

give a spectrum of incidence and disease management which one can dip into again and again. For this reason it should find a place not only on the vocational trainee's book list but on many practice library shelves.

RICHARD LEETE

CARING WITH CONFIDENCE

Scottish Health Education Unit

Edinburgh (1979)

92 pages. Price £1.30

I have extremely mixed feelings about this little book. There are already several books containing almost identical information, some presented in a better format than this one, and cheaper too. It claims to be a guidance manual for those caring for the elderly but there is little of interest to the general practitioner. The knowledge it imparts is so basic that it is probably better for the producers to distribute it directly to the patient, especially as the print is large and clear.

A. P. PRESLEY

MAN AGAINST DISEASE, PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

J. A. Muir Gray

Oxford University Press

Oxford (1979)

192 pages. Price £4.95

Family practitioners spend a large part of their time performing simple preventive medicine and so this book cannot fail to be of interest. The text is authoritative and comprehensive and contains all the figures and references to government reports that make preventive medicine scientific rather than speculative.

The great problems of alcoholism, coronary heart disease, smoking, and cancer are dealt with in detail but the family doctor, more familiar with life than reports and statistics, will find his scepticism increased. Although there has been so much research, publicity, and legislation about these topics, the man in the street appears largely to ignore it all.

There is a hiatus about everyday preventive medicine such as jogging, the effect of newspaper and television health scares, and health food fanatics, all of which are as much a national preoccupation today as are opening

hours and health and safety at work regulations.

On the whole the book is more for trainees in community medicine than for family doctors but it will be a real must for all those general practitioners who are committee men or who dabble in the politics of health care.

A. ROGERS

A MANUAL OF ADVERSE DRUG INTERACTIONS. 2ND EDITION

J. P. Griffin and P. F. D'Arcy

John Wright & Sons Ltd
Bristol (1979)

370 pages. Price £9.00

The adverse clinical effects of well documented, and therefore preventable, drug interactions are at best inconvenient and at worst occasionally fatal. Yet, in some studies, general practitioners have been demonstrably deficient in knowledge about them. Although some known interactions involve drugs which are not commonly used in general practice and many others present a risk which is more theoretical than real, there is clearly a need for a handy and explicit source of reference, which these authors, a senior member of the staff of the Medicines Division of the Department of Health and a Professor of Pharmacy, have attempted to provide.

The first 50 pages review briefly and simply the pharmacological principles and mechanisms underlying drug interactions. The accompanying diagrams and graphs are unimpressive and could be omitted. The remaining 320 pages contain the drug interaction tables, each entry listing the drug(s) involved in the particular interaction, the possible clinical effects, and a suggested alternative management which would avoid the interaction. The structure of the book allows rapid location of information about therapeutic groups (for example, "Antibiotics"), pharmacological subgroups (for example, "Cephalosporin antibiotics"), or, using the detailed and comprehensive index, individual drugs, by either approved or proprietary name (for example, 'Keflex' or cephalixin). Only a few clinical effects, such as gynaecomastia and thyroid dysfunction, are indexed, so that it is not possible to identify easily, say, all drug interactions capable of producing photo-sensitization. This is not a major disadvantage, as the user of the book would usually have a specific drug, or drugs, in mind, probably in connection with a particular patient.

Apart from an exceptional lapse as on page four ("The anticoagulants . . . are used within a rigid sphere of patient stabilisation") the book is plainly written. It is packed with accurate factual information and every general practitioner could profitably study it, although for day-to-day use many may prefer a much less detailed and considerably smaller handbook, such as that written by Linda Beeley (1977). Specially interested general practitioners will particularly appreciate the careful and extensive documentation of the text.

Postgraduate centres and larger practices should have one or more copies of this manual easily accessible for reference. I hope the book is widely and frequently consulted: many patients may benefit as a result.

R. J. TAYLOR

Reference

Beeley, L. (1977). *Safer Prescribing*. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications.

COLOUR ATLAS OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

Arthur S. M. Lim and Ian J. Constable

Henry Kimpton Publishers Ltd
London (1979)

139 pages. Price £5

Every so often a specialist writes a textbook which even a general practitioner can get excited about. Such a book is the new *Colour Atlas of Ophthalmology* by Dr Arthur Lim and Dr Ian J. Constable, Lion's Professor of Ophthalmology of the University of Western Australia.

True to its title, this is an atlas of ophthalmology and the colour reproduction of the pictures is first-class. Coming as I do from Singapore, I was pleased to see that the book was printed by one of our local printing firms and it bears comparison with any produced from leading medical publishing firms overseas.

The text is uncluttered and easy on the eye. There are no long paragraphs to plough through. A wealth of information is given and a special feature of the book is the attention it pays to details such as how to examine the eyes or evert the upper eyelid without fumbling.

There is an extremely good collection of photographs showing such common conditions as chalazion, entropion, iritis, and acute glaucoma. However, the pictures which are truly superb are