

BOOKS / BOEKE

ABC series from the BMJ

ABC of Monitoring Drug Therapy. By J. K. Aronson, M. Hardman and D. J. M. Reynolds. Pp. ix + 38. Illustrated. £9. BMJ. 1993. (ABC books are available through the Book Division, MASA Publications, tel. (021) 531-3081.) ISBN 0-7279-0791-3.

The administering of drugs to patients has often reminded me of the old-style naval bombardment where you took aim, fired, and then waited some time to see whether the desired effect on the target had been achieved. As drugs have become more effective and considerably more expensive, accurate feedback has become of paramount importance and the need for drug monitoring has become progressively more pressing.

The need is even more acute when using drugs with a narrow therapeutic index, or those with distressing or hazardous side-effects such as theophylline, digoxin, cyclosporin, lithium or aminoglycosides. As with all the ABC books, this one is based on a series of articles which originally appeared in the *BMJ*. It is well written, informative, and good value for money.

ABC of AIDS. 3rd ed. Ed. by Michael Wadler. Pp. 86. Illustrated. £15. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0761-1.

I had a quarrel with this booklet when it was first published, and I still have it in this third edition. It concerns the section 'Having AIDS' written by a homosexual man who gives a highly subjective account of the effect that having the disease had on himself and his lover. I thought then that it was out of place in an otherwise excellent medical publication and I still think so. Quite apart from its emotive overtones, my major objection to it is that it sustains thinking that AIDS is predominantly a disease of homosexuals, which in Africa, we certainly know, it is not.

The rest of the publication has been updated and is now probably the best available overview of AIDS for both generalist and specialist. If the offending article were removed, it would have my unqualified support and recommendation.

ABC of Dermatology. 2nd ed. By P. K. Buxton. Pp. 98. Illustrated. £15. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0777-8.

Another of the *BMJ*'s estimable ABC series, this time dealing with skin diseases. Dissertations on this subject are only as good as the illustrations accompanying them, and the standard in this booklet is excellent. As a handy *vade mecum* for the busy practitioner, it can be thoroughly recommended.

ABC of Healthy Travel. 4th ed. By Eric Walker, Glyn Williams and Fiona Raeside. Pp. 49. Illustrated. £12. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0762-X.

More and more people are travelling to far away places with strange-sounding names these days. Unfortunately, those places also harbour some pretty unpleasant diseases, also with strange-sounding names, which the traveller may not have heard about before setting out. This booklet is a mine of information about what the various health risks are in different parts of the world, how to avoid them and what to do if you are affected. It also carries inside its back cover a

check-chart on infection risk for travellers, which gives the requirements for most countries in the world. Excellent value.

ABC of Otolaryngology. 3rd ed. By Harold Ludman. Pp. 58. Illustrated. £11. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0765-4.

This is the third edition of this ABC book on otolaryngology, proof enough of its popularity. Generally, it is well produced, as with the others of this series, although I do have a few minor quarrels with it. One of these concerns the treatment of children with foreign bodies in the nose. Before any attempt is made to start poking around in the nose with forceps, it is always a good ploy to ask the child to close the good nostril and blow hard down on the blocked one. In many cases, the foreign body will pop out with minimal trauma. Simple, but often forgotten.

The other minor point concerns cauterising Little's area for recurrent epistaxis. If using trichloroacetic acid (TCA), it is worth mentioning the awful medicolegal consequences of mistaking TCA for local anaesthetic. It has happened, and should be warned about.

ABC of Colorectal Diseases. Ed. by D. J. Jones and M. H. Irving. Pp. 103. Illustrated. £15. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-9755-7.

There can be few series of publications that manage to boil down a mass of information into a short, succinct presentation like the *BMJ*'s ABC series. This issue on colorectal diseases is a particularly good example of the genre. Well laid out with excellent, easy to follow illustrations and explanations, it gives all the information on this fundamental topic necessary to the busy practitioner. Highly recommended.

N. C. LEE

Tissue banking

Musculoskeletal Tissue Banking. By William W. Tomford (with contributions by James H. Forsell, Allen P. MacKenzie and D. Michael Stron). Pp. xiii + 240. Illustrated. \$94.50. Raven Press. 1993. ISBN 0-88167-995-X.

