

Much of the information given, however, is incomplete. For example, a list of *Equipment used for treatment* includes such items as *Spencer-Wells forceps* without any indication of how to recognise such a thing, or why a secretary might want to. It is difficult to see how the bald names of specialised appliances can aid a secretary, and one cannot escape the conclusion that the text should be well-pruned. A selective reader will have no problems, but a junior secretary might find the book more difficult than it need be.

J. F. BURDON

**Dermatology—An Illustrated Guide (1973).** FRY, LIONEL. Pp. 154. London: Update Publications. Price: £4.75.

The recognition of skin diseases is a problem in general practice. Trainees have reported that they find skins the most difficult part of their introduction to family practice, and unfortunately

this is an aspect of medicine where previous experience is almost essential. One cannot work out the diagnosis from taking an elaborate history and unless one has detailed knowledge of dermatology the diagnosis of most rashes cannot be deduced. What does happen is that practitioners recognise patterns and, once this has been done, diagnosis can often be made, almost at sight.

A good skin atlas is essential in most practices, but they are usually expensive, and the diseases chosen are often more relevant to hospital out-patients than the conditions normally seen in general practice. *Update* however, have now produced an excellent atlas eminently suitable for family practice. The pictures are good and clear, and there are short concise descriptions of common conditions which are practical and useful.

This is one of the few textbooks I would miss if it was not close at hand in my consulting room, and it is the best skin atlas I know.

D. J. PEREIRA GRAY

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This Journal is concerned with the integration of scientific disciplines in the practice of medicine and, by providing a wide ranging commentary on the growing points of medicine, is an essential complement to the specialised journals.

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