

## Book reviews

**Medical and dental hypnosis 9**, (1971). Second edition, J. Hartland, B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B. London: Baillière Tindall. Price: £4.00.

This, the second edition, of a work published in 1966 is of as much value to the general practitioner for its common sense approach to medicine and people as to its hypnosis content. It is a very human book.

Hartland, in traditional manner, scans the subject through, from its history, the nature of suggestion, the principles of trance induction and the theories and the phenomena associated with hypnosis. Thus the first half of the book is important and helps to make the complete hypnotist, yet the reviewer feels that such a blanket of theoretical information will limit any natural flair of an emerging therapist. Hypnosis is still an art and demands intuition and flair and in the reviewer's opinion, though it is an unreliable therapy, its range of usefulness requires exploiting by the general practitioner rather than the psychiatrist.

The second half of the book is more for the general practitioner. It deals with the clinical application of hypnosis in the traditional range of psychosomatic, obstetric, gynaecological, dermatological and dental conditions.

John Hartland, the author, was himself in general practice in an industrial area for many years, doing much hypnosis, finally becoming a psychiatrist until his recent retirement. In the nature of things, psychiatrists who do hypnosis use it for psychiatric conditions and practitioners and others who use it already have an interest in matters psychiatric and use hypnosis accordingly; this is a pity because the reviewer has learnt that it has a range greater than is touched upon in this or any other traditional book. But this does not detract from its usefulness, for there are many conditions for which traditional therapy can do little and these 'end of the line' patients can sometimes be helped and occasionally cured.

Hartland is a realist and knows that hypnosis is no more than a procedure to keep tucked up the therapeutic sleeve for the occasion when traditional medicine has little to offer. Even if such a situation should arise once every few weeks in practice, such situation calls for a text on the subject and Hartland's book, along with one or two others, will do this.

The main difference the reviewer has with the author is his approach to technique, a matter which is considered in great detail; he has produced monologue and procedure in the finest detail for every condition and this takes up much of this book, whereas, for many 'each fish' is played by

ear, and procedure is tailored to taste. It takes all sorts to make an hypnotist.

The reader could do worse than join the controversy; just buy a copy of Hartland and learn about some simple uses in general practice.

**Clothing for the handicapped child** (1972). GILLIAN FORBES, M.S.A.O.T. Pp. 79, London: The Disabled Living Foundation, 346 Kensington High Street, London, W14. Price: £1.20.

Only rarely can the general practitioner truly say a publication is something for which he has really been looking. This is such an occasion. At one time or another, all of us must have been in the situation when the mother or relatives of a handicapped child ask urgently, earnestly, and even despairingly how to dress the child to make it less like an invalid; how not to handicap the child further with the cumbersome clothing necessary to keep it warm; where to get certain materials and what particular type of fastening; how to cope with shoes that wear out so quickly; how to get dresses over calipers. It is refreshing and singularly opportune that the Disabled Living Foundation chose as its first major research project and publication *Clothing for the Handicapped Child*. It is indeed the answer to the prayer of the much harassed general practitioner who may find himself isolated from specialist services or where there are long waiting lists for specialist advice. He can confidently recommend this book from which further information can be obtained.

What is remarkable about the book is that it tackles the whole problem in a way one is hardly ever taught. The child should not feel an invalid, but feel as normal as possible, a part of ordinary surroundings treated as competently and confidently as possible.

Among the many problems discussed are the question of recreation and sport for those children who are handicapped in some way; the appropriate garments to wear; how to overcome incontinence difficulties, different sized limbs, deformed back and how to cope with buttons and loops and toilet purposes when intelligence is retarded. There are also beautiful simple sketches illustrating to the mother or relatives patterns of suitable clothing and how to alter existing garments.

It is immensely encouraging to see all this set out and any parent reading it must be infected by the positive approach, hopefulness and helpfulness which this excellent collection of material inspires. Gillian Forbes who did this study on behalf of the Disabled Living Foundation is to be congratulated, and it is hoped that this book will find a place as a reference book on the shelves of the doctor's library.