William Tomford is well known amongst bone bankers worldwide. He is the Director of Massachusetts General Hospital Bone Bank at Harvard Medical School and has made a tremendous contribution in the field of musculoskeletal tissue banking.

The purpose of this book is clearly to assist bone banks in their endeavour to supply safe products to the medical community, and to educate orthopaedic surgeons in the use of allografts. The contents include a history of musculoskeletal tissue banking in the USA, and chapters on the technique of bone harvesting and freeze drying of tissues, and on disease transmission and sterilisation of tissue.

The importance of rendering safe sterile grafts is highlighted, because of the danger of transmitting diseases like AIDS or hepatitis to recipients. The guidelines in harvesting, procuring and storage of tissue proposed in this book are the state-of-the-art methodology.

The book is strongly recommended to scientists with an interest in musculoskeletal tissue banking.

B. G. P. LINDEQUE

Let MASA get the books for you . . .

Your time is too valuable to spend scouring shops for a book you want. Let MASA Publications help you. You can either give us the full details — title, author and publisher — or simply describe the exact subject you want to cover and we will send you a list of available titles and prices, with descriptions.

The Book Manager, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430, Ph: (02823) 3205, Fax: (021) 531-4126

BOOKS / BOEKE

Tobacco smoking

Legislative Action to Combat the World Tobacco Epidemic. 2nd ed. R. Roemer. Pp. xiii + 297. SFr.59. in developing countries: SFr.41,30. WHO. 1993. ISBN 92-4-156157-2.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) first published this title in 1982, updated it in 1986, and has now brought out a 2nd edition. And not before time, as the tobacco industry looks for new markets in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Eastern Europe, while tobacco use in industrialised countries declines.

Legislation in many developing countries is weak or non-existent and unless the smoking epidemic is curtailed, preventable death and disease may swamp the health services. The figures quoted are horrific: if smoking habits are not changed, there may be 10 million tobacco-related deaths per year by the year 2025.

A WHO expert committee reported in 1983 that smoking control programmes without legislation do not work, since education, restriction and legislation form the core of smoking control.

This is a worthwhile reference work for anyone involved in research on smoking control and tobacco use, and an interesting historical document. It gives the history of anti-tobacco legislation, with a tabulated annexure of eight types of legislation: smoking in the workplace, preventing young people from smoking, health education on tobacco, restriction of points of sale, health warnings, and control of tobacco advertising. Each type is listed with the countries having such legislation. Annexures give details of legislation worldwide, and some economic information.

This book gives useful information and guidance for future anti-tobacco legislation in South Africa. Such legislation will be of paramount importance considering the anticipated burden on health services of future afflictions such as AIDS.

There is no doubt that tobacco marketing will result in increased sales and smoking-related diseases. It is thus essential that the book be read by anyone with influence over future anti-tobacco legislation.

F. N. SANDERS

There's Sunlight in My Leaf. Biography of *Nicotiana tabacum*. By Johan Fourie. Pp. 69. Marius du Plooy Communications. 1992. ISBN 0-620-17064-6.

The Tobacco Board of South Africa has commemorated the Columbus Quincentenary with a glossy book that extols the virtues and 'contribution' of tobacco and its industry. Obviously, one would not expect the Board to comment on the enormous contribution made to death, disease and disability; to environmental degradation due to deforestation of Africa; and to the negative impact on the economy, due to direct and indirect costs associated with tobacco consumption.

The book details the alleged medicinal characteristics of tobacco and its influence on world history. The author proclaims how the spread of tobacco in Africa has brought great benefits to the populations.

In the chapters on South Africa the strategy used by the tobacco industry to buy respectability is described: clean factories; contribution to the costs of the Southern African Nature Foundation and extensive support of the arts and sport.

There is, however, increasing global repugnance of crude sports sponsorship aimed to increase the childhood population of smokers! What is not mentioned is that when the Cape Town City Council several years ago tried to

introduce bans on smoking in restaurants, Rembrandt Tobacco Corporation threatened to withdraw its subsidy for the Cape Symphony Orchestra. A more blatant example of attempts by the industry to influence public policy would be hard to find. But the Tobacco Products Control Act of 1993 will probably be the start of more comprehensive legislation that should limit the future success of the industry.

As with other government boards set up to promote the interests of tobacco producers, the Tobacco Board will probably be phased out in time; it can only be hoped that this will happen soon.

