

cancer in brief and simple terms is glaringly exposed in the last chapter of this book. Widespread ignorance of the excellent prognosis for many patients with cancer remains prevalent, not only among laymen, but also among medical students and nurses. It should be widely publicized that certain kinds of cancer can nowadays almost certainly be cured, and that, even in the more refractory forms of the disease, up to 75 per cent of the victims can be cured if an early diagnosis is made. The need to abolish stigma and fear, which are themselves responsible for hundreds of unnecessary deaths each year, is urgent.

Awareness of this need has prompted some officials and members of the British Cancer Council, all men of high international standing, to produce this book, presumably with the object of making the necessary information available to the public. I use presumably because, unfortunately, it is not immediately apparent what audience is being aimed at. Indeed, my chief criticism of this collection of essays is that I feel it has failed to get its audience into clear focus. On the cover it states "This book . . . is designed for the ordinary reader as much as for doctors and the medical world". I doubt that it is possible to write meaningfully on this subject for both. It is therefore probably suitable as general reading for nurses and for the informed and interested layman, but does not contain enough detail on most subjects for medical students. On the other hand, some of the chapters are, I suspect, too technical for the non-specialist.

Three chapters aim at about the right level. That by R. J. C. Harris (who edits the volume) on the history of cancer research provides a lucid and interesting summary of the field; it is marred only by a liberal spattering of complex chemical formulae which I would guess to be meaningless to most ordinary people. The account of the role of surgery in the management of cancer by Sir John Bruce has the down-to-earth, factual incisiveness one might expect of a surgeon. The most readable chapter of all is that on the social context of cancer by John Wakefield; intelligent, precise and thought-stimulating. Writing about lung cancer caused by cigarette smoking, for example, he points out that the total deaths in Britain every year are equivalent to the annihilation of every man, woman and child in Ilfracombe, Llangollen, Minehead and Penrith. "If it were some mystery virus that wiped out nearly 30,000 people each year, the public clamour for action by medical and governmental authorities would be instant and deafening." These are the sort of words that strike home hard.

There is a great deal to interest in the rest of the book, ranging from factual outlines of radiotherapy and chemotherapy, to accounts of the basic nature

and mechanism of cancer and some speculation on the control of the disease in the future. I hope many people will buy and read this book, because although it could have been done a little better, it is still likely to be one of the best books on cancer available to the general public. Moreover, the authors have donated their royalties to a worthy cause—the British Cancer Council—whose altruistic motives are outlined in the first chapter of the book.

JOHN PAUL

Sound and Hearing

Foundations of Modern Auditory Theory. Vol. 1. Edited by Jerry V. Tobias. Pp. xv+446. (Academic: New York and London, August 1970.) 210s.

THIS volume comprises eleven essays. Two of them deal with pitch analysis, three with masking and related phenomena, two with cochlear mechanics, two with auditory neural processing, one with lesions of auditory structures and one with musical perception. According to the editor's preface this varied collection is intended to cover areas not presently well reviewed and to provide a source book for readers "who know enough about hearing . . . to contribute a chapter themselves some day".

As a source book it leaves something to be desired, in that it fails in many cases to cover adequately the literature, particularly the more modern material. Indeed, in a footnote to the essay on cochlear processes, the author cites as his principal sources reviews written in 1962, 1960 and 1957, and this is an area where advance has been rapid in the past ten years. It might be argued that the foundations, even of modern auditory theory, should be historical, and this is certainly valid. Such foundations should not, however, recapitulate old interpretations which subsequent work has shown to be of doubtful validity or even downright wrong, as happens in several essays here. One does not, of course, expect a catalogue of every known reference in a work of this type, but an author should, hopefully, show familiarity with recent major developments in the field he is reviewing. At least one of the essays presents an extreme view of its topic—a deliberate policy, the editor claims—but one that again does not seem to be appropriate to the foundations of a subject.

The prospective reader would be less liable to disappointment if he were not led to expect that he would acquire a survey of the foundations of auditory theory; rather this is a collection of essays by well known workers on various subjects in the auditory field—some are well informed, others less so, some critical, some uncritical, some really filling a need,

others a rehash of material readily available elsewhere long ago. Among those that certainly deserve praise is the excellent essay by Scharf on critical bands; previously it was necessary to search through a very scattered literature for information about this subject.

I. C. WHITFIELD

Fruits of Progress

The Economic Prospects for Horticulture. Edited by E. D. Sargent and S. J. Rogers. (An Agricultural Adjustment Unit Symposium.) Pp. xiii+142. (Published for the Agricultural Adjustment Unit, University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Oliver and Boyd: Edinburgh, October 1970.) 30s.

COMMERCIAL horticulture (the intensive production of fruit, vegetable and flower crop plants) is in the midst of a revolution that started in the late 1940s and has been gathering momentum ever since. The chief result of this revolution has been increasing yield from a shrinking acreage, produced by a labour force that gets smaller each year. In spite of the increase in efficiency, there have been many pessimistic statements recently about the future prospects for horticulture, particularly in relation to the possible entry of the United Kingdom into the Common Market. On the other hand, there are many growers who are very optimistic about the future of the growing and commercial side of the industry and are increasing their capital investments in it.

This book gives a sound picture of the horticulture industry as it has developed recently in the United Kingdom, and as it has been influenced by Government policy at home and by changes in international trade. It is based on a series of ten papers presented at Wye College, London, in March 1969, and as there are thirteen authors, including the editors, it is not surprising that divergent views are expressed. There is no attempt to hide the many adverse features with which horticulturists have to grapple, and the economic pressures on the industry at present, from the producers, the processors, and the distributors of its products, are the subject of these papers. Less relevant to the title of the book, but a very interesting paper nevertheless, is that on the organization of research in horticulture in the United Kingdom. Like much in the management and marketing sides of the industry, research and extension need drastic overhaul. They are among the best of such services in the world, but if they are to help the grower to lead in horticultural production in Europe during the next thirty years considerable rethinking of aims and methods is needed. That all is not well with the ways in which commercial horticulture has been developing on the Continent