

BOOK REVIEWS

SPORTS MEDICINE BY J.G.P. Willaims and P.N. Sperryn (editors), *published by Edward Arnold Ltd., London 1976 pp. 547, 2nd Edition, Price £23.50 (Distributiod in India by M/s B.I. Publications, 13, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002).*

This book which is the now an enlarged and updated edition of the Sports Medicine published fifteen years ago projects the subject matter in the form of an integrated multidisciplinary field incorporating basic areas like physiology of exercise and sports, psychology, biomechanics and kinesiology as well as the relevant areas of clinical medicine like sports traumatology, sports psychiatry and medicine. There are chapters on unique medical problems of sports like those in different environments, of nutrition, doping as also problems specific to women in sports. It is indeed a very comprehensive treatise and produced and published in the best of Arnold's tradition.

The book is a must for the medical adviser in the field of sports. It will also prove useful to all those who work in or close to the field like physical educationists, physiotherapists, coaches and trainers.

S. K. MANCHANDA

NEW MIND, NEW BODY — Biofeedback: New Directions for the Mind BY Barbara B. Brown, *published by Hodder and Stoughton, Lond. 1975, pp. 464, Price £5.25*

Dr. Barbara Brown is a pioneer researcher in the field of bio-feedback, and has already edited some reference books—(The Bio-feedback Syllabus, and The Alpha Syllabus) in this fast advancing field of research that explores the mechanisms behind the working of mind.

In this book she sums up her own work and the contributions made by others with a personal touch that makes a fascinating reading. The studies described by Dr. Brown include the changes in galvanic skin response as indicators of various unconscious confrontations of mind with the surroundings, and experiments on the control of skeletal muscles, heart, blood pressure, various frequencies of brain waves and mental activity. Effects of meditation, and various altered states of consciousness too find a fairly sufficient treatment. Dr. Brown marshalls impressive evidence to assure the possible use of bio-feedback in the voluntary control over most internal body processes, relief of medical problems like asthma, high blood pressure, eczema, insomnia and help in many other psychosomatic disorders and emotional distress.

Some years ago, the writer of this review was sitting in the company of some yogis and religious men, and their admirers when a very pointed question was asked: Can science help the yogis or religious teachers by inventing a tool that can assess the level of achievement of the disciples who undergo a training course in meditation? Much was being said and printed about bio-feedback

at that time. We ourselves too were involved in these researches and were feeling handicapped on account of lack of resources. Barbara Brown's book which sums up the literature to date is very reassuring and considering the massive effort that is going into these areas, we may reasonably predict that in the very near future objective tools which may help to objectively classify various states of mind and then later prediction of such states at any particular time may be available in the near future.

The value of the book is enhanced by its bibliography which gives more than 500 references from standard scientific journals and a well thought-out subject index. All compliments to Barbara Brown.

S. K. MANCHANDA

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS (Vol. II and its supplement) BY DR. J. D. PATHAK, B.Sc., M.D., F.C.P.S., *Director, Medical Research Centre, Bombay Hospital, Bombay, published by the Medical Research Centre of the Bombay Hospital Trust, Bombay.*

These two volumes deal with wide groups of diseases including common conditions like cataract to complex situations like myocardial infarction and achromobacter meningitis. This kind of compilation is very helpful for the general practitioners who can be benefited from the experience of many eminent persons in different fields. Since a general practitioner has to deal with all kinds of diseases such a volume should prove a great asset for him. The critical analysis in presentation of data of clinical material is amply evident from these volumes. Bringing out such monographs also help in proper and accurate documentation of medical records. The younger doctors in the profession no doubt can get the right inspiration from these books and tend to pursue the path of science and its measurement even in day to day clinical practice.

USHA NAYAR

DISORDERS OF THE OLD BY DR. J. D. PATHAK, B.Sc., M.D., F.C.P.S., *Director, Medical Research Centre, Bombay Hospital, Bombay, published by the Medical Research Centre of the Bombay Hospital Trust, Bombay.*

This manuscript gives an analytical assessment of the medical problems of persons above the age of 60 years. These were the patients admitted to the Bombay hospital during 1970-71. This book is written in simple language and is a good beginning for the study of geriatrics. The author has tried to classify the incidence of diseases of old age in hospital patients. The data in this book deals with the medical problems of patients belonging to middle strata of Bombay cosmopolitan population who can afford the treatment and hospitalisation at the Bombay Hospital. This book should make an interesting reading for doctors, nurses and research students in Gerontology.

USHA NAYAR