On the positive side, tobacco control opponents could learn considerably from the author and producers of the book. It is easy to read and well illustrated. Despite this, I would prefer to rename the book *There's Death in my Leaf*, a more accurate reflection of the impact of tobacco on global health over the past five centuries.

(Published by request of the Tobacco Board to commemorate the 500th birthday of *Nicotiana tabacum*. 1492 - 1992)

D. YACH

Nutrition

Food, Facts and Figures. The Complete South African Guide. Pp. 135. Illustrated. R19,99. Oxford University Press (In collaboration with the Medical Research Council). 1992. ISBN 0-19-570736-2.

You want a little book that gives you everything you want to know about nutrition? About a balanced diet? About the prudent diet? About therapeutic diets? About recommended daily food intakes? Then this is the booklet for you. Produced by the South African Medical Research Council, it contains everything you need to know about diet in a practical sense.

The book is appearing at a time when widespread interest in nutrition is manifesting itself not only within the medical profession but among the general public, and this book contains information with which every clinician should be familiar. It retails at a mere R19,99 from any good bookseller, is well worth the price and deserves a place on every medical bookshelf. Very highly recommended.

N. C. LEE

Orthopaedics

Orthopaedic Diagnosis and Management: A Guide to the Care of Orthopaedic Patients. By Boyd S. Goldie. Pp. xviii + 247. £17,95. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1992. ISBN 0-632-03043-7.

Written specifically for: 'junior doctors in their first orthopaedic job . . . providing answers to many of the questions housemen and . . . patients ask (of the houseman)', this large 'pocket book' lists 25 orthopaedic injuries or surgically treated entities, with a general sketch on pre- and postoperative management. It has useful information on preoperative assessment, writing operation notes, applying plaster of Paris and the expectations of housemen on the ward round.

Designed for the well-structured British system, the book could have a useful role in South Africa for a medical officer in a district hospital and should also be 'an aid to medical students, paramedicals and nurses involved in the care of orthopaedic patients'. I imagine it will be passed from incumbent house surgeon to successor with regularity, and be frequently borrowed by the ward sister.

J. P. DRIVER-JOWITT

Buying the books you want is as simple as this:

Write, fax or 'phone the Book Manager, MASA Publications, who will find the book you want and send it to you by insured post.

The Book Manager, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430, Ph: (02823) 3205, Fax: (021) 531-4126

BOOKS / BOEKE

ABC series from the BMJ

ABC of Monitoring Drug Therapy. By J. K. Aronson, M. Hardman and D. J. M. Reynolds. Pp. ix + 38. Illustrated. £9. BMJ. 1993. (ABC books are available through the Book Division, MASA Publications, tel. (021) 531-3081.) ISBN 0-7279-0791-3.

The administering of drugs to patients has often reminded me of the old-style naval bombardment where you took aim, fired, and then waited some time to see whether the desired effect on the target had been achieved. As drugs have become more effective and considerably more expensive, accurate feedback has become of paramount importance and the need for drug monitoring has become progressively more pressing.

The need is even more acute when using drugs with a narrow therapeutic index, or those with distressing or hazardous side-effects such as theophylline, digoxin, cyclosporin, lithium or aminoglycosides. As with all the ABC books, this one is based on a series of articles which originally appeared in the *BMJ*. It is well written, informative, and good value for money.

ABC of AIDS. 3rd ed. Ed. by Michael Wadler. Pp. 86. Illustrated. £15. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0761-1.

I had a quarrel with this booklet when it was first published, and I still have it in this third edition. It concerns the section 'Having AIDS' written by a homosexual man who gives a highly subjective account of the effect that having the disease had on himself and his lover. I thought then that it was out of place in an otherwise excellent medical publication and I still think so. Quite apart from its emotive overtones, my major objection to it is that it sustains thinking that AIDS is predominantly a disease of homosexuals, which in Africa, we certainly know, it is not.

The rest of the publication has been updated and is now probably the best available overview of AIDS for both generalist and specialist. If the offending article were removed, it would have my unqualified support and recommendation.

ABC of Dermatology. 2nd ed. By P. K. Buxton. Pp. 98. Illustrated. £15. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0777-8.

