

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,

unlike some of the new series which will be re-written or revised from the Students Aid Series.

The author is an examiner in obstetrics to the University of London and gives the student a useful and comprehensive account of the conventional basic knowledge needed for his examinations. In common with many obstetric textbooks emphasis is on subjects of interest to the specialist. For instance, breech delivery has four pages while episiotomy is not indexed and has only a brief description in the text; how to repair a first or second degree tear of the perineum has to be deduced from a description of the way in which a specialist would repair a third degree laceration in hospital under general anaesthesia.

The book is intended for the student and will serve him well. It must not be imagined that it will prepare him for the type of obstetrics required of the general practitioner.

Pathology. J. L. PINNIGER, M.A., D.M., F.R.C.P. London. Baillière, Tindall & Cox Ltd. 1964. Pp. 256. Price 15s.

Few doctors, be they students, general practitioners or those working in specialist medical practice, will fail to find in Dr Pinniger's small yet practical book much new knowledge and wisdom. Modern advances have left many branches of medicine rather isolated and in need of fresh information. This book will clarify much we have not fully understood in our past reading; it will also give us encouragement to adventure outside our own immediate work and interests. Under a comprehensive title will be found a clear style and an uncomplicated arrangement of the contents, a great virtue in a book that will fit into the pocket of a white coat. There is a short but brilliant chapter on electrolytes and the body fluids. Also one on the newest concepts of allergy and of anaphylaxis, of auto-immunity and the collagen diseases. The important discussion of the pathology of genes and chromosomes will be gratefully accepted by many students of all ages. Basic science has tended to intimidate the clinician by the very magnitude of the help that has been made available to his patients. Here is a book that helps us to meet this challenge, and it will be for many a guide to a high ideal of accurate practice.

All will deeply regret that this work should be published in the shadow of Dr Pinniger's early death. We express to the author's family and to his colleagues our sincere sympathy.

Some Aspects of the Work of the Midwife. A report of the fourth study undertaken by the Dan Mason Nursing Research Committee of the National Florence Nightingale Memorial Committee of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. 1963. Pp. i+44. Price 3s.

This committee have previously published reports on the work of the recently qualified nurse, the staff nurse and the enrolled nurse and now complete the series with a report on the work of the midwife.

The report is based on returns from a questionnaire circulated to a