

in various parts of the body, a few microphotographs and a most useful series depicting those conditions from which a differential diagnosis may have to be made.

The only criticism is that some of the microphotographs do not give the degree of magnification, and one error in spelling. This book is highly commended.

Doctors and Family Planning. MARY JEAN CORNISH, FLORENCE A. RUDERMAN, SYDNEY S. SPIVAC. New York. National Committee on Maternal Health Inc. Pp. iii + 100. Price \$2.00.

In 1957 the Bureau of Applied Social Research of Columbia University interviewed about 550 American doctors—gynaecologists, internists and general practitioners—on the role of family planning in their medical practice. Some of the major findings are incorporated in *Doctors and Family Planning* (Publication No. 19, National Committee on Maternal Health Inc., 2 East 103rd Street, New York) by Mary Jean Cornish, Florence A. Ruderman and Sydney S. Spivac. Priced at \$2, the book is free to schools, libraries, governmental and non-profit making organizations and to individuals on request.

The conclusions reached are not particularly startling. Variations in opinion and behaviour among doctors with regard to the giving of contraceptive advice are attributed, as might be expected, to religious beliefs, age, medical specialty, professional status and hospital affiliations, the religious beliefs of patients and colleagues and the kind of community served.

The authors found a reluctance on the part of many to ask their doctors for contraceptive advice and a corresponding reluctance on the part of doctors to take the initiative in offering it. They found also that doctors were often reluctant to discuss the subject of contraception with professional colleagues, though Roman Catholic doctors not infrequently discuss it with non-Catholics "because it is an issue".

There is at present no established medical tradition that to provide advice on contraception is a necessary part of a medical practice. Nor is there yet much formal teaching of the subject in medical schools. Many doctors feel that they should steer clear of giving such advice unless specifically requested by their patients to do so. The typical exception is the younger gynaecologists practising in a community largely non-Catholic which regards contraception as "a good thing".

It is probable that women doctors are more often consulted on this subject by women patients than are men. What proportion of the doctors interviewed in this survey, if any, were women is not stated.

Obstetrics. J. M. HOLMES, M.D., B.S., M.R.C.O.G. London. Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. 1964. Pp. vii + 256. Price 15s.

This book is one of a series to be published under the title of Concise Medical Textbooks, replacing the Students Aids Series. It is a new book,