Anatomy: 1800 Multiple Choice Questions. Revised edition, M.J.T. FitzGerald, James P. Golden and Maeve FitzGerald. Pp.iii + 210, illustrated, Butterworths, London, Boston, Durban, Singapore, Sydney, Toronto, Wellington, 1986. £6.95.

While our lives are ruled by MCQs, there will be demand for books dedicated to these. This book provides 1,800 questions which, by and large, are reasonable and straightforward. There are questions on regional anatomy, histology and embryology. In addition, there are a number of simple line diagrams to be labelled. The standard of the questions indicates that they are aimed at the undergraduate rather than those aspiring to primary F.R.C.S. This is a good little book.

Desmond E. Sharland
*Whittington Hospital,
London N19 5NF.*

Annual Review of Public Health. Vol. 7, 1986, edited by Lester Breslow, Jonathan E. Fielding and Lester B. Lave. Pp.viii + 566, illustrated. Annual Reviews, Palo Alto, California, 1986. \$31.00 (U.S.A.), £34.00 (elsewhere). Prices include postage and handling.

This latest annual review of public health maintains the high standard of the series. As a USA publication it centres to a large extent on the American scene with American contributors but British authors are prominent amongst the references. It must also be said that much of the material is equally applicable to Britain.

The subject matter is wide, dealing with such issues as: the environment, bio-statistics, nutrition, occupational health, legal and economic aspects of public health as well as concerns about human behaviour. In general the reviews of the topics are up to date and comprehensively covered, setting out the 'state of the art'. Perhaps unavoidably, some of the conclusions are less precise.

However, on the difficult subject of treatment of mild hypertension the reviewer sets out the somewhat conflicting evidence and comes down in favour of treatment as the appropriate public health policy. I also like the approach of the authors of 'asbestos and public policy' who argue for the separation of science from advocacy which plays on emotion and is frequently at odds with current research.

Readers can be assured that they will find in this volume topics of interest from the many subjects covered. The book is a significant contribution to the advancement of our knowledge in important and difficult areas and is recommended for selective reading to a wide range of health professionals.

R.J. Donaldson
*Department of Epidemiology and Social Medicine,
Royal Free Hospital,
Pond Street,
London NW3 2QG.*

Hospital Infections. Second edition, edited by John V. Bennett and Philip S. Brachman. Pp.xix + 666, illustrated. Little, Brown, Boston, Toronto, 1986. £47.15.

The first edition of this book appeared in 1979 and concentrated much needed authoritative advice on the increasingly important subject of hospital infections. The current edition has the same format and although only 120 pages longer, contains much more information because of the reduced type size. The editors have brought together a formidable group of internationally known American authors but have exercised too much editorial control. This is evident in the stereotyped length, often too short, of many of the chapters, best illustrated in the section on nosocomial urinary tract infection which is restricted to six pages when the author rightly reports infection rates of 35–45% of *all* hospital-acquired infections. Nevertheless, this edition deals with the many facets of the complex environment of the hospital and the increased size of the book reflects the magnitude and complexity of nosocomial infections together with the recently accumulated knowledge of control measures. The source and impetus behind much of this new information and advice is provided by members of the Association for Practitioners in Infection Control (APIC) and those of the Society of Hospital Epidemiologists of America (SHEA). The Center of Disease Control (CDC) is internationally recognized as a provider of the 'Guidelines and Recommendations for the Prevention of Infections and Infection Control in Hospitals'. This edition contains a report by Robert Haley of the Study on the Efficacy of Nosocomial Infection Control (SENIC) Project which has formed the basis of much of the statistical information available on nosocomial infections in 338 US hospitals.

New chapters on infection surveillance and control programmes, statistics, medico-legal aspects and domiciliary infection problems reflect the change in emphasis in infection control and are welcomed. During the period of the SENIC project (1974–83) over 5,000 infection control nurses received training in the CDC courses which permits each hospital of more than 250 beds to have the services of a trained infection control nurse; sadly lacking in many British hospitals!

This book introduces computers into surveillance, discusses AIDS in two pages, and offers the reader the choice of category specific or disease specific isolation systems. New terms like 'emergicenters' and 'surgicenters' have crept into the text but the message throughout the book is clear – hand washing is the single most important isolation precaution. This is a most learned book and I have enjoyed sharing the clinical experiences of the authors. The approach is based strongly on the epidemiological approach of surveillance in hospitals and will prove an invaluable reference text for those who work in hospitals and who strive to achieve a safe environment within which to practice their skills.

Professor A.M. Emmerson
*Department of Microbiology and Immunobiology,
The Queen's University of Belfast,
Belfast BT12 6BN*