

Practical treatment in psychiatry. Edited by J. L. CRAMMER. Oxford and Edinburgh. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1969. Pp. xii+162. Price 25s. 0d.

This paperback consists of ten lectures, being the substance of a three-day course held at Oxford in 1968. This was one of a series designed for doctors beginning specialization in psychiatry. Each course focuses on a theme, and the theme of this one, emphasized by the word 'practical', is the use of drugs and 'simple procedures applicable without special training.'

There are chapters on drug addiction, alcoholism, anxiety, depression, schizophrenia and epilepsy. Less obvious in the context of the theme are essays on drug metabolism, and 'Some aspects of clinical trials', though this last, by Professor Michael Shepherd, is one of the most interesting.

There is a chapter on behaviour therapy (Is this a simple procedure applicable without special training?) but nothing on psychotherapy, group therapy, or therapeutic communities. These subjects are doubtless covered in other courses, but it is difficult to see for what section of the medical public this book has been prepared. The budding specialist, though he will have benefited by attending the course, will want fuller monographs on each subject, and the family doctor will want a comprehensive textbook for reference.

Each chapter is by a different author, mostly from the Oxford area or the Maudsley Hospital, and the treatment of each subject is generally adequate and sometimes distinguished.

Scoliosis. Edited by P. A. ZORAB, M.D., M.R.C.P. London. William Heinemann Medical Books Ltd. 1969. Pp. xii+87. Price 25s. 0d.

As Professor Sir Herbert Seddon says in his foreword to this book, we know nothing about the cause of idiopathic scoliosis, and little about what this disorder does to the patient's vital organs. This monograph—one of a series produced by Heinemann—attempts to fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge, mainly by an examination of the natural history of the condition.

The first chapter covers surgical aspects, the remaining five consider scoliosis from the point of view of its effect on the lungs, on respiratory function and on the heart, and from the radiologists' and pathologists' viewpoint. To the family doctor reading these detailed studies two main points seem to emerge; the first is the importance of the earliest possible diagnosis, and this responsibility must surely rest with the family and child health services: the second is the rapidity with which an apparently active and otherwise healthy scoliotic can become grossly disabled—

and here again the preventive function of general practice is concerned.

This is a competent and workmanlike book. While not an essential in the family doctor's personal library, it can fairly claim a place on the shelves in the local postgraduate centre.

Infectious diseases. W. H. PARRY, M.D., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H. London. The English Universities Press Ltd. 1969. Pp. xiv+184. Price 21s. 0d.

The author is at pains to make an epidemiological approach to his subject, and he has achieved his aim. This is a short but fairly comprehensive work, on the whole easy to read, and quite sufficient in depth for the senior student or the general practitioner. The index is good, and quick reference easy. Recent advances in immunology and virology are well described, and the author succeeds in carving a refreshingly-clear path through the jungle of virology. He describes in detail a number of what used to be thought the exotic tropical diseases, and makes the point clearly that they are no longer exotic—leprosy may present in the surgery at Liverpool, and Chaga's disease shatter the calm of Cheltenham or Harrogate. It is odd to find acute rheumatism described in a book on infectious diseases, and odder still to find no reference to the routine use of penicillin in this condition. On the other hand it is pleasing at long last to see measles described as a mild disease with a tiny mortality rate—people have been trying to make our flesh creep for far too long in this respect.

Unfortunately there are occasions when the author's style is less than clear, and too often a sentence has to be read twice before its sense is established. The reviewer was puzzled and irritated by the author's use of the word 'parental'. This word appeared to play several parts, most of which could only be guessed at, and it is to be hoped that the proof-readers were nodding, and that this is not a new-fangled syncopation of 'parenteral'. These small criticisms apart, this is a good book and a useful, and excellent value at its price.

Trouble with feet. MAY CLARKE. Occasional papers on social administration No. 29. London. G. Bell & Sons Ltd. 1969. Pp. 93. Price 18s. 0d.

It has become fashionable in sociology to carry out detailed investigations of various problems. The assumption is that if the population studied is statistically valid then the results are not only valid but interesting and important. This book disproves the latter theories. It is difficult to know to whom it is directed. A limited amount of information is presented with an enormous amount of padding. For example, on several occasions a percentage is explained: "over half, 56%". Quotations from individual people inter-

viewed are given. We are not told whether they are taken out of context. Anyway, they are anecdotal and thus unscientific. Those who are involved with feet care may want to spend 18s. on this book. Had it been condensed to a short paper many medical journals might have wished to publish it.

