

Book reviews

Multiple choice questions in physiology: with answers and comments. IAN C. RODDIE and WILLIAM F. M. WALLACE. Pp. x+277. London: Lloyd-Luke. Price: £2.00.

This review is constructed in the same way as the book.

Mark the following statements true (T) or false (F) and compare your answers with those below.

1. "Multiple choice questions in human physiology" is intended to help students to revise their physiology.
2. General practitioners remember most of the physiology they learned at medical school.
3. General practitioners practise poorer medicine for not knowing such facts as the fate in the kidney of infused para-amino hippuric acid.
4. A piecemeal approach to revision is better than reading a well-written coherent text which sustains the interest with wit and erudition.
6. False statements which the reader wrongly marks as true have an educative value.
7. There is already a surfeit of books for the student of physiology.

Answers

1. T. This is the authors' explicit aim.
2. F, at least for this general practitioner, who tested himself with the book and failed miserably on the basic physiology but passed easily on the applied, which is simply medicine.
3. F, but this may be a matter of opinion.
4. F. Professor Roddie has himself assembled a collection of articles into a book which makes exactly the opposite point.
5. F. In looking up an answer the reader concentrates only on correcting his knowledge of the one fact he has got wrong; this often contributes little to his understanding of the subject as a whole.
6. F. They imprint still further an impression which is all the harder to remove.
7. Too true.

Comment

This is a well produced book aimed at the student. It is unlikely to be of much use to the practising doctor, who, if he wanted information on physiology, would go to one of the large textbooks for an authoritative discussion.

S. L. BARLEY

Lecture notes on gynaecology. BARNES, JOSEPHINE. (1972). Second edition. Pp. 248. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. Price: £1.75.

This handy little book is written principally for senior medical students and student nurses. Its style is concise, but there are a few slips of fact (e.g. p. 19, "the left ovarian vein drains into the

renal artery") and grammatical errors, some of which make the meaning obscure.

The book is best when it is more discursive, as in the chapter Essential Gynaecological Endocrinology, which is well written and very informative. In a small volume of necessity much has to be omitted. Some recent gynaecological advances are adequately described, such as laparoscopy, but not sonar. The psychosomatic aspects of the subject are barely hinted at, and this is the book's main weakness.

It will probably appeal to readers such as those referred to above, but will be less useful to those in general practice, and those making a further study of gynaecology.

S. G. BROOK

A life apart (1972). E. J. MILLER and G. V. GWYNNE. London: Tavistock/Lippincott. Price: £3.00.

This book is an account of a pilot study of residential institutions for the physically handicapped and the young chronic sick. The aim of the authors is to stimulate informed debate about, and the search for, better solutions to the problems of residential care for such people.

The authors were asked to take up this investigation by residents of Le Court Cheshire Home, who, being only too well aware of the strains and hazards of community life, wished to have the help of trained social workers in enabling people to adjust to their disabilities and to each other.

The authors visited 22 residential homes, studying five of them in considerable detail. The purpose of these institutions is to care for the cripple, from the time of 'social death', when he enters the institution, to that of 'physical death' when he dies. This may be many years. Consequently the problems involved in management are not simply organisational, medical and nursing, but psychological, social, moral and religious.

From their analysis the authors identify two types of home. The first is where the emphasis is based on meeting the physical needs of the dependent patient, which they refer to as the 'warehousing' model. The second is that in which the patients are urged to be as nearly independent as possible. This they refer to as the 'horticultural' model. They identify three aims of residential institutions for the chronic sick; to provide for the dependent needs of the individual, to provide as much scope for independence as possible for each individual, and to support each individual in his striving for independence. One inmate summed this up as the three 'A's, to Accept, Adjust, Achieve.

The authors conclude by offering suggestions for future developments in the field of caring for the chronic sick, both in and out of hospital. They