Another of the *BMJ's* estimable ABC series, this time dealing with skin diseases. Dissertations on this subject are only as good as the illustrations accompanying them, and the standard in this booklet is excellent. As a handy *vade mecum* for the busy practitioner, it can be thoroughly recommended.

ABC of Healthy Travel. 4th ed. By Eric Walker, Glyn Williams and Fiona Raeside. Pp. 49. Illustrated. £12. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0762-X.

More and more people are travelling to far away places with strange-sounding names these days. Unfortunately, those places also harbour some pretty unpleasant diseases, also with strange-sounding names, which the traveller may not have heard about before setting out. This booklet is a mine of information about what the various health risks are in different parts of the world, how to avoid them and what to do if you are affected. It also carries inside its back cover a

check-chart on infection risk for travellers, which gives the requirements for most countries in the world. Excellent value.

ABC of Otolaryngology. 3rd ed. By Harold Ludman. Pp. 58. Illustrated. £11. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0765-4.

This is the third edition of this ABC book on otolaryngology, proof enough of its popularity. Generally, it is well produced, as with the others of this series, although I do have a few minor quarrels with it. One of these concerns the treatment of children with foreign bodies in the nose. Before any attempt is made to start poking around in the nose with forceps, it is always a good ploy to ask the child to close the good nostril and blow hard down on the blocked one. In many cases, the foreign body will pop out with minimal trauma. Simple, but often forgotten.

The other minor point concerns cauterising Little's area for recurrent epistaxis. If using trichloroacetic acid (TCA), it is worth mentioning the awful medicolegal consequences of mistaking TCA for local anaesthetic. It has happened, and should be warned about.

ABC of Colorectal Diseases. Ed. by D. J. Jones and M. H. Irving. Pp. 103. Illustrated. £15. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-9755-7.

There can be few series of publications that manage to boil down a mass of information into a short, succinct presentation like the *BMJ's* ABC series. This issue on colorectal diseases is a particularly good example of the genre. Well laid out with excellent, easy to follow illustrations and explanations, it gives all the information on this fundamental topic necessary to the busy practitioner. Highly recommended.

N. C. LEE

Tissue banking

Musculoskeletal Tissue Banking. By William W. Tomford (with contributions by James H. Forsell, Allen P. MacKenzie and D. Michael Stron). Pp. xiii + 240. Illustrated. \$94.50. Raven Press. 1993. ISBN 0-88167-995-X.

William Tomford is well known amongst bone bankers worldwide. He is the Director of Massachusetts General Hospital Bone Bank at Harvard Medical School and has made a tremendous contribution in the field of musculoskeletal tissue banking.

The purpose of this book is clearly to assist bone banks in their endeavour to supply safe products to the medical community, and to educate orthopaedic surgeons in the use of allografts. The contents include a history of musculoskeletal tissue banking in the USA, and chapters on the technique of bone harvesting and freeze drying of tissues, and on disease transmission and sterilisation of tissue.

The importance of rendering safe sterile grafts is highlighted, because of the danger of transmitting diseases like AIDS or hepatitis to recipients. The guidelines in harvesting, procuring and storage of tissue proposed in this book are the state-of-the-art methodology.

The book is strongly recommended to scientists with an interest in musculoskeletal tissue banking.

B. G. P. LINDEQUE

Let MASA get the books for you . . .

Your time is too valuable to spend scouring shops for a book you want. Let MASA Publications help you. You can either give us the full details — title, author and publisher — or simply describe the exact subject you want to cover and we will send you a list of available titles and prices, with descriptions.

The Book Manager, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430, Ph: (02823) 3205, Fax: (021) 531-4126

BOOKS / BOEKE

Tobacco smoking

Legislative Action to Combat the World Tobacco Epidemic. 2nd ed. R. Roemer. Pp. xiii + 297. SFr.59. in developing countries: SFr.41,30. WHO. 1993. ISBN 92-4-156157-2.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) first published this title in 1982, updated it in 1986, and has now brought out a 2nd edition. And not before time, as the tobacco industry looks for new markets in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Eastern Europe, while tobacco use in industrialised countries declines.

Legislation in many developing countries is weak or non-existent and unless the smoking epidemic is curtailed, preventable death and disease may swamp the health services. The figures quoted are horrific: if smoking habits are not changed, there may be 10 million tobacco-related deaths per year by the year 2025.

