tioned only three and gave one a less than enthusiastic review.

Anyone interested in buying medical books personally or professionally should have access to the 'Medical Textbook Review', a bargain at £3.00. It is a good read and a useful reference book and can be used as a blunt instrument in convincing your medical librarian that *your* favourite title should be available on the shelves.

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Multiple Choice Questions in Geriatric Medicine, K. Gupta. Pp. xiv + 178. Pitman, London, 1985. £5.95.

This small book begins with an introduction from Professor John Anderson giving advice on answering multiple choice questions. It is then followed by over 300 questions in eleven different sections. Each section is followed by the answers together with some discussion of the background to these answers. It is well put together, easy to use and serves the useful purpose of self audit. It raises, however, a question which is fundamental to multiple choice questionnaires and particularly those involving clinical material or (as in this case) more general material about care of the elderly. That is the difficulty that arises when there is no clear cut answer and so debate is possible.

Some examples of debatable answers are as follows (author's answer is in parentheses):

Generally speaking diseases are difficult to prevent in old age (False). The answer says it is false because anaemia, hypothyroidism and osteomalacia are frequently not reported. This is true but a student could be forgiven for taking the opposite view if he indicated that much more common than those diseases specifically mentioned are others (e.g. atheroma/ishaemic heart disease/congestive heart failure/diabetes/chronic obstructive airways disease and Parkinsonism) which are not preventable at the present time by intervention in old age, although some may be affected by intervention at earlier ages.

'Age Concern was started in 1940 (True).' In fact the National Old Peoples' Welfare Committee started in 1940 and Age Concern became its successor under different management in 1970.

'Over 50% of cases of infective endocarditis in the elderly are due to *Strep. faecalis* (the answer indicates this is true because *Strep. viridans* is the most important cause). This is somewhat confusing, to say the least.

'Day hospitals with 15–20 places provide a better quality of care (True).'

'Angina is not often complained of by the elderly (False).'

'Thyrotoxicosis predominantly affects the cardiovascular system in the elderly (True).'

In the main these and other debatable questions are shortcomings of the multiple choice questionnaire system and not of the author's researches. In the present context, however, used as a self audit exercise this little book provides a useful basis. The answers are briefly but reasonably

discussed and if the auditee disagrees with some then hopefully he will be stirred to refer to a textbook.

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Multiple Choice Questions in Psychiatry, James Maguire, Patrick McKeon and Kieran Power. Pp. ii + 140. Pitman, 1985. £5.95.

This small book includes 200 MCQs in its first part, and answers accompanied by short commentaries in the second. The questions are of a type encountered in examination for Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the exercise of trying to answer them and checking the answers afterwards will prove valuable to candidates for this examination. This is the purpose of the book which it is likely will be achieved.

At the same time it is interesting that the wording of psychiatric MCQs requires particular care, and that it is difficult to set psychiatric MCQs to which all the answers would be agreed by representative experts. Royal College of Psychiatrists' questions are not (yet) entirely free of semantic problems or of contentious items and so the questions in this book, which are similar in these respects, will be useful to trainee psychiatrists facing the examination hurdle. The commentaries are commendable.

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Practical Methods in Clinical Immunology Series. Vol. 8. Paraproteins in Disease: Investigation of Plasma Cell Dyscrasia, W. Pruzanski and E.C. Keystone. Pp. xii + 195, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1985. £30.00.

This is yet another review of paraproteins from this Canadian group. The first chapter is devoted to the structure and function of immunoglobulins and is similar to the dry descriptions that can be found in most standard immunology texts. Chapter 2 however, is recommended and reviews a wide variety of disease states associated with paraproteins with in particular a good review of non-neoplastic diseases associated with paraproteinaemia. The discussion on cryoglobulins is very up to date, however I wish more space had been allowed for discussion on amyloidosis.

The remaining chapters are largely devoted to laboratory techniques involved in isolation and characterisation of paraproteins from a wide variety of body fluids and tissues. The final chapter discusses the hydridoma technology for monoclonal antibody production and I regret that they have not gone on to discuss the new techniques of DNA hybridisation which is revealing so much evidence about B cell products such as immunoglobulins.