Lecture notes on bacteriology. R. R. GILLIES, M.D., D.P.H., M.C.Path. Oxford and Edinburgh. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1968. Pp. vii+188. Price 20s. 0d.

This is a small handy well-written introduction to a large subject. There are eight introductory and general chapters on bacterial anatomy, physiology, aggressive and defence mechanisms, serology and the spread of infection. The next ten chapters classify and describe the various groups of bacteria and the three final chapters outline the collection and testing of specimens, antibiotic sensitivity and sterilization techniques.

Medical students and young graduates will find this book as useful as any; older doctors will be jolted to find how much has passed them by since qualification.

The principles and practice of medicine. Seventeenth edition. Edited by A. MCGEEHE HARVEY, M.D., D.Sc. (Hon.), L. E. CLUFF, M.D., R. J. JOHNS, M.D., A. H. OWENS JNR., M.D., D. RABINOWITZ, M.D. and R. S. ROSS, M.D. London. Butterworths. 1968. Pp. xxiii+1,472. Price £7 18s. 0d.

This monumental tome has six editors and 59 contributors, all of whom are or have been on the professional staff of the department of medicine of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. As the editors point out, it is not a revision of Osler's great book (the sixteenth edition by Christian appeared in 1947). It was conceived as a Johns Hopkins textbook of medicine, as Osler had originally intended for his eighth edition. It is the product of a single department in which the presentation of a heritage of clinical excellence received from Osler has been the goal. They point out that the focus of the usual textbook of medicine is upon the disease rather than the patient. Their purpose in this edition is to produce a book which is built around the patient rather than the disease, with the problems he presents in diagnosis, management and prognosis. Much of the material contained in current textbooks has, therefore, been sacrificed. To meet any gap on a particular subject a list of references has been included at the end of each section.

The text opens with an excellent section on the approach to the patient, the examination and the intelligent use of ancillary methods and the management of the patient after a diagnosis has been made. The next section is refreshingly surprising and illustrates one of the great advances made since the last edition—an account of the disorders of water and electrolyte metabolism.

Other sections which emphasize accretion of knowledge are those on medical genetics and on diseases in the immunological features. Both are masterly expositions of the principles involved.

The chapters on renal, cardiovascular, pulmonary and neurological diseases follow the pattern set by the editors—an emphasis on clinical problems, e.g. uraemia, haematuria, congestive heart failure, obstructive airway disease, pleural effusions, headache and weakness, to name a few topics from each section. In an attempt to cover the whole realm of medicine, chapters on psychiatry, medical ophthalmology and dermatology have been included.

With so many authors, there is naturally an unevenness in content and presentation. The field of gastroenterology, for example, is confined to 63 pages, 12 of which are devoted to malabsorption—but there are 128 references at the end of the section. Some subjects, e.g. endocrine diseases, histoplasmosis and tuberculosis receive much more detail.

An unpleasing feature of the book is the vast number of lists of lesions and tables of causes, which detract by their synoptic touch, and can be of little value to the physician and still less to the student. This seventeenth edition bears little relation to Osler, but with the great strides made in all branches of medicine, this is not surprising. The double-column page-setting is easy on the eye, and the book is eminently readable. It succeeds in what the editors have set out to do, and, with this divergence from traditional textbooks, it will make refreshing reading for the physician and the postgraduate.

A mild criticism can be directed to the binding, which seems tenuous for such a heavy tome; while the longitudinal arrangement of the book title and editors' names on the cover will call for a degree of cervical dexterity when placed on the bookshelf.

The education of exceptional children and youth. Second edition. Edited by W. M. CRUICKSHANK, Ph.D., D.Sc., and G. ORVILLE JOHNSON. London. Staples Press. 1968. Pp. xvii+730. Price £4 5s. 0d.

This is not a book of primary concern to British general practitioners. It is written in a number of sections by distinguished authors from several American universities and provides a comprehensive survey of current thinking in relation to the education of handicapped children. Each problem is considered in some depth, primarily from the educational point of view. The book is of particular interest in dealing with the management of highly intelligent children and in regard to the traditional educational problems of to what extent such children should be segregated. It also has an interesting section on stuttering. Its price is bound to make this book unattractive, except to those general practitioners who have a special interest in this field.