slighted personalities whose ideas did not conform to their opinions: Freud's is a case in point. Lesky stresses that most of the great discoveries were made in the quite inadequate and narrow premises of the 'Allgemeine Krankenhaus' and the institute buildings which were even worse. But she sees in the close neighbourhood of the various clinical departments in *one* hospital and the proximity of the theoretical institutes a great advantage allowing for a very useful exchange of views and ideas among the doctors of the different branches of medical practice and research.

'New Specialties—Laboratory and Experiment' is the title given by Lesky to the third period (from 1870 to the end of the century). She indicates the ever-increasing specialization of medicine and greater use of laboratory methods and experiment in clinical medicine and research. She also refers to the difficulties of catering for the ever-increasing number of students, many of whom were coming from abroad; thus it became necessary to abandon the teaching at the bedside and to do it in the lecture theatre, and to build new institutes with larger laboratories and more accommodation for students. Quite a few of the university chairs had to be duplicated, some even tripled, and new chairs were created as the number of specialties grew. How quickly every progress was taken up in Vienna is shown by Lesky relating the history of the X-ray department in the 'Allgemeine Krankenhaus': On 1 January 1896 Röntgen communicated the discovery to his friend F. Exner, professor of physics in Vienna; 10 days later F. Exner's brother S. Exner, professor of physiology, gave a short address to the 'Gesellschaft der Ärzte', on 23 January the *Wiener Klinische Wochenschrift* published some X-ray photographs; a few days later a gallstone was shown on an X-ray plate. A few months later the 21-years-old Dr. L. Freund discovered the healing properties of the X-rays at the dermatological clinic. In 1898 the 'Central Röntgenlaboratorium' was established, which under the directorship of G. Holzknecht gained world fame. Among other events marking medical progress Lesky lists Koller's discovery of the anaesthetic action of cocaine on the cornea, the invention of laryngoscopy and gastroscopy by Türck, Czermak and Störck, of the cystoscope by Nitze and Leiter, Billroth's gastrectomy, Schauta-Wertheim's total hysterectomy, Wagner-Jauregg's fever therapy of dementia paralytica, Lorenz's treatment of congenital hip dislocation, Gruber-Durham's detection of agglutination, etc.

The book is written with great precision and brings a wealth of detailed knowledge; many of the abundant sources cited have never been utilized before. One would perhaps like to get some more information on the influence of the internal and external political scene and of the social circumstances on the evolution of medicine; but such a discussion probably would have transgressed the boundaries of the book. It certainly is a standard work which everyone interested in the history of medicine in the past century will consult with great benefit.

A. ARNSTEIN

A Short History of Public Health, by C. FRASER BROCKINGTON, 2nd ed., London, J. & A. Churchill, 1966, pp. vii, 240. 30s.

This is a new edition of the well-known work originally published in 1956. Opportunity has been taken to incorporate the results of modern research, notably Lambert's

on Sir John Simon and the author's own work on government intervention in health matters in the nineteenth century.

Although it is no criticism of the contents of the book, the title is apt to mislead in two ways. First, the history is really of modern public health since the mid-eighteenth century. A mere fifteen pages, out of a total of two hundred and nine, hardly constitutes even a short history of public health for all recorded time up to 1750. Second, the term public health has been interpreted in the widest sense of social medicine; thus much of the valuable and detailed matter of the second section of the book is on legislation concerning building, care of children and lunacy.

On questions of fact there is little to criticize, but a couple of points of interpretation are worth raising. It is hardly fair (pp. 26-27) to imply that it was due to the politicians, who ignored the arguments of doctors, that improvements in public health were adopted so slowly. Medical opinion after all was bitterly divided between the rival 'contagionist' and 'miasmatic' schools; and when doctors were put in positions of authority, as under the 1774 Act to regulate London mad-houses and on the Boards of Health in 1805 and 1831, little was achieved. It needed the drive of the politically conscious lawyer-administrator Edwin Chadwick, who disdained the medical profession, to bring in reform. Whatever Chadwick's faults, and they were many, is it fair to blame him for the predicament at the Local Government Board in which Simon found himself in 1871, nearly twenty years after Chadwick's retirement?

Finally, on the question of the general handling of the theme of the development of public health, it is surely not unreasonable to expect some basic statistics. No uninformed person reading this history could estimate the impact of all the reforms and discoveries enumerated. The cutting of the mortality rate from about 40 to about 12 per thousand is, when all is said and done, what this book is about.

R. S. ROBERTS

A Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts on Medicine and Science in the Wellcome Historical Medical Library, by A. Z. ISKANDAR, London, The Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1967, pp. xvi, 256, 36 plates, inc. 2 col. plates, £10. 10s. 0d.

An adequate assessment of the medieval Arabic contribution to medicine depends on an exhaustive survey of the extant manuscripts; the need for such a survey has been long felt, but its fulfilment has been hampered by the scarcity of scholars possessing the necessary equipment of both a sound knowledge of medical history and a training in the intricacies of medieval Arabic manuscripts. Dr. Iskandar is one of the very few people to combine these skills, and scholars have reason to be grateful to the Wellcome Trust both for having enabled him to catalogue their very important collection, and for having produced the catalogue (printed by the Oxford University Press) in such a handsome form.

The catalogue describes, with full bibliographical references and indexing, 245 works contained in 197 volumes; and the admirably produced plates form an extremely valuable repertoire of medieval Arabic scripts. These points may perhaps be of more interest to Arabists than to readers of this journal, but what will be of interest to the latter is Dr. Iskandar's lengthy Introduction, which he prefaces with the observation: 'A number of the Arabic manuscripts in the Wellcome collections demand