

and also the difference of approach available to readers.

The volumes may be placed best on or near the working desk for quick reference when seeing patients. They also contain material that is suited for general reading when the opportunity occurs, and also for special reference in pursuit of elusive material. Type is clear and page spacing a pleasure in volumes of 500–600 pages which are easy to handle.

Most chapters have a short list under "Guide to further reading". The brevity of the lists should make them more readily used. The papers and books listed should be valuable as an antidote to the idea that an encyclopaedia can be a substitute for wide, varied and independent reading.

In minor criticism this reviewer suggests that more cross references would be valuable and should be found at the beginning of each section, instead of at the end. It is irritating to turn through eleven pages, on "Colon" looking for Diverticulosis, only to find a small type reference on the last, to a section under that name by the same author in another volume.

Some tightening up of subject matter in the sections may be helpful too. It is odd to find a two and a half page summary on "Earache" immediately after an admirable twenty-six pages on "Ear" by another author. No doubt it is by editorial achievement that this occurs so infrequently. In contrast the separation of "Eyelids" from the section on "Eye" and a special eight pages on "Elbow Joint" supplementary to that on "Fractures and Dislocations" enables information of special value to family doctors to be presented in satisfactory detail.

This bold enterprise of publication is bound to be important to those doctors who read little and adopt the encyclopaedia as a habit. It will stimulate regular readers to a wider horizon of subject matter. The reviewer is surely not the only family doctor who finds parts of it good to read in bed.

ANNIS GILLIE

The Child and His Symptoms. JOHN APLEY, M.D., F.R.C.P., and RONALD MACKEITH, D.M., F.R.C.P. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1962. Pp. i + 262. Price 25s.

Here is a book which ought to be read, and absorbed, by every general practitioner. It is one of the very few that will be memorable not for information but for wisdom, and which will help the doctor in his work every day.

It is subtitled "a psychosomatic approach" and the sick child is discussed against the background of his relationship with his parents and the world, and the relationship between the doctor and his patients. The understanding of these unmeasurable realities which are so much the concern of the general practitioner is not common among specialists but paediatricians in general—and the authors in particular—tend to be exceptions, perhaps because they specialize in particular people rather than particular systems.

The comprehensive and balanced approach displayed will be aspired

to by every general practitioner who has constantly to look after both the physical and the emotional health of his patients. The authors assume that every doctor has a responsibility to equip himself to treat his patient as a whole, a right to do so, and an acceptance of the need for specialist help when he feels he has reached his limitations. These criteria apply to emotional as well as organic illness.

The book is, above all, practical. After two introductory chapters the common symptoms and disorders are dealt with in chapters full of terse and vivid phrases, illustrative case histories and helpful advice. The last chapters on the consultation (structured and unstructured), the diagnosis (comprehensive but provisional) and reassurance (good and bad) speak for themselves.

The Medical Care of Children. Professor S. D. M. COURT, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.C.H. London, New York, Toronto, Oxford. Oxford University Press. 1963. Pp. v + 294. Price 50s.

This book is written by a group of dedicated paediatricians from the "Newcastle School" and edited by Professor Court. It is such a readable book and so close to our experience as family doctors that I feel sure I could detect the influence of the family doctors mentioned in the acknowledgements. How much one would have wished for the support of such a book in the early years of practice. Even now the description of various clinical systems made lively by case histories is most stimulating. Selected reading titles mentioned at the end of each chapter prodded one into a sombre resolution to pursue the matter further.

Now for a closer look. Does the pudding taste as good as it looks? We are warned, quite rightly that, "antenatal and neonatal paediatrics is a difficult but growing subject; and if confinements are to continue at home and in general-practitioner maternity units, the family doctors concerned must become familiar with the principles and practice which are already established".

The chapter on care of the newborn—the first 15 minutes, examining the baby, daily care, feeding, malformations—contains clear instructions written in simple language. The description and discussion of symptoms with associated disorders, abdominal pain, limb pain, headaches, blood in stools, and pallor, to mention but a few, are in the best tradition of medicine, indicating how to seize the essential elements in a diagnostic problem. Herein lies the art and the skill—the selection of the significant symptom and the analysis.

I am not sure that the Talquist method mentioned for haemoglobin estimation in the home is the most satisfactory. Accurate haemoglobinometry with more modern apparatus is available for use by general practitioners. This has an accuracy of ± 2 per cent and eliminates errors due to matching colours with the eye.

I missed any mention of sexual problems, or what Sir Frederick Still called "certain morbid habits in children". He meant "masturbation"; and in his book *Common Disorders and Diseases of Childhood* by coinci-