

Book Reviews

Reconstructive Surgery in Leprosy by Ernest P. Fritschi; xiv + 225, illustrated. 1971. Bristol, John Wright & Sons Ltd. £3.25.

All doctors working in leprosy need this book. They should get it, and read it, and keep it handy for ready reference. Dr Fritschi has brought together, within the convenient compass of 216 pages of well-illustrated text, a vast amount of very practical observations and helpful advice.

The book is intended primarily for doctors who have had some training in, and flair for, surgery, and will be especially appreciated by those who have followed short courses under expert guidance. It will remind them of salient points in operative technique that they may not have appreciated until they themselves are facing real problems on the operating table. The well-trying and classic procedures are here described, often with practical comments drawn from the author's extensive experience.

The book will also be of value to those budding surgeons who from time to time have to do more than treat series of plantar ulcers. If some of the diagrams are rather too diagrammatic and make surgery look a little too neat and easy, salutary experience (and hints and warnings scattered in the text) should make the unwary surgeon conscious of the pitfalls and problems in his path. It is practice under experienced guidance, and not infrequent—and perhaps ill-considered—surgical intervention, that will lay the foundations of knowledge, judgement, and technique.

While we cannot exactly subscribe to the statement in the "blurb" that "this book constitutes a real breakthrough in tropical medicine", it is a pleasure to commend it to readers of *Leprosy Review*. Those who constantly refer to the chapters by Brand in Cochrane and Davey's *Leprosy in Theory and Practice*, and surgeons conversant with the fine work of their French and South American colleagues, will nevertheless welcome this very practical and handy résumé of the application to leprosy of the established principles and procedures of reconstructive surgery.

The text and the diagrams are on the whole clear, but a critical revision would have eliminated the rather numerous verbal infelicities and misprints. In places, also, more precise advice could have been given regarding, for instance, the indications for operative interference; the rather bald statement "the presence of lagophthalmos", as the indication for a Gillies type of temporalis transfer, is not sufficiently helpful to the puzzled surgeon.

These quibbles apart, this is a book to buy, to refer to, and to put into the hands of the local surgeon, who has not appreciated what can be done—and what ought to be done—in the way of reconstructive surgery for the benefit of those whose preventable leprosy deformities have not been prevented.

S. G. Browne

Health, Manpower and the Medical Auxiliary by the Intermediate Technology Development Group. Published in London, 1971. £1.50.

The pivotal rôle of the medical auxiliary or paramedical worker has for years been recognized by doctors engaged in leprosy control schemes. Without them, the majority of such programmes would grind to a halt. Some developing countries, however, have been slow to see that it is quite impossible and unrealistic to imagine that health care and preventive medicine

can be provided for the mass of the people, unless recourse is had to the services of trained and supervised auxiliary workers.

This little book examines some of the parts that can be played by such auxiliaries. For most leprosy workers it is a preaching to the converted, but the chapters on "Towards an appropriate health care technology" (by Dr Oscar Gish), "Intermediate technology in medicine" (by Prof. Kenneth R. Hill), and "Using medical auxiliaries: some ideas and examples" (by Dr Katherine Elliott) all provide salutary reminders and useful suggestions to the most convinced and experienced readers.

Units, Symbols and Abbreviations—a Guide for Biological and Medical Editors and Authors. Edited by George Ellis. Published by the Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London W1M 8AE, Price 54p per copy, post free.

We draw the attention of our readers and potential authors to this guide, which embodies the recommendations of a Working Party set up at a Conference of Medical Editors held in London in December, 1968. It is practical, compact, comprehensive, and clear. With the advent of metrication, and the wider diffusion of scientific knowledge through the medium of the printed word, it is more than ever necessary that clarity and uniformity should be the hallmarks of our communicating with each other and with the outside world.

We give this booklet an unqualified welcome, and hope that all future contributors to the pages of this *Review* will buy it, read it, and use it.