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Book reviews

Behaviour Modification for the Mentally Handicapped. Edited by W Yule and J Carr. (Pp. 298; illustrated + tables. £11.95 hardback.) Croom Helm: London. 1980.

This volume arises out of a series of workshops given at the Institute of Psychiatry which showed the need for a text bringing together widely scattered source material. The contributors aim to combine examples from practical experience with surveys of the relevant literature.

13 chapters and 3 appendices are used to show how to select appropriate behaviour for change, increase desirable behaviour, decrease undesirable behaviour, and to teach these skills to others. It is intended for all those who work with mentally handicapped children, including parents. The 3 appendices give a detailed account of the content of workshops run by the editors, a means of assessing basic knowledge of behavioural techniques, and a form for students to assess lectures.

This is one of the most useful books of its kind, especially as it is in a British rather than an American context. Although the standard of the contributors varies, and perhaps a heavier editorial hand could have resulted in a more even style, the general standard is high. The contribution of practical examples and literature review works well and should be repeated. In summary this book is essential reading for anyone concerned with behavioural problems of mentally handicapped children.

R L SMITH

Green and Richmond Pediatric Diagnosis. Interpretation of Symptoms and Signs in Different Age Periods. Third edition. By

Morris Green. (Pp. 658; illustrated + tables. £14.25 hardback.) Saunders: Philadelphia. 1980.

This edition has been almost entirely revised by Morris Green with only one of the 73 chapters, that on child development, beautifully and simply written by Sally A Provence.

The text is in two parts 'The interview and physical examination' and 'Signs and symptoms'. There follows a short appendix of weight and height charts and a comprehensive 59-page index of symptoms, signs, and disease headings. There are only 2 pages of pictures illustrating 10 facial syndromes.

The aim is to guide the paediatrician, already well armed with his standard textbooks, through the intricacies of history taking, examination, and interpretation of the findings.

The first section is full of good advice and hints, and takes care to point out what is normal and what is not. The second section is devoted to the differential diagnosis of presenting symptoms and signs, and each one is carefully dissected in an introduction which is backed up by a briefly annotated but comprehensive aetiological classification of the relevant diseases. References are included as an integral part of the text.

I liked this book for its good sense and useful advice which are not always found in the standard works. Some subjects such as 'Failure to thrive' and 'Headaches' are particularly well laid out, but there are unexpected disappointments as in 'Understature' where reference to parental heights is only found by searching, and emotional deprivation only merits 4 lines at the end of a 6-page classification.

It is unfortunate that the author has

not tried formally to separate the manifestations of illness in the newborn from those of infancy and the older child, and disappointing that there is virtually no reference to, or advice on, the interpretation of laboratory and x-ray investigation. Despite these drawbacks, I am glad to have this book on my shelf.

JACK INSLEY

Neonatal Hyperbilirubinemia. Monographs in Neonatology Series. By G B Odell. (Pp. 153; illustrated + tables. \$16.50 hardback.) Grune & Stratton: New York. 1980.

Provided that this book is looked on as something nearer to a research monograph than a general paediatrician's handbook, it is a useful text for the neonatologist who has a particular interest in laboratory medicine. Where the book is dealing with the biochemistry of bilirubin metabolism and its transport it is undoubtedly scholarly, extensively referenced, and informative although rather heavy going. In contrast there are some very simple sections relating to the clinical aspects of jaundice which are too superficial.

The opening chapter has the admirably simple title 'Jaundice and the formation and excretion of bilirubin', but it is full of complex biochemistry, some of which is extremely interesting, and we are helped with some of the difficult concepts by a series of very clear diagrams—such as the diagram of the hepatocyte unit in the first chapter which is a model of clarity and in itself justifies looking at the book. Tucked away in the biochemistry are some general ideas which I found quite novel. For example, Professor Odell points out