Book reviews

The Sun is My Enemy. By HENRIETTA ALADJEM. 1972. Pp. 162. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, U.S.A. (\$5.95)

This is the personal story of one young woman who suffered from systemic lupus erythematosus for 17 years. Despite renal damage, recovery occurred while she was being treated with nicotinic acid injections along with chloroquine.

The doleful but not uncommon story is told of the slowness in recognizing the part played by hypersensitivity to sulphonamides (including Diamox), to many other drugs, and to vaccination against smallpox.

The patient goes through all the treatments and eventually finds her salvation in a Bulgarian doctor and his use of nicotinic acid. She received wonderful care and understanding from some well-known physicians in Boston, Massachusetts. Her personal courage is remarkable and led to her doing much research into the disease—no doubt mainly with the object of finding a cure.

The reviewer is a firm believer in the wider knowledge of medicine and in the understanding of patients to be obtained from plays and television, from the Sunday newspapers, and from the reading of novels. The same is true of personal stories of both common and rare chronic diseases such as this one. He believes that all students of the connective tissue disorders should read this well-written story.

N. S. PLUMMER

Acupuncture and You. By DR. LOUIS MOSS. 2nd ed., 1972. Pp. 192, 14 figs. Paul Elek, London. (£2.00)

The author of this book, a Guy's man of 1920, has always been a therapeutic enthusiast, and of course enthusiasm is really the important thing in 'curing' diseases and improving patients—in getting results. His first book

'Rheumatism and You', published in 1955, which was written for the layman, contained many wise and useful remarks. The book as a whole was devoted to the use of adrenaline cream and adrenaline injections, which were mentioned on a majority of the book's 158 pages, often as many as six times a page, and advocated for growing pains, fibrositis, capsulitis, lumbago, sciatica, tennis elbow, occupational cramp, rheumatoid arthritis, scoliosis, gout, and osteoarthritis. The book did not, however, mention that in 1951 the Empire Rheumatism Council had published a double-blind controlled trial of adrenaline cream *versus* cream without adrenaline, and had found no difference in effect. That book also contained a page on clinical acupuncture, and in 1964 Dr. Moss published the first edition of 'Acupuncture and You'. This second edition comes when there is a wave of popular enthusiasm for such treatment. Although directed in large part to the layman, it makes fascinating reading for the doctor, particularly when the author tries to find modern explanations for ancient ritual, and there is much clinical wisdom. There are fourteen diagrams showing 'meridians', front, back, and sides, and points of puncture, 24 in the shoulder alone, and approximately 800 in all. Fortunately, although 'no fewer than 42 needles could be used to cure an ordinary case of jaundice if every point was treated, the expert acupuncturist would use about half a dozen in all'. Yin and Yang, vital energy and organic rhythms, all play their mystic role, but there is no mention of the Great Pyramids. Adrenaline cream has now taken a back place, and is mentioned only nine times—usually in an historical sense—as against eight for adrenaline injections and eight listed in the index for aspirin. The book disarms criticism both by its ingenuity and by its ingenuousness: truly a still rolling Moss gathers no stones, whatever else may accrue.

E. G. L. BYWATERS