A WHO expert committee reported in 1983 that smoking control programmes without legislation do not work, since education, restriction and legislation form the core of smoking control.

This is a worthwhile reference work for anyone involved in research on smoking control and tobacco use, and an interesting historical document. It gives the history of anti-tobacco legislation, with a tabulated annexure of eight types of legislation: smoking in the workplace, preventing young people from smoking, health education on tobacco, restriction of points of sale, health warnings, and control of tobacco advertising. Each type is listed with the countries having such legislation. Annexures give details of legislation worldwide, and some economic information.

This book gives useful information and guidance for future anti-tobacco legislation in South Africa. Such legislation will be of paramount importance considering the anticipated burden on health services of future afflictions such as AIDS.

There is no doubt that tobacco marketing will result in increased sales and smoking-related diseases. It is thus essential that the book be read by anyone with influence over future anti-tobacco legislation.

F. N. SANDERS

There's Sunlight in My Leaf. Biography of *Nicotiana tabacum*. By Johan Fourie. Pp. 69. Marius du Plooy Communications. 1992. ISBN 0-620-17064-6.

The Tobacco Board of South Africa has commemorated the Columbus Quincentenary with a glossy book that extols the virtues and 'contribution' of tobacco and its industry. Obviously, one would not expect the Board to comment on the enormous contribution made to death, disease and disability; to environmental degradation due to deforestation of Africa; and to the negative impact on the economy, due to direct and indirect costs associated with tobacco consumption.

The book details the alleged medicinal characteristics of tobacco and its influence on world history. The author proclaims how the spread of tobacco in Africa has brought great benefits to the populations.

In the chapters on South Africa the strategy used by the tobacco industry to buy respectability is described: clean factories; contribution to the costs of the Southern African Nature Foundation and extensive support of the arts and sport.

There is, however, increasing global repugnance of crude sports sponsorship aimed to increase the childhood population of smokers! What is not mentioned is that when the Cape Town City Council several years ago tried to

introduce bans on smoking in restaurants, Rembrandt Tobacco Corporation threatened to withdraw its subsidy for the Cape Symphony Orchestra. A more blatant example of attempts by the industry to influence public policy would be hard to find. But the Tobacco Products Control Act of 1993 will probably be the start of more comprehensive legislation that should limit the future success of the industry.

As with other government boards set up to promote the interests of tobacco producers, the Tobacco Board will probably be phased out in time; it can only be hoped that this will happen soon.

On the positive side, tobacco control opponents could learn considerably from the author and producers of the book. It is easy to read and well illustrated. Despite this, I would prefer to rename the book *There's Death in my Leaf*, a more accurate reflection of the impact of tobacco on global health over the past five centuries.

(Published by request of the Tobacco Board to commemorate the 500th birthday of *Nicotiana tabacum*. 1492 - 1992)

D. YACH

Nutrition

Food, Facts and Figures. The Complete South African Guide. Pp. 135. Illustrated. R19,99. Oxford University Press (In collaboration with the Medical Research Council). 1992. ISBN 0-19-570736-2.

You want a little book that gives you everything you want to know about nutrition? About a balanced diet? About the prudent diet? About therapeutic diets? About recommended daily food intakes? Then this is the booklet for you. Produced by the South African Medical Research Council, it contains everything you need to know about diet in a practical sense.

The book is appearing at a time when widespread interest in nutrition is manifesting itself not only within the medical profession but among the general public, and this book contains information with which every clinician should be familiar. It retails at a mere R19,99 from any good bookseller, is well worth the price and deserves a place on every medical bookshelf. Very highly recommended.

N. C. LEE

Orthopaedics

Orthopaedic Diagnosis and Management: A Guide to the Care of Orthopaedic Patients. By Boyd S. Goldie. Pp. xviii + 247. £17,95. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1992. ISBN 0-632-03043-7.

Written specifically for: 'junior doctors in their first orthopaedic job . . . providing answers to many of the questions housemen and . . . patients ask (of the houseman)', this large 'pocket book' lists 25 orthopaedic injuries or surgically treated entities, with a general sketch on pre- and postoperative management. It has useful information on preoperative assessment, writing operation notes, applying plaster of Paris and the expectations of housemen on the ward round.

