

Book reviews

The Digestive System. By R. J. RYALL

The Endocrine System. By J. G. LEWIS

The Respiratory System. By R. GRENVILLE-MATHERS

The Urological System. By C. A. C. CHARLTON

Penguin Library of Nursing. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Education. 1973. 90p each.

The present syllabus for nurse education requires the student to consider each system of the body as a whole. With this concept in mind the Penguin Library of Nursing is producing a series of ten books, of which those on the Digestive, Endocrine, Respiratory and Urological Systems are here under review. These volumes provide comprehensive studies of the systems involved, covering applied anatomy and physiology, pathology, investigations and treatment, nursing care and social aspects of the disease. The material has been thoughtfully prepared but inevitably in a paperback edition of this kind, the quality of production is restricted. The illustrations, particularly the X-ray and microscopic reproductions, are noticeably poor. Some aspects are too detailed for the average student nurse and it is unlikely that she will wish to expend 90p per copy to purchase the whole series. However, it should be a useful addition to nursing libraries and individual volumes may well prove of value to the pre- or post-registration nurse who has a special interest in one of the systems involved.

Clinical Behaviour Therapy

Edited by ARNOLD A. LAZARUS. Pp. 230. London: Butterworths, 1972. £3.50.

Behaviour therapy began as a reaction to the lengthy and unscientific methods of psycho-analysis with its uncertain results. Techniques based on learning theory have now been practised for a decade and some convincing claims have been made as to its efficacy. Unhappily this book of articles on the subject edited by one of its foremost protagonists is disappointing. Most of the contributors are Psychiatrists or Psychologists in Private Practice treating fee-paying patients suffering from phobias, anxieties and disturbed inter-personal relationships. There is a wealth of anecdotal material but no attempt is made to assess results on a scientific basis and little effort in justifying techniques in terms of theory. Most of the authors use a combination of traditional insight therapy and a more directive behaviouristic approach. Details of the methods used will be of interest to those already familiar with this form of therapy (and its limitations) but will find much of the very detailed case material superfluous and repetitive.

Speaking at Medical Meetings, a practical guide

By JAMES CALNAN and ANDRAS BARABAS. Pp. 117, illustrated. London: William Heinemann Medical Books, 1973. £2.25.

A small minority of us are naturally endowed with the ability to speak well in public. The majority do it indifferently or downright badly. There are none of us who could not, with some effort and the right sort of advice, improve our performance.

This grand little book provides the advice and should be compulsory reading for all who presume to demonstrate cases, present scientific papers, deliver formal lectures and organize or chair medical meetings. There are individual chapters dealing with all these activities followed by more general ones on learning to speak well and the correct use of visual aids.

An increasing amount of time is spent by the medical profession on its backside being talked at. If the guidelines presented succinctly and entertainingly by Professor Calnan and Mr Barabas were followed, it would be to the greater enjoyment and profit of us all.

Gynaecology Illustrated

By M. M. GARREY, A. D. T. GOVAN, C. H. HODGE and R. CALLANDER. Pp. 492, illustrated. Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone, 1972. £3.00.

As a book whose main claim is that it is illustrated, the illustrations must take pride of place in any review. These are, on the whole, good, many indeed are excellent. There are, however, some notable exceptions. In the first place, those purporting to demonstrate histological findings lack definition and tend to be confusing, while others, fortunately few, are too diagrammatic to be easily understood.

The text itself is concise and well laid out but of somewhat variable standard, some sections being excellently written while others are less adequately dealt with. There is throughout a lack of differentiation between conditions which are rarely encountered and those which are commonly seen. As a result a student would be bound to gain a false impression of the relative importance of various diseases and conditions.

The final impression is one of a book which would be valuable for revision purposes but less useful as a text-book for a student at the start of his gynaecological training.