

Book Reviews

Medical Sound Recording. JOHN GRAVES, *O.B.E.*, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. and VALERIE GRAVES, *O.B.E.*, M.B., B.S. London and New York. The Focal Press. 1965. Pp. 461. Price 55s.

The post-war development of electronic apparatus and the commercial production of tape-recorders opened new fields in medical education. Several doctors, including your reviewer, saw some of the possibilities of this medium and experimented with varying degrees of success, but it was only given to the authors of this book to appreciate fully the value of tape-recording in the teaching of medicine and to have the energy and determination fully to develop it. Their valuable work is well known to members of the College. Out of their vast experience they have produced this book which is a comprehensive survey of the subject of sound recording, especially in its application to medicine.

The book is in five sections. The first deals with the range of medical sound and the value of recorded sound in medicine; the second with recording theory, mechanisms of speech and hearing, and principles of good medical speaking; the third with practice . . . recording practice, recording the medical speaker, recording the medical meeting, recording the patient's voice, measuring noise and hearing, recording internal sounds, and standardization and serial recordings; the fourth section deals with processing; and the fifth with administration. Included in this is useful advice on the choice and selection of apparatus, without which the beginner would waste much time and money in trial and error. The authors have met the common snags and pitfalls and give advice on their avoidance; this assistance alone is worth the price of the book.

This bare outline fails to convey how informative and entertaining the book is. It is written in a refreshingly clear and lucid style and it is hoped that the general reader will not be put off by the suggestion of specialization in the title, for there are few who would not enjoy reading it or indeed fail to derive benefit from the exercise.

The book is well produced on semi-matt paper, adequately illustrated and has a good index.

Modern Perspectives in Child Psychiatry. Edited by JOHN G. HOWELLS, M.D., D.P.M. Edinburgh and London. Oliver and Boyd. 1965. Pp. xvi+595; illustrated. Price £5 5s.

Dr Howells has undertaken the formidable task of producing a comprehensive statement and analysis of the scientific basis of child psychiatry. Half of the volume is devoted to this theme. The other half of the book is

concerned with the clinical aspects of the subject. This is not, however, a textbook but rather a statement of recent advances in selected fields. Dr Howells has collected an outstanding team of 25 collaborators and appears to have found the magic formula of editorship. Each chapter is written by an acknowledged expert in his field.

This is certainly not a book which itself forms a basis for systematic study of child psychiatry nor does it provide a comprehensive guide as a work of reference, although there are very full references at the end of each chapter.

The volume will have a special appeal to psychiatrists, including those not practising in this field, and young trainees in psychiatry, but the interested general practitioner will find much of value. Dr Howells and his department are well known for their contributions to postgraduate training of general practitioners in this field. Although the family doctor may not have been in the forefront of his mind when planning this work, one would hope that young trainee practitioners and our future family doctors will include this volume in their working libraries. Such chapters, for example, as: "The psychosomatic approach in child psychiatry", "Disorders of speech in childhood", "Delinquency", "The psychiatric aspects of adoption", "Accident-proneness", "Suicidal attempts in childhood and adolescence" and an up-to-date statement on "Organization of child psychiatric services", are only examples of a wide range of very practical issues with which general practitioners are obviously concerned. The book is very attractively produced, the bibliography is full and there is an adequate index.

Psychiatric Illness. Diagnosis and management for general practitioners and students. H. MERSKEY, M.A., D.M., D.P.M., and W. LAWTON TONGE, M.D., D.P.M. London. Bailliere, Tindall and Cassell. 1964. Pp. xii + 254. Price 27s. 6d.

This is an excellent book. It succeeds in clarifying this difficult subject for general practitioners because it concentrates on the problems we meet and looks at them from the angle of our limited training, biased as it still is against psychiatry and people with psychiatric troubles. The authors are right to devote much of the introductory section to 'the doctor's problems'. The book is short and written in as plain English as anyone could reasonably expect in this part of medicine.

To single out one helpful simplification from a frequently helpful book:

"There are in general four ways in which people fall ill with anxiety and depression. First, there are the emotionally immature and vulnerable personalities, in whom anxiety and depression are frequent responses to life stress. This is the condition of psychoneurosis. The fundamental disorder is at a psychological level rather than physiological. Secondly, current environmental stresses have to be considered. The physical environment of the human being has to satisfy certain requirements if health is to be maintained; the same is also true for the social and psychological *milieu*. Thirdly, there are the endogenous