

names that included the Latin would have been helpful.

In the midwifery section the midwife is advised for all but normal vertex presentations to anoint her hand with oils and perform an internal version.

Medieval Woman's Guide to Health is well worth reading, and the introductory review is stimulating and helpful. All in all, a delightful book.

IRVINE LOUDON
Medical historian
Wantage

UNDER THE DOCTOR

S. Bourne

Avebury Publishing Company
Amersham, Bucks (1981)

211 pages. Price £12.00 (hardback),
£5.95 (paperback)

This is an important book for doctors. By focusing on the field of physiotherapy it throws into relief the ways in which doctors behave—initially in the hospital setting, but by implication also in the primary health care team.

I had always considered that physiotherapy was also a kind of psychotherapy, but was never quite clear why this was so until this book appeared. Clearly, touching the patient is the key. Touching has traditionally been taboo to psychoanalysts, but now it is clear that touching patients is proper treatment by many professionals, including general practitioners. Freud knew it, Ferenczi knew it, Balint knew it, and now Bourne confirms it.

The book's format is also important. Part I distils the essence, Part II illustrates the method, and the appendix lists the case material (Part III does not exist, in spite of a reference on page 44). This is a proper sequence—the kernel is up front, resting on the evidence behind.

The substance is short, but packed solid. In a few short chapters the nitty-gritty of medical practice is discussed in terms of: team-work; the extreme difficulty and importance of being able to give bad news to patients; the tensions of being in the remedial treatment role; the overtones of the gender role implicit in the majority of physiotherapist/doctor relationships; the difficulties of dealing with mourning, often unresolved; the plight of the captive wife; and the concept of the good doctor being able to stop the patient uttering unnecessary verbiage. Further, it touches on teaching and defences and the proper distance between patient and professional. It warns of the dangers of modern medica-

ments. In short, it is about doctoring and physiotherapy.

MICHAEL COURTENAY
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SOCIAL WORK AND GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTICE. COLLABORATION OR CONFLICT?

June Huntingdon

Allen and Unwin
London (1981)

196 pages. Price £12.50 hardback,
£5.95 paperback

There is so much tension between general practice and social work that minds on both sides may close and attitudes may harden. It would be sad if they were now too closed to want to know why, but this is just what June Huntingdon analyses in her short but balanced and perceptive book. Her background and experience, here and in Australia, have fitted her well for the task. She finds explanations in both the structure and the culture of the two disciplines.

'Structure' covers the history, size, distribution, work-settings and clientele of each profession, and the age, sex, social class, educational attainments, marital status and income of typical practitioners. A potential for conflict and misunderstanding exists in every aspect of structure, and all are brought to life by differences in values and beliefs that are fundamental.

The most important chapters are those which explore the ways in which members of the two occupations think and feel about their work and the unspoken assumptions that they make. Behind many of the conflicts lies a difference Huntingdon calls 'Action v. Holding'. Doctors believe deeply in the importance of decisive and immediate action; social workers believe just as deeply in the importance of a reflective exploration of the many possibilities inherent in any complex situation. Huntingdon traces the consequences of this difference into several areas, such as views about working relationships, the nature of responsibility and collaboration in disputed territory. Collaboration, for example, is undermined where general practitioners who resent having to cope with social problems because they have low status in the rest of the medical profession, devalue both them and the social workers whose *raison d'être* they are. On the other hand, where general practitioners do like the social aspect of their

work, they will find more territory to dispute with social workers. Either way, matters will be made more difficult by a social work approach that is not based on medical ways of thinking. Conflict therefore arises from the peculiar pattern of differences and similarities in the two occupations; the possibility that it can have positive aspects is not discussed—that it may be of benefit to the client/patient, for example.

There is a short section on the circumstances in which collaboration is most likely to occur, but it has to be speculative. The work as a whole will do most to reduce conflict by offering general practitioners insight into its causes; insight does not always bring about cure; but it is usually a necessary first step. This is surely a book that all general practitioners should read and think about.

CONRAD M. HARRIS
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ACUTE AND CHRONIC RENAL FAILURE, Michael Boulton-Jones, 108 pages; RENAL RADIOLOGY AND IMAGING,

O. P. FitzGerald-Finch, 91 pages;

RENAL GLOMERULAR DISEASES, Paul Sharpstone and J. A. P. Trafford, 83 pages;

URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS, CALCULI AND TUBULAR DISORDERS, John

Walls, 90 pages; RENAL DISEASE: AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE, D. Gwyn Williams, 89 pages

MTP Press
Lancaster (1981)
Price £5.95 each

Each of these small volumes is extremely well produced, and has been written by a specialist in renal medicine. They give a valuable review of the pathophysiology, clinical features, investigation and management of a wide range of urinary tract problems, from acute infections to chronic renal failure, including dialysis and transplantation, but without attempting to be comprehensive textbooks. Together they provide a good introduction to nephrology, and contain ample suggestions for further reading for those who wish to study the subject in greater depth.

