

middle third had the chapters on questioning and reflecting; these were well worth reading. We all ask questions, and many of us have discovered that our patients will talk more intimately if we reflect back at them what we understand them to be saying. The analysis offered here of the functions and effects of different kinds of questions and reflections, with research evidence, could improve our performance.

The final chapters do not live up to this standard, but are not without interest. The bibliography is quite impressive; the index is poor.

The middle 60 pages, good as they are, hardly justify the cost of individual purchase, though they could occupy a useful hour if the book is discovered in a library. Next time they write a book, the authors should bring in someone who can make an entertaining subject entertaining.

CONRAD M. HARRIS

A TEXTBOOK OF CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY

J. Rogers, R. G. Spector and J. R. Trounce

*Hodder and Stoughton
Sevenoaks, Kent (1981)*

853 pages. Price £12.95

"The last 30 years have seen an unprecedented increase in the number and in the range of activity of drugs used in the treatment of human disease." Information about drugs is received by general practitioners by a variety of routes. The better informed we are, the better we are able to evaluate the rival beguiling claims of pharmaceutical houses. The new *BNF* goes a long way to meet the everyday needs of general practitioners in a concise form. So, is there a place on the bookshelf for a textbook of clinical pharmacology, or will it be satisfactory for most of us to have library access to this at the postgraduate medical centre?

The authors, who are clinical pharmacologists, state that their opus is intended primarily for medical students: "Some of the pharmacokinetic equations are at first sight fearsome to many doctors of our generation" — and indeed at second sight also to the present writer.

The opening section, on general principles, occupies about one fifth of the book. There are then system-by-system accounts of the use of drugs in the management of disease and sections on infections and cancer chemotherapy, allergy and drug dependence. The authors do not claim to be comprehensive in

their coverage of the subject but it would probably answer most problems that a general practitioner might pose; there is an extensive appendix of further reading. This appendix also reminds us that pharmacy-based drug information centres are found in many district hospital pharmacies within the UK, and are co-ordinated in most NHS regions.

Postgraduate centre libraries should contain at least one up-to-date textbook of clinical pharmacology. This new one is worthy of consideration by library committees and competes with established works on the subject.

D. J. PRICE

CLINICAL NEUROSIS

Philip Snaith

*Oxford Medical Publications
(Oxford University Press),
Oxford (1981)*

233 pages. Price £6.95 (softback)

There has been a considerable advance in the understanding of neuroses during the past two decades. This text is based on lectures given by the author at Leeds and is an attempt to summarize the developments in a single book. The two concepts of personality disorder and neurotic syndrome have been separated. There is full consideration only of the latter.

In the seven chapters the author emphasizes that neurotic syndromes do not in fact exist in categorical compartments, and throughout great effort is made to define terms as clearly as possible and with considerable skill. For instance, "A person with a phobia of dogs will experience extreme anxiety at the sight of a dog, whereas the person with an obsessional fear will not experience so much anxiety at the sight of the dog but will engage in prolonged anxious concern in case he has been contaminated by the dog and it is likely that he will worry more about dogs that he does not see than those that he does."

References and quotations are acknowledged throughout, as would be expected in a work primarily aimed at those studying for postgraduate degrees in psychiatry and clinical psychology. The treatment of the neuroses is considered, but although the final chapter is a detailed description of one form of psychotherapy in which the author has a special interest, there is no attempt to cover the many psychotherapeutic techniques.

There is an extremely clear review of sexual dysfunction in this book which, as far as the general practitioner is concerned, is a text of considerable interest. However, I think it is one to be referred to in the postgraduate centre rather than a must for the practice bookshelf.

RICHARD J. ROBERTSON

FIRST AID IN THE FACTORY. 5TH EDITION

Lord Taylor of Harlow

*Longman
London (1981)*

174 pages. Price £4.95 (paperback)

The writer, until recently abroad, comes to this as a new book, although generally aware of good reports of it. The book covers all aspects of industrial first aid, simply explained and appropriately illustrated by large line drawings. One of its most valuable assets is that it does not hesitate to say when it thinks the official requirements or recommendations could be improved upon, or should be ignored. Its down-to-earth emphasis on good management of the common minor problems—not that major trauma is neglected—is also a strength; it distills clearly the long practical experience, both of the Harlow Industrial Health Service and of the author, in providing first-aid care in the factory.

Its main use appears to lie in offering a basis around which individual first-aid courses can be built; doctors using it for this purpose will be able to correct one or two minor errors, of which perhaps the most important is a confusing instruction to hold the chin "up and back" in mouth-to-mouth respiration. They may also wish to advise a thump on the chest as a preliminary to external cardiac massage.

Even hazards as rare in Britain as bites from inadvertently imported snakes or spiders and the effects of heat, including sunstroke, are mentioned, though here it may perhaps be pointed out that sucking out snake venom is no longer recommended, and that heat exhaustion (stoker's cramp) is quite distinct from, and does not evolve into, heat stroke.

Doctors responsible for teaching industrial first aid will find the book helpful, and should try to persuade employers to supply it to their first-aiders, who may otherwise be deterred by the price (four times that of the 1973 edition) from purchasing it individually.

H. DE GLANVILLE