

infections, peptic ulcer and other disorders also contain much interesting material. The plan of each chapter is similar: a definition and classification of the disease; the incidence and prevalence rates in the whole practice and in different age, sex and social groups; the course and outcome; and a study of various factors influencing the prognosis. The text is illustrated throughout with numerous tables and diagrams.

At the end of each chapter is a 'profile' of the disease, that is, a word picture of the *whole* disease, from its beginning to its ending, in its mild forms and severe forms, at all ages and in all classes. The knowledge contained in this book is basic not only to general practice but to the whole of medicine. How many false trails have been followed by medical men, and how much bad advice given to patients, because disease was not studied as a whole. As John Ryle said—quoted by Dr Fry in his preface—"Faithful observation of matters must ever in a world of ignorance and prejudice serve to correct men's principles".

Many of Dr Fry's findings have the most important practical applications in the management of disease. To mention only three: the good prognosis of recurrent tonsillitis without tonsillectomy; the benign nature of hypertension in elderly women; and the spontaneous remission of most cases of asthma. Besides the implications for treatment, the book also contains a mine of information which is vital for a rational approach to diagnosis in general practice. Only by knowing the true prevalence of disease in the community, and its distribution in age, sex and social groups, can the primary physician achieve diagnostic precision. And this is exactly what he cannot learn in hospital.

This book will be read and studied by general practitioners for many years to come. It should also be studied by those whose range of experience has been narrowed by specialization, for this narrowing can give rise to erroneous conceptions of disease.

A course in renal diseases. GEOFFREY M. BERLYNE, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.P
Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. Pp. xiii + 379 + index.
Price 37s. 6d.

This is an exciting book to read. The author has adopted the method of giving information in short sections each followed by a question to test the knowledge gained. The questions are in multiple-choice-answer form and, according to the answer chosen, direct the reader back to the paragraph which he has just read or on to the next step. If he makes certain answers he is directed to appropriate explanations, so that his misunderstandings are rectified. The effect is like a game of snakes and ladders on an academic plane. The book covers anatomy, physiology, investigations, diseases and disorders of the kidney. It is strongly recommended to those who find it difficult to concentrate when they read textbooks.