

has not been firmly established and is the cause of a great deal of misunderstanding between general practitioner and consultant in this field.

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REFERENCES

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Electronoiks*

Sir,

I am not a founder [member of the Royal College, but have been on the College Research Register for some time working in a number of fields but possibly not up the same tree as your correspondent E. C. Hamlyn (*Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners*, July 1970).

I once spoke at the same meeting as the Rt. Hon. Lord Cohen of Birkenhead, and have attended symposia on mental health addressed by eminent members of the psychiatric fraternity. I have also watched Freud on television.

Since 1959 I have taken a keen interest in the

anatomy of the mind and have had the good fortune to observe at close hand the work of L. H. Dexter who has developed Electronoiks. Electronoiks involves the application of intense gamma radiation photometric methods to micron photography so that the passage of mental impulses are given physical form. From this work it can be categorically said that the mind is anatomical, physical and subject to direct observation. There is no doubt that the evidence shows that electonoikal patterns have unique configurations which vary according to the emotion felt, for example, pain.

These new and exciting findings make nonsense of the belief that the mind is merely a spiritual phenomenon. I am sure that doctors, esteemed by their fellow men, will welcome this addition to their armamentarium in mental care.

Much needs to be done in this field and it is soon hoped to be able to present a comprehensive guide to the ordinary practitioner.

Oldham.

GARETH LLOYD

* Electronoiks is spelt in this way because L. H. Dexter, when he first observed the phenomenon of electronic, photometric mind impulse recognition, said 'oik'. He has applied this term to the recognized impulse—hence 'electronoiks'.

Book reviews

The international handbook of medical science. A concise guide to current practice and recent advances. Edited by DAVID HORROBIN and ALEXANDER GUNN. Aylesbury. Medical and Technical Publishing Co. Ltd. 1970. Pp.744. Price. £3 15s. (£3.75)

This handbook was heralded by an intensive advertising campaign in which it was described as a new concept in medical publishing, and the editors claim that it has been planned to provide a unique service to the medical profession. It is against this background that the work must be reviewed. The first part consists of a series of review articles on recent advances in a series of selected subjects. These are written by a team of well-known authorities from both sides of the Atlantic. They do not cover the whole field of medicine or surgery and some are rather scrappy. They leave the impression that here is another of those year books whose life is purely transient. Each chapter is preceded by a few editorial lines describing its content. For example that on recent advances in surgery proclaims that "The

developments in modern surgery are world-renowned, since the field of transplantation has captured international interest". Psychiatry we find "has become one of the important modern sciences of the developed community". For those who administer anaesthetics there are four pages in which "Professor Dripps retails the main areas of advance in this subject and reviews the problems that face this specialty". There is a large section on drugs in which there is much useful information, particularly on the cytotoxic drugs. Sometimes there is some gratuitous information, such as that magnesium trisilicate is "a white powder given orally in a dose of 1.0g. mixed with milk or water". A large section on the management of the more common syndromes follows. These are divided into categories according to the anatomical systems involved. They are short and concise, and of varying quality. The section on cardiovascular disorders is especially informative. Dr John Fry writes on common emergencies as seen by the general practitioner. Hence the unusual terminology. Included are such phenomena as the 'acute back'

and the 'acute neck' as well as 'acute vomiting and/or diarrhoea' tonsillitis is included as an emergency. The definition of an emergency is rather vague; the patient's is very different from the doctor's. A medical emergency is surely a situation which demands action to prevent disaster to the patient. A peri-tonsillar abscess (which is not mentioned) may be such, but not tonsillitis.

The book is well printed and for these days the price is reasonable.

Preventive medicine in medical care. KURT SCHWARZ, M.B., B.Ch., M.R.C.P., D.P.H. London. H. K. Lewis & Co. Ltd. Pp. x+216. Price £2.10s. (£2.50).

The author describes his book "as a practical guide to the practice of preventive medicine and the application of preventive medical procedures" to individuals and to the community. Two sections cover infectious and non-infectious diseases and the chapter on each disease is subdivided under eight headings: (a) clinical features, (b) atypical features, (c) presymptomatic diagnosis, (d) epidemiology, (e) at risk groups, (f) prevention—primary, secondary and early diagnosis, and (g) public health aspects. Much interesting detail is packed into 26 chapters. The pity is that the author's misuse of punctuation and involved sentences (example above) may well irritate and distract from what has been written. He shows too the common confusion between "incubation period" which he mentions frequently and "serial interval" which is not discussed even when dealing with the duration of infectivity.

There are a few matters of fact, particularly about some of the common infectious diseases, with which experienced family doctors may disagree; for example that infants and young children are among those *at risk* in influenza; or again, the primary prevention of *adult* chickenpox or mumps should surely include a consideration of whether to encourage the catching of a usually milder attack of the disease during childhood.

Apart from such minor criticisms, this is a book to get out of the library and look through before deciding whether it satisfied one's personal taste. No one is likely to read very far without learning something he did not know.

Clinical investigation by means of haematology.

F. A. Ward, L.R.C.P.I., M.C.Path. London. Butterworths. 1970. Pp. vii+164. Price £1 8s. (£1.40).

This interesting little handbook is not one that would be purchased without having read a standard textbook on haematology. This is because the author presents his subject material as a collection of case reports, but these make amusing and stimulating reading. The format is such that the reader is presented in each case

report with a clinical history and the haemogram. The author then asks a number of questions which the reader must attempt to answer before turning the page. The answers are given in the form of a short discussion containing many useful and practical bits of clinical information.

The book is divided into five sections—the normochromic normocytic anaemias, the hypochromic microcytic anaemias, the macrocytic normochromic anaemias, proliferative conditions, and haemorrhagic diseases—and each section is headed by a short introduction. The case reports are not in any special order but the less complicated ones are earlier in each section. In fact the first one or two are used to explain and demonstrate some of the basic definitions used in each section. There is no index but the first one or two pages of each section is devoted to listing the different clinical conditions which are described in the subsequent case reports.

This book is suitable for picking up to read in the odd spare five minutes and can be resumed at any time after any interval.

The place of dynamic psychiatry in medicine.

Report of a Study Group of the Society of Clinical Psychiatrists. H. H. WOLFF. Edited by JOHN G. HOWELLS. Ipswich, The Calver Press. 1970. Pp. 37. Price 3s. 6d. (17.5p)

This study group was set up to consider the place of dynamic psychiatry in medicine as a whole. The report is readable, not over-burdened with technical jargon, and provides strong and reasoned arguments for their conclusion that: "Dynamic psychiatry, by virtue of its equal concern with the psychological, social and biological aspects of health and illness, has an important part to play in medical practice, in training and in research, as well as in the wider field of preventive medicine and organization of society." Much of the practical application of these ideas will be in the hands of general practitioners, and for those who find the term 'dynamic psychiatry' a bit terrifying, it is consoling to read (p. 19)—"Much of what has been said should follow automatically from common sense and ordinary human concern."

New editions

Conybeare's textbook of medicine. Fifteenth edition. Edited by W. N. MANN, M.D., F.R.C.P. and M. H. LESSOF, M.D., F.R.C.P. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1970. Pp. xii+935. Price £8.

The fact that a textbook has reached its fifteenth edition in 30 years makes a review almost superfluous. Furthermore no reviewer can be expected to read right through a heavy tome of nearly a thousand double-column pages. Reference to