

Book reviews

Childhood Disorder. A Psychosomatic Approach. By PHILIP PINKERTON. (Pp. xii + 192; 10 figures + 9 tables. £3.75). St. Albans: Crosby Lockwood Staples. 1974.

Dr. Pinkerton 'presents clinical disorder in childhood as the outcome of continuous interaction between the child and his personal environment, including parental attitudes, school atmosphere, and his social background'.

The chapter on therapy (pp. 151 to 166) gives special attention to 'listening'. It is good. An earlier section (pp. 140-150) on adolescence is also good. Chapter 12 on the psychosomatic concept adds 'the psychosocial sequence' and 'the pseudosomatic sequence' to the more familiar terms 'somatopsychic' and 'psychosomatic'. These may become useful new ideas. This chapter might usefully have been put near the beginning of the book.

This is not so much a book to consult for guidance on individual symptoms as a book for a doctor new to these ideas to read through for new attitudes. But to some extent it is COIK (comprehensible only if known). What the beginner needs is guidance on the sort of reasonably hard evidence that supports a hunch that a bodily symptom arises in the psyche rather than in the soma—more than the evidence of 'nil organic'. It would have been helpful to discuss the words 'sensitive' (p. 32) and 'overprotective' (p. 33), and why is 'volatile' the term for the child with aggressive behaviour? To say (on p. 39), 'A competitive society makes certain demands on every child', seems to me to assume that middle class attitudes are common to all classes, which I doubt, just as I doubt whether 'in socioeconomic adversity, family relationships tend to be irregular'.

This is a book with many thoughtful ideas, which will suit some tastes more than others.

The Residential Psychiatric Treatment of Children. Edited by PHILIP BARKER. (Pp. xiii + 354; illustrated + tables. £7.50.) London: Granada. 1974.

This is the first systematic account of psychiatric inpatient resources for children in Britain. The contributors, each with special experience in a particular aspect of the subject, bring together in a well-produced volume a great deal of useful and interesting material. There are chapters dealing with the management of neuroses, psychoses, conduct disorders, psychosomatic disorders, language disorders, epilepsy, and brain damage. The Editor provides an historical introduction, a general survey, and a review of follow-up studies. A useful appendix provides details of residential units in the United Kingdom. Particularly valuable is the discussion of the role and training of the child psychiatric nurse.

This is essentially a pragmatic account and is likely to be of most use to those actively engaged in inpatient work with disturbed children.

Diets for Sick Children. 3rd Edition. By DOROTHY E. M. FRANCIS. (Pp. xii + 434; 136 tables. £7.50.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1974.

This new edition of an excellent reference book has been considerably extended and revised. The addition of references within each chapter will prove very useful, as will the new chapter on vitamin D and mineral supplements in therapeutic and synthetic diets, and two short appendices on borderline substances and metric conversion. Lists of commercially available products suitable for each diet have been omitted since their composition is liable to frequent changes and it is safer to obtain regular information from manufacturers themselves. However, lists of suitable basic foods and a wide range of recipes have been retained, together with much fuller information on special products available.

There is an excellent section on normal feeding including breast feeding, a detailed comparison of artificial baby milks, and guidelines for weaning and for feeding each age group. The physiological background to each disease has been explained in greater detail and most of the chapters have been extended, including those on coeliac disease, tube feeding, renal disease, various fat-restricted diets, carbohydrate intolerances, phenylketonuria, amino acid disorders, and organic acidaemias. New chapters have been included on the dietary treatment of cystic fibrosis and achieving adequate nutrition in multiple malabsorption or protracted diarrhoea. There are also excellent tables on amino acid disorders and a chart of the physiology of absorption of the major foodstuffs. The advice given in the chapters on balance studies and diets for special tests can be applied to use for adults.

The additional information provided in this new edition should ensure that it will be acknowledged as an indispensable reference book for paediatricians, physicians, medical students, and dietitians.

Neonatal Medicine. Edited by F. COCKBURN and C. M. DRILLIEN. (Pp. x + 873; illustrated + tables. £15.75.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1974.

There are 16 contributors to this book which is intended as a practical guide, particularly for paediatric registrars and senior nursing staff in special care and premature baby units. It has many good points but several faults, not the least of which is its price. This must surely be due, at least in part, to its being over-ambitious. It tends to overlap too far with standard paediatric texts. Furthermore, there is a certain