

language. It is also well up to date in recent trends, although it does not trace the development of knowledge from the past to the present. Being psychologists, the authors possibly linger too long over some of the more esoteric psychological treatment methods.

This is not a ready-made handbook for general practitioners—such a book has not been written yet. However, the information given here can be adapted to the needs of most family doctors who wish to identify and understand the problem drinkers in their practices.

The management of alcoholics depends first of all on the ability to recognize them, and then to draw them into discussion about the impact of their drinking on their own health and that of their family. For this, basic knowledge of the facts about alcoholism is essential and reading this short book may help.

B. POLLACK

DERMATOLOGY 3rd EDITION

J. S. Pegum and Harvey Baker

*Baillière Tindall
London (1979)*

278 pages. Price £4.95

This is the third edition of a book by two dermatologists from the London Hospital Skin Department. It epitomizes a standard revision text for students in that it is concise to the point of making it rather dull.

The first 40 pages are concerned with the principles of skin biology, diagnosis, and treatment. The sections which follow on viral, bacterial, fungal, and parasitic diseases contain all the conventional information, but ringworms are particularly well explained. Drug eruptions are comprehensively covered for a book of this size, though the presentation is really an elaborate list.

A pleasing aspect is the space given in each section to the pathogenesis and pathology of each skin condition, and in future one might expect even more detail. Sections on the nails, hair, and sweat glands are tucked away at the back, a position they do not merit in view of their common presentation.

The book is peculiarly deficient in what could be called general practice dermatology; for example, the range of rashes one sees with rubella, measles, and glandular fever is not discussed and some common conditions which can be intriguing in general practice (such as squash players' heel) are not mentioned.

Although this criticism may be nit-picking it is a sign that the book is really intended for hospital dermatologists.

The style of writing is clipped with an occasional humorous comment. There are some good black and white photographs and a few colour plates, but I feel this is totally inadequate: dermatology is very much a visual subject and more photographs especially in colour would do much to enhance the value of the book.

A. P. PRESLEY

EVERYDAY PSYCHIATRY

John Ashton

*Update Books
London (1980)*

126 pages. Price £5.95

Writing textbooks about specialist subjects in general practice is very difficult and there have been few successes: either the book is written by a hospital doctor who sees only an atypical representation of his specialty or a general practitioner who does not have the necessary depth of knowledge to be able to write on a specialist subject in such a way as to appeal to his colleagues.

This book is another attempt to bridge the gap between specialist knowledge and the reality of general practice and to a certain degree has been successful.

The text is readable and many case histories are given to show practical ways in which the psychiatrically ill patient can be helped in the community. There is also constant emphasis on the range of psychiatric illness from an exaggeration of normal behaviour to major psychotic problems.

The trainee in particular will find the guidelines in this book helpful when first coping with the vast number of patients with undifferentiated problems who present to him in the surgery. Where the book is of little help is in giving practical guidance to the inexperienced general practitioner on managing time in this sort of consultation. Skill in this can probably be acquired only through practical experience.

Inevitably, some subjects are treated fairly simply and more detailed advice on management may need to be sought elsewhere. For example, many general practitioners would not treat a child of five for enuresis.

This book is therefore recommended for vocational trainees and at £5.95 is comparatively cheap, although at a cost

of being a soft back with poor quality paper.

K. J. BOLDEN

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES 3rd EDITION

Wilfrid H. Parry

*Hodder and Stoughton
London (1979)*

247 pages. Price £3.95

It seems that most medical textbooks take about six months' thought to put in a proper perspective. Fortunately, it is immediately obvious on reading this particular book that it is essential to every primary care physician. It is exceptionally primary care orientated and the clarity of explanation is beyond reproach.

After a short administrative section explaining the monitoring of infectious disease, the content is divided into airborne diseases, animal and pet transmitted diseases; it has useful chapters on foreign travel and immigrant diseases, and 20 pages of concise, highly selected information on tropical diseases. Each section deals with clinical and therapeutic aspects of individual diseases as well as bacteriology/virology, which adds immensely to its value. There is a comprehensive reference list at the end of each section.

Whooping cough is treated in a balanced and dispassionate way. My only criticism is the shortage of information on the very topical *Campylobacter* diarrhoea (which appears to be extremely common).

The presentation of the text is good, the content interesting and easy to read. It is a truly excellent volume and will probably be as popular as its previous editions.

A. P. PRESLEY

INVOLVING DOCTORS IN HEALTH EDUCATION ABOUT CANCER

D. J. Hill, M. W. Heffernan, and D. I. Rice (Eds)

*International Union against Cancer (UICC)
Geneva (1979)*

*UICC Technical Report Series
Vol. 44*

116 pages. Price 10 Swiss Francs

It came as a surprise to me to learn that there was such an organization as the