Books received

- Children: a Handbook for Children's Doctors.* Edited by PETER GRAY and FORRESTER COCKBURN. Pp. ix+374, illustrated. Pitman, London. £30.00.
- Contemporary Medical Physiology.* By ROBERT L. VICK. Pp. xxxii+1003, illustrated. Addison-Wesley, Menlo Park, California, Reading, Massachusetts, London, Amsterdam, Don Mills, Ontario, Sydney, 1984. £35.55.
- Contemporary Neurology.* Edited by M. J. G. HARRISON. Pp. xiii+641, illustrated. Butterworths, London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1984. £25.00.
- Dermatology. An Illustrated Guide.* By LIONEL FRY. 3rd edn. Pp. 183, illustrated. Butterworths, London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1984. £19.50.
- The Foremost Physician, the Farseeing Physician.* By E. TED CHANDLER and ROBERT L. BLOOMFIELD. Pp. 87. Harbinger

- Medical Press, Box 17201, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27116, U.S.A., 1983. \$8.95.
- The Hip. Proceedings of the Eleventh Open Scientific Meeting of the Hip Society, 1983. In memory of Sir John Charnley.* Edited by DAVID S. HUNGERFORD. Pp. xii+340, illustrated. C. V. Mosby, St Louis, Toronto, 1983. £47.50.
- Pocket Examiner in Surgery.* By JOHN NORTHOVER and TOM TREASURE, with contributions from MATTHEW FLETCHER, JOHN DIXON, MICHAEL BRIDGER, PAUL HUNTER and KENNETH LINDSAY. Pp. xiii+236. Pitman, London, 1984. £4.95.
- Psychological Influences and Illness: Hypnosis and Medicine. Based on a Symposium held at the Cavendish Conference Centre, London, on 1 September 1982 and sponsored by the Section of Medical and Dental Hypnosis of the Royal Society of Medicine.* Edited by DAVID WAXMAN. Pp. x+83, illustrated. Royal Society of Medicine, and, Macmillan, 1984. £20.00.

Book reviews

Annual Review of Genetics. Vol. 17, 1983

Edited by HERSCHEL L. ROMAN, ALLAN CAMPBELL and LAURENCE M. SANDLER. Pp. viii+537, illustrated. Annual Reviews, Palo Alto, California, 1983. \$27.00 (U.S.A.), \$30.00 (elsewhere). Prices include postage and handling.

This updating relates to most aspects of genetics, both animal and plant, and therefore much of what is written is a far cry from medical problems. Furthermore, to understand the relevant sections it is necessary to have a good working knowledge of modern genetics.

The outstanding medical chapter is by Epstein *et al.*, and here recent developments in the prenatal diagnosis of genetic diseases and birth defects are fully discussed, e.g. the value of fetoscopy, particularly for haemoglobin abnormalities and the prenatal detection of the thalassaemias, and linkage analysis by the use of restriction fragment length polymorphisms. The response of some metabolic disorders to fetal therapy is also dealt with and this brings some optimism into an otherwise depressing area—that of destroying abnormal fetuses.

An awareness of hybrid dysgenesis is a "must" these days, and Engels deals with it well—but that such a fundamental phenomenon as "jumping genes" should be confined (in animals) to *Drosophila melanogaster* seems unbelievable and clearly "more work needs to be done".

Of general interest is the latest news on sex ratio manipulation to control insect pests (Robinson). Irradiation of males in *Drosophila* leads to an excess of this sex in the F₁ generation, and so it does in the Codling Moth—yet *Drosophila* males are, like us, XY whereas those of the Codling Moth are XX. Very puzzling, but the technique in any case does not seem successful in ridding us of our insect enemies.

The chapter by Maynard Smith on the genetics of stasis and punctuation in evolution is stimulating, and he concludes that single gene differences between species do not indicate saltation any more than polygenic inheritance argues for stasis.

Lastly, there is (for me) nostalgia in the excellent memoir to Curt Stern (Neel). What a splendid book Stern wrote on the *Principles of Human Genetics*, and how sad that his clarity of expression is now, with a few notable exceptions, so rare in the discipline.

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Case Histories in Psychiatry

By EAMONN FOTTRELL. Pp. 328. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1983. £6.95.

Yet another book aimed primarily at trainees in Psychiatry preparing for the MRCPsych examination. This is however a useful addition to the rapidly growing list. Dr Fottrell presents 57 selected case histories covering a wide range of psychiatric practice. Each is followed by a series of questions related both to the diagnosis and management of the individual case and the general field of psychiatry relevant to the case. The author provides his own answers and then a brief list of relevant further reading.

I would not agree with the author's notion of what constitutes a formulation and would certainly disagree with many of the answers. This is to be expected in a book of this kind and the author makes no claim to be definitive. The strength of the book lies in its recognition that in the individual patient the interaction of psychiatric illness with a particular personality in the context of specific influences and stresses will be unique in every case and will require a flexible response from the doctor.

This approach to learning centred around specific clinical problems has educational merit and the book can be recommended.

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Case Presentations in Renal Medicine

By R. A. COWARD, C. D. SHORT and N. P. MALLICK. Pp. xiv+172, illustrated. Butterworths, London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1983. £5.95.

Books of case presentations are a popular method of preparing oneself for examinations, especially the MRCP in which case history interpretations are an important part. Case histories and their interpretations certainly make interesting and easy reading, but do not replace the use of textbooks in learning about a subject. Nephrology often comes over as a very confusing subject partly because there is often no one pathological diagnosis for a given clinical presentation and vice versa. These case presentations