

personality-traits constitute the predominant 'cause' of lung-cancer, and Cox's essay on 'Psychiatric Aspects of Old Age' should be compulsory reading for Hospital Administrators and Ministry Officials. The book is full of interesting suggestions about the interplay between heredity and environment (the nature and nurture of old): every now and then Bernal's thought-proof partition goes up and we find ourselves looking at a naked geneticist or environmentalist. The modern 'science of the infinitely complex' refuses, in the last analysis, to be compartmentalized. As one quotation used in the book says, 'a universe in which cause and effect always have a one-to-one correspondence with each other would be easier to understand, but it obviously is not the kind we inhabit'.

Dr Brierley apparently once did biological research in Oxford. He clearly fell much under the spell of Darlington, and the first half of his book is a rehash of Darlington and Haldane. The blurb tells us that after schoolmastering, and lecturing in America, he is now one of H.M.'s Inspectors of Schools, which is a disturbing thought. His book is sub-titled 'A Social Biology For Everyman'. It consists of a collection of a hundred or so short articles, many of which might well have first appeared in the popular press. They cover an enormous variety of topics, from 'classical' genetics (no

new idea since the 1930s at the latest) to modern theories of memory in man. The author writes of both electrical and chemical theories (he is a reductionist to the core) with brash triumphalism characteristic of scientism, but is so muddled in his thinking on these difficult matters that he does not seem to realize that these are competing theories and can't all be equally valid. The book has some singularly unattractive illustrations to match its verbal content.

Dr Dannie Abse, a general practitioner with wide experience, a sharp wit and considerable insight, has produced a survey of Medicine that will deservedly be a best-seller. It has been printed for the American market (at heaven knows what price in dollars) and makes an astonishingly good two-guineas' worth. Ranging as he does over ancient and modern, orthodox, fringe and quack medicine, he is bound to be selective in the topics he discusses. But it hangs together. He is imbued with the best elements in the Hippocratic tradition and is progressive about all things that are clearly good in intention and practice. His chapter on the increasingly-recognized evils of some parts of current 'experimental medicine' reaches a high level of analysis and criticism. This is undoubtedly a book to get and to keep.

BERNARD TOWERS

WOMEN'S TWO ROLES, HOME AND WORK, by Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein. *Routledge Paperback*, Second edition, 1968. 213 pp. 15s.

This thorough study of almost every factor relating to the gainful employment of married women was first published in 1956. Although this is a topic which has been discussed almost *ad nauseam* in all the current media and although some of the original aims of the book have since been achieved, yet I believe the authors are correct in claiming the continuing validity of their arguments, and therefore in re-publishing.

The whole subject of women's roles—whether two or any number she might be called upon to play—is fraught with emotion. 'Miserable married women' for whom home in its present attenuated form is simply not enough, have received almost an excess of sympathy; the tide is turning in favour of the husbands who have to live with discontented wives; and even the children in whose name the sacrifice of outside interests is often made appear, ironically, not to benefit. Women have the ability and the need to serve a larger public

than the family, if their faculties are not to atrophy, and yet to do this in any serious way introduces numerous conflicts. Some of these are psychological and due to valid concern for their relationship with husband and children; and some practical, since society is not so far organized with the needs of working married women in mind.

For most women, however, (and especially those of the higher educated middle class, with whom the book is chiefly concerned) the problem is largely one of attitude; having been subtly influenced in their choice of career by the future possibility of marrying, they enter marriage as a complete occupation without looking through or beyond it. Faced later with the painful realization that their home role is not a full-time one, many yet find themselves in a 'tender trap' from which there is no escaping without damage to the family. For these women, in this particular period of adjustment, the present book is an invaluable ally.

Here, in clear and unemotional terms, supported by ample statistics, are unassailable arguments in favour of women playing a much fuller part in the 'labour market' (a term covering every range of job, professional and unqualified). In the first phase it was women themselves who claimed the right to work outside the home as a logical response to the industrial revolution—'The work had been moved from the home and women wanted to move after it, as men had done not so long before'. That they are capable of the same achievement as men has been amply proved, and today practically no prejudice against women, married or unmarried, exists in almost any career. When we read further the stark facts that because of increased life expectation, a woman at marriage has an average of half a century or more in front of her, and that because of smaller families she is fully employed on homemaking tasks for only one quarter to one third of her adult life; and on actual child-bearing and nursing for roughly three and a half years of this: when the moral is pointed by the calculation that 2,340 million working hours are spent annually in Sweden on shopping, cooking and washing-up, as opposed to only 1,290 million hours on Swedish industry; that married women with three children and a job spend 83.5 hours on job *and* home, while those with no job spend 77.7 hours on home duties alone—learning all this may force us to question with the authors the respectability of the custom whereby the woman stays at home, and certainly to concur with their contention that to think that marriage is an end-all state is to court disaster.

Once having faced women with this unpleasant picture of time and talent wasted, the authors make a severe criticism of society as a whole for allowing this to happen; it has failed to be truly democratic in its organization of work and leisure for both sexes. The present cleavage between work and home, and between father's and mother's roles respectively is shown as a harmful one, since it necessitates 'leaving women alone to do a thing which should be done jointly by men and women if the ideal of a happy home is to be a reality'. Fortunately society has moved since these words were first written, and there is more participation by fathers in the child's world from birth up, and less emphasis on careers as paramount in importance.

The whole book, then, rests on the conviction that work and family are not in principle two irreconcilable alternatives, even though society

is slow to adapt itself to the idea, and its creative value lies in the recommendations made to women and society in general. If women could visualize their lives as a succession of three phases—education, family, then a period of 'wider social use'—they could plan their lives more rationally than at present. Equally, the nature of work should change to allow greater equilibrium between home and job.

The authors do however here implicitly raise a problem which they do not properly face. They firmly deny that they are bent on chasing all married women into jobs; their chapter on children is conscientious, and aware of the many aspects of motherhood at its best. And yet they do see the completion of a woman's life in terms of a job. For many this is obviously desirable, but for at least as many the real problem is surely whether a woman's 'wider social use' cannot best be deployed from within the home. The authors do not seem to do justice to the very complex and creative nature of woman's role at home. Without wishing to dispute the grave duty of women to act as mature citizens and avoid wastage of time and talent, it must be pointed out that a woman at home is at the intersection of many circles of influence and can be of value to society in ways not easily assessable. As Mary Miles has said, a career is often easier than running one's own personal life. There one is not totally involved, but in marriage and the bringing up of children one is, or should be; and it is through her family that a woman is often able to follow a 'profession' or to exercise response to social issues, judgement in local affairs and responsibility in a diversity of fields which can use and even test her education and creativity to the full. Society would suffer rather than benefit if the energies of many women were directed away from their home circle. With the development of computerized industry, too, the jobs that this 'untapped labour force' of women might enter will soon, it is predicted, disappear and people will be increasingly faced with the problem of leisure.

For the present, however, this exceedingly competent book is a valuable manual for marriage, and could well be prescribed reading for sixth-form classes; and if husbands and employers could read it, too, and make the recommended adjustments, the tension between loyalties to home and to work would eventually disappear and marriage would become more frequently the equal partnership in work and leisure that it ideally is.

ELAINE BARRY