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Postgraduate Medical Journal publishes original papers on subjects of current clinical importance and welcomes review articles with extensive, up-to-date bibliographies as guides to further reading. Several symposia are published each year, each devoted to a single subject and written by specialists in different disciplines. Most issues include authoritative Current Surveys of clinical problems, and well documented Reports of cases of particular interest, and Book Reviews.

A 'Notice to Contributors' is published on the inside back cover of this issue. The Editor reserves the right to make changes which may clarify or condense papers where this is considered desirable.

The Journal is covered by *Current Contents* and *Biological Abstracts*.

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Books received

Familial Hyperbilirubinaemia. Edited by L. OKOLICSANYI. Proceedings of the Workshop on Familial Disorders of Hepatic Bilirubin Metabolism - Venice, May 1980. Pp. xvii + 263, illustrated. John Wiley, Chichester, New York, Brisbane and Toronto, 1980. £15.50.

Immunosuppressive Therapy. Edited by J. R. SALAMAN. Current Status of Modern Therapy vol. 7. Pp. xi + 257, illustrated. MTP Press, Lancaster, 1981. £16.95.

Introduction to Physiology. Vol. 5. Control of Reproduction. By HUGH DAVSON and M. B. SEGAL. Pp. ix + 602, illustrated. Academic Press, London, Toronto and Sydney; Grune and Stratton, New York and San Francisco, 1980. £19.20.

Perspectives on Epilepsy. 1980/81. Compiled by the British Epilepsy Association. Edited by SHELAGH MCGOVERN. Pp. v + 107, illustrated. British Epilepsy Association, Wokingham, 1980. £2.50 + 50p postage (non-members); £1.50 + 50p postage (members).

Book reviews

Community Paediatrics

By ELSIE D. MAY. Pp. 186, illustrated. MTP Press, Lancaster, 1980, £7.95.

The value of a comprehensive approach to the health and development of children from birth to adulthood is now accepted, and there is a need for a book on Community Paediatrics. A number of surveys, the most important of which is the longitudinal study of the National Children's Bureau, have shown that the health and development of children who are disadvantaged at birth continues to be adversely affected throughout their childhood and adolescence. There are a number of social indicators of social deprivation including poverty, poor housing, single parent families and unemployment. The child health services have an important role not only in the provision of care for sick children but also in the identification of children at risk of developmental delay and in the prevention of childhood handicap. This book aims to provide a comprehensive approach to the health and development of children from birth to adulthood suitable for use by professionals working with children from birth through adolescence, as well as by parents.

The book is planned in 8 chapters; the first provides a review of the subject; the 6 subsequent chapters consider age-related subjects and the last describes the child-care services. The appendices contain further details about hearing tests, developmental questionnaires and infectious diseases. The format of this book is somewhat restrictive in that certain chapters which are discussed in relation to one particular age-group have relevance throughout childhood, e.g. a useful account of accidents, injuries and poisons could with benefit have been expanded to cover all age-groups including the adolescents. Likewise the account of non-accidental injury in young children could usefully have been expanded.

The subject has been extensively researched, as evidenced by the large number of key references. The case histories used to illustrate specific problems are described vividly, and in several instances provide amusing vignettes which are illustrative of the author's considerable experience and wisdom gained in working in the community child health services.

This book has much to commend it, but it is difficult to see

how it can be unreservedly recommended to the suggested readership, which includes parents as well as professionals working with children. The technical terminology and detail will render comprehension difficult for the lay reader, but there is perhaps too little detail to ensure that the book is instructive to professional workers. There are always difficulties in writing a technical book for a wide audience.

The Epilepsies. Modern Diagnosis and Treatment

By JOHN M. SUTHERLAND and MERVYN J. EADIE. 3rd edn. Pp. x + 156, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1980. £3.95.

The third edition of this short book has been awaited with expectation, as in the last 6 years considerable advances in the management of patients with epilepsy have occurred as a result of the development of CT scanning of the brain and greater use of anti-convulsant drug monitoring.

As before, this is an excellent book which can be highly recommended to both neurologists in training and those already trained, if such a category can be said to exist. Others concerned with the management of patients with epilepsy such as psychiatrists and pediatricians will also find it of great value. As usual there may be personal differences in the way patients are managed and, in particular, different anti-convulsants are used, but this is an excellent text on which to base one's approach.

Pharmacology in Clinical Practice

By RICHARD LANCASTER. Pp. 604, illustrated. William Heinemann Medical Books, London, 1980. £25.00.

An increasing number of books on clinical or applied pharmacology are appearing on the market, probably reflecting the recent growth of interest in clinical pharmacology in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. It is inevitable, therefore, that comparisons will be made with established texts when examining a new book for the first time. This book is an imaginative attempt to apply basic pharmacological principles to contemporary therapeutic practice, giving many references to original papers for further detailed information. Unfortunately, it is deficient in several respects. There are

projects, all of which are of a high quality and stimulate an awareness of the increasing range of rehabilitation medicine, as it moves into the 1980s. Now that it is the policy of the Royal College of Physicians to require specialists in all branches of medicine to acquire an understanding of the principles of rehabilitation, this book should be required

reading for all physicians in training. It should also find its place in all postgraduate libraries, physiotherapy and occupational therapy departments and schools, and will be of very great value as an introduction to those thinking of rehabilitation medicine as a career or who are studying for the Diploma in Medical Rehabilitation.

Letter to the Editor

February 4th, 1981

Review of general surgery 1980

Sir,

Regular readers of my Review of Surgery may notice that this year's is rather shorter, and rather later in appearance, than usual. This is because I, like all of my colleagues at Westminster Medical School, have been preoccupied in 1980 in dealing with the report of a committee, set up by the Vice Chancellor of the University of London, which recommended the closure of our School. No reasons were given nor worthwhile advantages claimed. It was therefore necessary for us to become deeply involved in proving to others what we ourselves already knew – that we had one of the (if not *the*) best and most economic medical schools in the country. It now seems that common sense has prevailed and the University hierarchy has found other things with which to occupy itself. However, television and radio appearances, speaking at emergency meetings, writing to newspapers and publishing political articles (Ellis, 1980a, b) were hardly compatible with the normal duties of a Professor of Surgery, who is far better occupied in teaching and research. Hence the difficulties that have been encountered in finding time for more important academic exercises, such as the preparation of this review.

Sincerely,

HAROLD ELLIS,
D.M., M.Ch., F.R.C.S.

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References

- ELLIS, H. (1980a) The Flowers report. *World Medicine*, **19**, 27.
ELLIS, H. (1980b) The Flowers report. *British Medical Journal*, **1**, 691.

Notice

The Fourth World Congress for Cervical Pathology and Colposcopy

will be held in London, England from 13th–17th October 1981. For further information apply to: CPC Secretariat, Caroline Roney Medical Conference Organisers, 100 Park Road, London NW1 4RN, England; telephone: 01-723 6722.

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Standard usage. The *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* is used as a reference for all spelling and hyphenation. Verbs which contain the suffix *ize* (*ise*) and their derivatives should be spelt with the *z*. Statistics and measurements should always be given in figures, i.e. 10 min, 20 hr, 5 ml, except where the number begins the sentence. SI units should be used wherever possible. Papers should be written in the third person.

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