The illustrated guide describes disor-

ders according to the mechanisms which cause them. The volume on urinary tract infections covers common problems as well as some of the rarer nephrological diseases. Of the five books, these two will be of most use to general practitioners, but all five would be a useful addition to any practice library.

The remaining three volumes will acquaint general practitioners with advances in this rapidly expanding field and explain current investigative methods. The glomerular diseases and modern imaging techniques are well described and profusely illustrated. *Acute and Chronic Renal Failure* is of greater interest to hospital staff, who are more often concerned with patients in this state, but by informing general practitioners of the processes and problems involved, family doctors will be better able to advise patients and their relatives.

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BOOKS FOR PATIENTS

THE EYE BOOK

John Eden
Penguin
Harmondsworth (1981)
215 pages. Price £1.95

All the facts are here, but there really are an awful lot of them; this book is too long for most people, who will surely not want to know so much about so many eye diseases. There are many diagrams, but the ones on the physiology of the eye, like that part in the text, seem unnecessarily technical. This is definitely one for the intellectual 10 per cent of the population.

ASTHMA AND HAY FEVER

Dr Allan Knight
Martin Dunitz
London (1981)
123 pages. Price £2.50

It is perhaps a measure of the relative under-development of allergy as a specialty in the UK that this book is written by a Canadian. However, there is no sign of transatlantic inappropriateness

THE OFFICE WORKERS' SURVIVAL HANDBOOK

Marianne Craig
British Society for
Social Responsibility
in Science
London (1981)
200 pages. Price £2.35

No one who has spent any length of time working in an office will be surprised to learn that the second most stressful occupation is that of a secretary, according to a US government survey of 22,000 workers in 130 occupations. This manual uses the survey as its starting point, and examines the hidden dangers of office work, making constructive suggestions about what can be done to reduce them.

There are chapters on noise, lighting, ventilation and the hazards of office machinery. The implications of new technology are also discussed. At the end of each chapter is a checklist, with

and the book can be warmly recommended to patients. It is well written, without being clogged by too much incomprehensible physiology, and with sensible ideas about living with tiresome allergies. It is not at all expensive, considering that it is so attractively illustrated in colour.

YOU AND YOUR HEART. HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEART FOR A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE

Paul Kezdi
Penguin
Harmondsworth (1981)
222 pages. Price £1.75

There is no doubt that public awareness of the dangers of coronary heart disease is growing—at least among some sections of the community. Yet the links between certain aspects of life style and risk factors for coronary heart disease are still imperfectly understood by the majority of our patients. Dr Kezdi, an American cardiologist, sets out to explain these links for the intelligent layman. He bases his book on a careful and well-presented review of risk factors, giving rather more prominence to cholesterol than to smoking or hypertension. He then goes on to review, in separate chapters, 13 aspects of life which may be related to coronary heart

advice about how offices can be made healthier places. The legal rights and obligations of employers and employees are explained, and the Health and Safety at Work Act is examined in detail. It is emphasized that most accidents could be prevented if a little more time and money were spent.

Any general practitioner who has regular contact with office workers, as patients or colleagues, would find this book well worth looking at, but its militant tone will probably deter those who need to read it most.

S. H. GREGORY
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New editions

Chemotherapy of Cancer. Stephen Carter, Marie T. Bakowski and Kurt Hellman. 2nd edition, 1981. London: John Wiley.

Davidson's Principles and Practice of Medicine, ed. John Macleod. 13th edition. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone.

disease, ranging from "Your food and your heart" to "Your sex life and your heart". These chapters are written in a more direct style than the first part of the book, but repeat much of the material presented earlier. A final section deals with the practical aspects of diet, giving up smoking and exercise. Curiously there is also a chapter on the use of progressive relaxation to avoid stress despite earlier reassurances that 'Type A' behaviour has not in itself been shown to be a risk factor.

The text is clear, and has been anglicized (sic) by Professor Peter Sleight, of the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford. References to British research and to the British Heart Foundation testify to this and there are few intrusive Americanisms. Nevertheless, most British general practitioners would now disagree with the typically American advice given in a brief section on the prevention of rheumatic heart disease. The reader is advised to treat throat infections seriously, to regard them as potential Strep. infections and to expect throat swabs and, if necessary, antibiotics "because of the seriousness of the complications which may arise".

However, this is generally a sound, readable book and can confidently be recommended to those patients who both care about their health, and are likely to spend £1.75 on a paperback book.

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