

language to many old and new members of the profession. Now, following the devoted efforts of Sir Arthur MacNalty and a team of colleagues over more than a decade, here is the very book for which we have been waiting.

The production is of the highest quality, an important feature in a work which is bound to receive rough treatment. The binding is stout and arranged so that, when an entry is found, the pages do not curl back in that maddening way so typical of bigger books. (This one weighs $7\frac{1}{2}$ lb.) The paper will stand up to thumbing and the layout and type make reading easy.

The quality of the 110,000 entries is in keeping with the standard of the appearance. Definitions are so clear and precise that room has been found to include many variations on a single theme. The term 'abscess', for example, is plainly described as a "collection of pus circumscribed in a cavity produced by tissue disintegration and displacement". The general entry, however, is followed by succinct explanations of more than 200 different kinds of abscess ranging from "atheromatous abscess", "bicameral abscess" and "collar-stud abscess" to "shirt-stud abscess" and "wandering abscess".

Each main entry is followed by its pronunciation, meaning and derivation, although readers are left to find out for themselves the pronunciation of secondary entries. Where there is doubt, the simplest form of spelling is used, 'hæmospermia', for example, being preferred to 'hæmatospermia' for the condition in which "blood is discharged in the semen". Where shortening might lead to confusion, each spelling is included. 'Hæmoplast', for example, is also listed as 'hamatoplast' and 'hæmocytoblast', the actual definition appearing under the last-mentioned entry.

For those who like to know at least a little about men and women whose names have left their mark on medicine, the treatment of eponyms is satisfying. Baron von Munchhausen's connexion with his syndrome owes much to Richard Asher's historical knowledge and makes not only Munchhausen but also the entry 'come alive'. The note about Dimitri Ivanovich Mendeléeff and, then, his Periodic Law, makes light work of mendelevium, a new transuranic element announced by Seaborg in 1955. The latter, incidentally, shows how recently some of the words in this dictionary have been coined and how wide-ranging has been the search for them.

To complete this word-picture, words are included if they have any significance in medicine at all. Thus, 'circuminsular' and 'circumvolute' are defined with precision along with more obvious medical words like 'circumocular' and 'circumoral'. The only deliberate omissions are words which are obsolete or valueless; even here eponymous terms are included if they are still occasionally used in medical literature or have some historical interest. Finally, to ensure that nothing is omitted or causes obscurity, three useful appendixes provide a firm base with a list of anatomical nomenclature, a number of physico-chemical tables and specialized words used by pharmacists. The total result is a book of some 1,700 well-packed pages which will be kept up to date by cumulative annual supplements.

English-speaking readers who have close or remote connexion with medicine will wish to thank the publishers for their vision and courage in producing such a magnificent dictionary. They should see to it that all the editors of medical journals in countries in Europe and Asia who have been struggling to

present articles in the English language should be informed of what could be a great aid to them. These, and all English-speaking readers, have cause to be grateful to the editor and his distinguished colleagues for labouring so long to produce such a distinguished work. Lexicographers, as Dr. Johnson knew, are held high in national esteem. With all his outstanding contributions to medicine, Sir Arthur MacNalty may have little thought that he is now most likely to be remembered as the editor of *The British Medical Dictionary*. K. M. HAWKINS

APPLICATIONS OF SCIENCE TO PEACEFUL USES

Current Trends in Scientific Research

Survey of the Main Trends of Enquiry in the Field of the Natural Sciences, the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge and the Application of such Knowledge for Peaceful Ends. By Pierre Auger. Pp. 245. (New York: United Nations; Paris: Unesco; London: H.M.S.O., 1961.) 33s.

PROF. AUGER'S ambitious survey of the main trends of inquiry in the natural sciences and the dissemination and application for peaceful ends of such knowledge, and on the steps which the United Nations, its specialized Agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency could take to encourage the concentration of such efforts on the most urgent problems having regard to the needs of the various countries was undertaken at the request of the General Assembly of the United Nations. This survey was carried out with the assistance of a special advisory committee and on the basis of texts prepared and supplied by the several agencies and other bodies. Nevertheless, the task remains formidable and indeed forbidding, for the selection or omission of particular features must remain a matter of personal judgment which is liable to challenge, and if it is not easy to discern the precise purpose which the survey will serve, Prof. Auger is to be congratulated on the courage and judgment with which he has discharged his mandate rather than criticized for particular omissions.

The survey is in three parts. The first, which occupies some 180 out of the total 229 pages, surveys the trends of scientific research, by functional divisions rather than academic disciplines, and is preceded by an excellent introduction on the development of research and the transition from discovery to application. Here, and also in some of the separate sections, as in those on mathematics, the physical sciences, the chemical sciences and the biological sciences, Prof. Auger attempts to set forth his conclusions as to the main trends in research, but in the applied sciences this is less frequently done and more open to criticism. In the second part of the report Prof. Auger reviews very briefly the main factors which affect the organization of scientific research and the dissemination of its results, while in the third are set forth the recommendations concerning the practical steps which might be taken by the United Nations and the Agencies to concentrate effort on the most urgent problems from a general point of view. By and large these two parts may well prove the most useful feature of the survey; the second part in particular should stimulate useful discussions, though here the absence of references is something of a drawback. R. BRIGHTMAN