

trainees will find it useful when studying for the Diploma of Child Health. Its low price and readability means that general practitioners may find it worth buying simply for the chapters relevant to their work. I am sure that the publishers' expectations of large sales will be fulfilled.

CLIVE STUBBINGS

### BUTTERWORTHS MEDICAL DICTIONARY. 2ND EDITION

Macdonald Critchley  
(Editor-in-Chief)

Butterworths  
Sevenoaks (1978)

1,942 pages. Price £45

This large and expensive book appears to have been compiled without reference to the largest branch of the profession. It contains virtually none of the specific terms of our discipline and none of its 51 contributors are in general practice, although one is a nurse tutor. This book will therefore not help medical students or vocational trainees seeking the meaning of words they meet in the literature of general practice, and is therefore not recommended.

D. J. PEREIRA GRAY

### 1978 YEAR BOOK OF PEDIATRICS

Sidney S. Gellis (ed.)

Year Book Medical Publishers  
Chicago and London (1978)

394 pages. Price £18

If you are an American paediatrician, then you will feel at home with the 1978 *Year Book of Pediatrics*. However, from the point of view of the British general practitioner with a special interest in paediatrics the scattered pieces of relevant and interesting information that are hidden in this book will not justify spending £18.

The *Year Book of Pediatrics* can be best described as a comprehensive review of the literature on the research into all aspects of paediatric care. Each research paper is first summarized, giving the author's conclusions, following which either the editor or a named colleague gives a personal view of the value of the research in the context of other work in that particular field.

In reviewing this book, I looked up the ten most common conditions seen in children in general practice and found many interesting and informative papers. For instance, there is a good comparative trial of various antibiotics for otitis media, several useful reports on control trials of cromoglycate and beclomethasone in asthma, and a series of papers which give a good general picture of the present position of a child with febrile convulsions. The editorial comments on these sections are to the point and the criticisms of papers on the grounds of faulty statistics fair. Sometimes, however, the reader is left with a critical editorial opinion with little to back it up; he must therefore be careful not to accept each editorial comment too readily. All in all, this is a useful book for the paediatrician but not a must for the general practitioner's bookshelf.

G. D. STARTE

### ESSENTIAL INTENSIVE CARE

E. Sherwood Jones

MTP Press Limited  
Lancaster (1978)

503 pages. Price £9.95

This is a splendid but very specialized work and is not relevant to most general practitioners. It might be of use for senior house officers in vocational training while working in hospital but the hospital library would probably have it anyway.

KENNETH EASTON

### INFORMATION KIT FOR AGENCIES

National Women's Aid Federation

Available from NAWAF, 51 Chalcot Road, London NW1

The 'kit' of the title consists of four leaflets entitled: "Battered Women and Refuges", "Unhelpful Myths and Stereotypes about Battered Women", "Battered Women Demand Control over their Lives", and "National Women's Aid Federation—How We Work". They seek to inform all members of the caring professions about wife battering and what can be done about it and there is an additional sheet addressed especially to doctors.

Although the existence of refuges and organizations such as NAWAF are in principle a good thing, when a crisis actually arises so much depends upon the personalities and capabilities of the

individual helpers that I would rather refer a patient to a helper I know personally, whom I *know* to be endowed with the right qualities to deal with this intensely emotive problem, than to one I do not. I seriously suggest, therefore, that NAWAF and like organizations try to direct their publicity campaign on a more personal level—which should not be impossible—so that those of us who may want to seek their help may judge more directly for ourselves. Well meant though they undoubtedly are, regrettably these leaflets will put off many of those whom they are intended to persuade because of their aggressive flavour.

TIM PAINE

### HAS YOUR CHILD BEEN IN HOSPITAL?

Joan Woodward

National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital,  
Roebuck Press  
Mitcham (1978)

24 pages. Price 30p

Writing with clarity, and the sensitivity which stems from considerable experience, Joan Woodward conveys a wealth of information in this small booklet. So much of it is so basic and yet so much of it is at present unappreciated both by parents and by those who work with children.

The title suggests that the book is directed mainly at parents, and certainly the author fulfils admirably her aim of setting out in everyday language some ideas on how parents can help themselves and their children to deal with the sometimes distressing results of a period of separation from a child who has been in hospital. However, as Dr Dermot MacCarthy points out in his foreword, it should be read first and foremost by nurses, doctors, and other professionals in hospital, and it is in my opinion just as valuable to the general practitioner and vocational trainee as to the hospital doctor, since children nowadays largely reach hospital by referral from general practice.

Many paediatric wards now produce their own hand-out for parents, but those who do not would be well advised to buy the booklet and distribute it free of charge to all the parents of children who come to their hospital. At 30p a copy a bulk purchase would look miniscule on the balance sheet, compared with some of the expensive fittings and equipment to be seen in hospital today.

COLIN WAINE