

There are specially printed sections for recording colour codes, blood groups, special investigations, cervical smear dates, x-ray results, etc. As well as trying to organize the medical record to make it simpler for the general practitioner's use, I have tried to avoid over-direction of recording.

There is only one serious objection to this new double-pocket wallet and that is its size: 9 in. high and 6.5 in. wide. It will not go into the usual metal drawer cabinets.

If any practitioners wish to have some of these wallets perhaps they would get in touch with me.

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Routine induction of labour at term in domiciliary obstetric practice

Sir,

I should like to compliment Dr White on his most interesting report on routine induction of labour in the September number of the *Journal*, but at the same time add a note of caution.

Dr White's practice of routine induction is

a brave attempt to overcome the problem of the personal obstetrician and midwife being available at the time when their patient goes into labour.

It is very tempting when he suggests that an obstetric practice can be so well organized as almost to eliminate the unexpected and the night work, but such ideas must be carefully scrutinized. It is in the routine use of oxytocin buccal tablets that Dr White is most liable to criticism. His own results are good, but in his factual paper he seems to make light of the dangers in such a way that others with far less experience may be encouraged to use this product which can still be responsible for rupture of the uterus and foetal death.

His report mentions some of the hazards such as the way in which pupil midwives and relatives were liable to amend the instructions. Other practitioners who have used oxytocin outside hospital can recount similar experiences. A doctor who would follow his example should think carefully about these risks. The makers of buccal oxytocin tablets certainly recommend this product for hospital use only, and have the support of the Safety of Drugs Committee (Dunlop) on this.

Warrington.

P. O'BRIEN.

Book reviews

Patterns of performance in community care.

G. F. REHN, B.A. and F. M. MARTIN, B.A., Ph.D. London. Published for the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust by the Oxford University Press. 1968. Pp. 235. Price 21s. 0d.

This is a report of a PEP study of community mental health services in different areas of the country. Three contrasting areas are chosen for intensive study, and what in particular emerges is the variety of concepts of functions and aims, and of standards of performance, that at present exists in this country. The aims and work of the mental welfare officer come particularly under the authors' searchlight; they can vary from the old 'duly authorized officer' to the MWO who is also a psychiatric social worker and whose aims are therapeutic. One of the areas under discussion is Worthing, an area of special experiment, where hospital psychiatrists, through domiciliary visits and a day hospital, do much work ordinarily done in other areas through MWOs.

The authors regard the local authority social work services as perhaps the crucial element in community care, and they do not discuss the role of the family doctor except as a referring agent. They view the division of the National Health Service, especially the separate organization of hospital and local authority services, as a brake on efficient organization and deployment of scarce resources. The authors have provided facts and figures in an area not well covered previously, and within the limitations they have imposed on themselves they have, with an elegant lucidity, given valuable background information for future planners.

Having reviewed this book, the reviewer would like to amplify what he means by "within the limitations they have imposed on themselves". By avoiding consideration of the role of the family doctor, not only do they ignore his role in the early and after treatment in the community of the psychoses and organic mental illnesses, but they also ignore his role in the treatment of the less

severe neuroses, which constitute the great bulk of mental illness in this country.

By chance, at the same time as the book reviewed, there arrived the November *Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners* (1968). In this (p. 407) Dr K. G. Dickinson found that most general practitioners felt that they were in a leading role in community care of mental illness, but needed support from trained ancillary staff. Many family doctors with enthusiasm and trained skill have included the treatment of mental illness in the concept of their daily responsibility; almost at random, the names of Max Clyne, Philip Hopkins, John Horder and Arthur Watts spring to mind. On the other hand a quotation (p. 344) from an article in the *British Medical Journal* by Dr A. R. May and Eva Gregory (psw) states that "The majority of doctors interviewed were not interested in taking a greater part in psychiatric care in the community".

Thus it appears that there is considerable divergence of view as to what should be the functions of the family doctor in this area of medicine. This should give concern both to those whose duty it is to train him, and to the college who represents and upholds his best standards.

The practical police surgeon. Published under the auspices of W. G. Johnston Memorial Trust Fund by the Association of Police Surgeons of Great Britain. London. Sweet & Maxwell. 1969. Pp. xi+252. Price £2 18s. 0d.

The status and standing of police surgeons is at present under review. It is therefore appropriate that a book specifically written for police surgeons should appear at this time. It is particularly pleasant to note that this book has been published under the auspices of the W. J. Johnston Memorial Trust Fund which had been created to further the education of police surgeons everywhere.

In 1962 The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries in London instituted by examination a Diploma of Medical Jurisprudence. This handbook is designed to cover the course necessary for those sitting the clinical part of the examination. As the editors point out in their preface, change in some aspects of legislation has been rapid in recent months; particularly those on alcohol and the motorist, homosexuality and drugs. Indeed the chapter on drug addiction could not be prepared in time and has had to be omitted from the body of the book. (It will be available as a free supplement).

Like most books with multiple authors, the quality of the chapters varies. Some are outstandingly good while others would have been improved by judicious subediting. The book commences with the problems associated with the doctor giving evidence in court and also offers an outline definition of terms he is likely to hear. There follows details of the mental health acts for good measure; Scotland has not been omitted.

What to do when called to an 'accident' is a chapter worth reading by every general practitioner. The contents of the recommended doctor's bag seem to have been taken from one individual's choice rather than what most practising police surgeons might have chosen.

The reviewer could find no aspect of the subject which has been omitted and, to add to the value, there are six appendices covering such subjects as arms, specimen reports and a summary of the Criminal Justice Act 1967. The index appears to be complete. This book will be essential on the shelf of every appointed police surgeon. It will be particularly valuable to those who only undertake this work occasionally, and who have not yet acquired the experience of the authors.

NEW EDITIONS

Outline of endocrine gland syndromes. Second edition. T. S. DANOWSKI, B.A., M.D. Baltimore. The Williams and Wilkins Company. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1968. Pp. ix+437. Price £3 5s. 0d.

This comprehensive book, without doubt, will provide a useful reference volume for the specialist, but its value to the general practitioner is limited by its specialized character. The author has divided the book into parts relating to the endocrine glands and each part includes chapters on the different diseases and syndromes relevant to that particular gland. There are also sections on the differential diagnosis of endocrinopathy and miscellaneous syndromes, and the final chapters are concerned with diabetes mellitus and hypoglycaemic states.

Individually, each chapter tends to be short and succinct and the various clinical manifestations and factors relevant to the disease or syndrome are discussed under numbered paragraphs with significant points listed, in a format similar to a catalogue. Each chapter is supported by a comprehensive bibliography.

Experiences in groups and other papers. W. R. BION. First published 1961. Republished 1968 as paperback by Tavistock Publications. Pp. 197. Price 15s. 0d.

Dr Bion is a psychoanalyst who was one of the pioneers of group therapy, and his observations are worthy of close study. Most of these essays are concerned with descriptions of his theories of group dynamics, and Dr Bion argues forcefully but with disarming modesty. The subject is complex, and the style is knotty and muscular. For the non-analyst this is a difficult book, but for those who work with groups it will repay careful study, and for sociologists it will illuminate aspects of larger groups such as the Church, the Army, and the Aristocracy.