



Common Diseases: Their Nature, Incidence and Care. John Fry. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and Toronto, 1974, 232 pp., \$14.00.

John Fry is internationally known in family practice. The October 1975 issue of the *Journal of Family Practice* carries a sample of his work ("On the Natural History of Some Common Diseases"), and Robert Smith's editorial in that issue tells us more about the man and his contributions. Students of family medicine have come to know Dr. Fry through his writings in the *Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners* and his previous books (*Medicine in Three Societies*, *International Medical Care*). As an active general practitioner he has observed, recorded, and studied problems occurring over a period of 25 years in his patient population in Beckenham, Kent, England. The approach has been that of epidemiology. The result has been a unique blending of clinical wisdom and disciplined scientific inquiry which is presented in a book of concise, readable, and enjoyable style. To say it is relevant to family practice is a gross understatement. Problems such as "catarrhal children," "the acute back," "depression," and "acute throat infections," are dissected and displayed with well-organized prose and well-placed charts and graphs — comprehensible at a glance. The data presented do not always fit the conventional wisdom of the day. For example, over the 25 years in question, approximately 220 patients suffered myocardial infarctions. The mortality rate (within one month of the event) for those treated at home was no higher (and, in fact, slightly lower) than for those hospitalized. The author draws no hard and fast conclusions from this, but uses it as an example of the information about a common problem which can be gained only from study of a stable, defined population at risk over a period time.

One could criticize the book for its lack of bibliographic references. The precise justifications for all statements are not readily traceable because of this. However, the sheer magnitude of literature search which would be necessary to construct such bibliography would be staggering. And, the author's purpose — stated in the preface — clearly was to present the results of his practice study as an example for others to follow. The book accomplishes that purpose admirably. One hopes that many will be prompted to follow his lead. This book is a must for all those interested in research in family practice. It provides the student with a wealth of knowledge. It will be enjoyed by all who engage in family practice.

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Occupational Lung Diseases. William Keith Morgan and Anthony Seaton. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1975, 391 pp., \$18.00.

It's all here, from "Actinomyces, thermophilic" (as in farmers' lung) to "Zinc, metal fume fever from" (as in galvanizing industry workers), in an easily handled book of one inch thickness. The writers have done a splendid job of making the topic readable and interesting to the non-specialist while thoroughly covering the technical aspects. The authors state that they have written the book for clinicians and that they hope it will be useful to radiologists and pathologists as well. Only three of the 18 chapters are not written by the coauthors, both of whom are English trained, although Morgan is now at the West Virginia University Medical Center.

There is a brief, interesting introduction to industrial medicine, a chapter on pulmonary physiology and testing ("Not withstanding all the

esoteric paraphernalia of pulmonary function testing, given a modicum of clinical acumen, it is usually possible to assess reasonably accurately the extent of any pulmonary insufficiency that is present by means of adequate history and physical examination."), and an up-to-date chapter on the immunology of lung disease. The chapter on coal workers' pneumoconiosis is the longest, and has over 150 references, but information on locust bean asthma, paprika splitters' lung, and suberosis (cork workers' lung) will also be found, as well as a chapter on industrial causes of lung cancer.

The book will be of most use to physicians in industrial and/or mining districts who may have occasion to treat patients with occupational lung disease regularly or sporadically. Medical students and residents will find this a useful reference work. There are numerous charts, x-ray reproductions, and photographs, and the entire book is printed very nicely on excellent stock.

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Simulations in Dermatology: Selected Problems in Patient Management. David L. Ramsay and Lawrence M. Solomon. Appleton-Century-Crofts. New York, 1974, 203 pp., \$18.50.

The format of this book follows that of the familiar and time-tested patient management problems used in many test situations and in self-assessment examinations. Instead of the erasure technique, the reader is provided with a treated pen that he applies to his choice of answers and the printed response then appears. The proper responses are listed in the back of the book in a series of appendices.

The book "consists of 12 problems containing elements common to both dermatology and internal medicine." Unfortunately, the choice of problems is rather esoteric in most instances. The average family physician would not see some of the cases presented in a lifetime of practice. Included in the problems are cases of pemphigoid, mycosis fungoides, Kaposi's sarcoma, blastomycosis, dermatomyositis, etc.

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