

Paediatric prescriber. Third edition. PINCUS CATZEL, M.D., B.CH., M.R.C.P., D.C.H., R.C.P. & S. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications Ltd. 1966. Pp. xviii + 181. Price 20s. 0d.

Dr Catzel's Paediatric Prescriber has now reached its third edition since it was first published in 1959. The author's aim remains, as before, "to provide the practitioner, in pocket form, with a guide to drugs and dosage for infants and children". As is usual with new editions the book's entire text has been revised. It is three years since the second edition was published and during this time many new preparations have appeared on the market. These have all been evaluated, and included only if they have been considered to be superior to or a valuable addition to, the existing range. It is almost needless to say that the number of preparations included has increased and so, to keep the prescriber down to pocket size, the section on milk and milk foods has been excluded. Dr Catzel recommends the percentage method of arriving at paediatric dosage. This method is based on relative surface areas, and arrives at a paediatric dose expressed as a percentage of the usual adult dose. The book contains a table of dosage related to age, but a few simple ones such as 25 per cent at one year, 50 per cent at seven years and 75 per cent at 12 years are easily memorized. He is also very much in favour of labelling medicine and tablet bottles with the drug names, largely on the grounds of ease of identification: coded tablets, based upon an international system are also commended.

This is a very useful book, it often goes beyond being a paediatric prescriber, containing useful information on paediatric treatment in its broadest sense. It can be recommended to any doctor who has to deal with children.

Family planning. Edited by MARY POLLOCK, M.B., CH.B., M.R.C.O.G. London. Baillière, Tindall and Cassell. 1966. Pp. x + 190. Price 30s. 0d.

An excellent book with contributions from many experts in this field. Not only does it cover the various aspects of contraception but includes chapters on such subjects as sub-fertility, psychological aspects and social background of family planning. Two well-written chapters extensively cover oral contraception and intra-uterine devices. A timely chapter by Dr Josephine Barnes discusses various aspects of sterilization and termination of pregnancy, and having read it one wonders if there is any justification or desirability to change the existing law. The drug firms will probably disagree with the advice not to use oral contraceptives during lactation, and I felt in the chapter dealing with the use of the diaphragm and cervical cap there was not enough detail on how to assess the size of device to be used.

A very readable book to be recommended for medical students, doctors and para-medical workers.