way of safeguarding parts not under treatment. The methods described are fairly elaborate, and we feel that those who have not such facilities for carrying them out should not be discouraged from the treatment of buccal and other lesions, since applicators which are both comfortable and accurate may be constructed without the use of vulcanite. The work represents a valuable record which will be of interest to all who work with radium.

Heart Disease and Pregnancy. By Crighton Bramwell, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., and Edith A. Longson, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. London: Oxford University Press. 1938. (8s. 6d. net.)

This book, apart from definite and intrinsic value from the point of view of its title, is almost a complete, if short, introduction to present-day cardiology for the general practitioner; and in that alone it is valuable. It is essentially practical in treatment and "gets right
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down to the little pitfalls that arise in the every-day application of cardiology. As regards pure cardiology, however, on two points especially it is not altogether clear; first, the tangible one of the assessment of venous overfilling in cases of heart failure; second, the more subtle point of when, in the authors' opinion, a heart failure case has recovered sufficiently to be fit for operation. This latter point may, of course, vary from case to case, but it, and the methods of treatment used to that end, are nowhere detailed.

After reading the book, the final impression is that of a well documented and satisfying assessment of the immediate risks of pregnancy in heart cases. The more difficult question of the ultimate effects on the heart is not so clearly dealt with. The authors make a valiant attempt; but, as they admit, circumstances make the gathering of relevant facts exceedingly difficult, and the reader is left with a less satisfied feeling as regards this section. This is more the pity, for as regards this subject, "advice to those about to marry,"—or about to become pregnant—is really what the general practitioner would like help with most of all. The book is full of many detailed cases dealing with findings and treatment of women with damaged hearts who are already pregnant. It seems to us that the number of these could with benefit have been reduced, in order to give space for similarly detailed cases of such women, not yet pregnant, but who wished for advice as to this. The reading of the advice which the authors might have given in a series of such cases would, we feel certain, have been an additional and considerable help to the practitioner.
Aids to Embryology. By R. H. Hunter, M.D., M.Ch., Ph.D., M.R.I.A. Third Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1938. (3s. 6d. net)

The Author has added to this recent edition, a new chapter on human heredity to conform with the new regulations of the General Medical Council. The other chapters have been rewritten and those on teeth and the uterus brought up-to-date. This is an excellent concentration of facts which will be invaluable to those interested in this branch, although the periodic references have been cut down to a minimum.

Hygiene. By J. R. Currie, M.A.Oxon., M.D.Glasg., D.P.H.Birm., M.A., F.R.C.P.Edin. First Edition. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 1938. (15s. net.)

A Manual of Public Health by the Professor of Public Health in the University of Glasgow of such wide experience and academic attainment is bound to have an appeal to all students of medicine.

This book is a masterly and concise description of the subject, dealt with in an interesting manner. The field covered embraces personal and community hygiene in all its aspects, as influencing the individual, from his parentage through the phases of pre-natal, infancy, school and industrial life, up to old age, with the social insurances applicable. The section dealing with food is particularly full and detailed. Under the heading of "International Health Relations," there is a novel inclusion giving a compact review on Air Raid Precautions.

A "New Hygiene," rightly described as organized preventive medicine, in its modern outlook, as applied to all living conditions, is brought to the fore. In its application as public health, due appreciation of the benefits and services rendered to the community are acknowledged.

The book deals with both English and Scots law, and has thus a wider application than to Scottish students alone. It fills a much-felt want and is the last word on the subject, being completely up-to-date.

An attempt has been made, successfully, to define concisely all that the student needs. The different sections are arranged so as to admit
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of ready reference as well as to facilitate study: the diagrams are simple and easily remembered: The index is full.

It is the soundest Manual on Hygiene we have read.

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Aids to Histology. By Alexander Goodall, M.D., F.R.C.P.Edin.
Fourth Edition. London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1938.
(3s. 6d. net.)

In common with the rest of the “Aids” series, this small volume presents a multitude of facts in the minimum of space. There is a high standard of accuracy in the information provided. The book, however, suffers from the inevitable defects of over-condensation, and the author’s style is not always simple. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that it will be of much value to students who may wish to cover a large amount of ground quickly.

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A Synopsis of Physiology. By A. Rendle Short, B.Sc., M.D., F.R.C.S., and C. L. G. Pratt, M.A., M.Sc., M.D. Third Edition.
Bristol: John Wright & Sons, Limited. 1938. (10s. 6d. net.)

The series of synopses of medical subjects to which this book belongs has a deservedly high reputation. In the third edition of the Synopsis of Physiology, Professor Short and Dr. Pratt show how an immense amount of information can be compressed into a small compass without resorting to a style of writing which is excessively staccato.

The views expressed in the paragraph on the origin and functions of the blood-platelets are perhaps unduly cautious in view of modern methods of intra-vitam staining. On the other hand, in the section on vitamins there are statements which most clinicians would regard as being sub judice. For the second-year student of medicine, a general statement regarding vitamins B₃, B₁₂, B₂, and Factor Y seems preferable to a tabulation of their physical properties. Criticism of this kind merely directs attention to the difficulty in proper distribution of emphasis which is common to all writers of synopses. Used in conjunction with one or more of classical text-books of physiology, this work will prove an invaluable asset to the student.