Designed for the well-structured British system, the book could have a useful role in South Africa for a medical officer in a district hospital and should also be 'an aid to medical students, paramedicals and nurses involved in the care of orthopaedic patients'. I imagine it will be passed from incumbent house surgeon to successor with regularity, and be frequently borrowed by the ward sister.

J. P. DRIVER-JOWITT

Buying the books you want is as simple as this:

Write, fax or 'phone the Book Manager, MASA Publications, who will find the book you want and send it to you by insured post.

The Book Manager, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430, Ph: (02823) 3205, Fax: (021) 531-4126

BOOKS / BOEKE

Biliary stones

Baillière's Clinical Gastroenterology. International Practice and Research. Diagnosis and Management of Biliary Stones. Ed. by M. Sackmann. Pp. x + 200. Illustrated. £27,50. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1992. ISBN 0-7020-1625-X.

This monograph provides a detailed overview on the clinical spectrum and modern treatment options for gallbladder and bile-duct stones. The important aspect of clinical presentation of gallstone disease is reviewed in great detail, and the variability in clinical presentation and the natural history of asymptomatic stones is emphasised.

The roles of dissolution therapy and shockwave lithotripsy, with an update on published trials, are covered comprehensively as is laparoscopic cholecystectomy. Two chapters are devoted to the endoscopic and surgical treatment of bile-duct stones but, disappointingly, there is not much on the treatment of gallstone pancreatitis. The pathogenesis of gallstone disease is also not reviewed.

Overall, this book gives a good summary of the current options and trends in the diagnosis and management of gallstone disease.

P. C. BORNMANN

Molecular and cell biology

Basic Molecular and Cell Biology. 2nd ed. Pp. vii + 209. Illustrated. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0772-7.

This is the second edition of the *BMJ's* excellent booklet that guides the reader through the field of molecular biology and cell biology. There can be few areas in which sophisticated basic biological science can have such a direct clinical application as this one, and although much has already been achieved, much remains to be achieved, particularly in the field of oncology.

A major advance that has already led to important clinical applications is the polymerase chain reaction, which has enabled early diagnosis of genetic disease using fetal DNA. This technique has been described in some detail in this edition. A particularly informative chapter is 'Genes and Cancer', which explains the oncogene cascade, and also the intriguing tumour-suppression genes, as well as the relationship between cancer cells and the immune system.

Those wishing to brush up their knowledge of this fast-moving field will find that this admirably concise little book is the one for them.

N. C. LEE

Nutritional anaemias

Nutritional Anaemias. Nestlé Nutritional Workshop Series. Vol. 30. Ed by Samuel J. Fomon and Stanley Zlotkin. Pp. xii + 220. \$75. New York: Raven Press. 1992.

This volume contains the proceedings of a workshop held in Toronto, Canada, in June 1991. The contributors are experts in the fields of iron, folate, vitamin A, copper and vitamin E metabolism and deficiencies.

The chapters include accessible reviews of our current knowledge of iron deficiency, much of it derived from the activities of members of the International Nutritional Anaemia Consultative Group over the last two decades. Recent advances include observations on calcium as an inhibitor of iron absorption (MacPhail and Bothwell). An

advance is the measurement of serum transferrin receptor levels in the diagnosis of iron deficiency. Serum transferrin receptor levels reflect the cells' iron requirements, are a measure of the severity of iron deficiency and are unchanged by inflammation; a combination of serum ferritin and serum transferrin receptor assays portrays the entire spectrum of iron status ranging from normal to severe deficiency, and this combination is likely to become standard investigation (Cook, Skikne and Baynes).

Dr Walter from Chile presents convincing evidence that iron deficiency severe enough to cause anaemia in infancy is associated with impaired mental and motor development, and that the cognitive deficiency is persistent and not reversible by treatment of the iron deficiency. The implications of these observations are of global importance.

Prevention of iron deficiency by diet is usually thought of as a lost cause, but Dr Hallberg and colleagues are more positive and propose that they could make a large impact in developing countries. In food fortification programmes, NaFeEDTA has emerged as a most effective, though relatively expensive, fortificant especially in the face of diets with high contents of inhibitors of iron absorption (Bothwell and MacPhail).

Dr Brabin reviewed the role of malarial haemolysis as a cause of severe folate deficiency in pregnancy, but not in childhood. Studies have been bedevilled by malarial parasitaemia being associated with high red cell folate concentrations even when the host is folate-depleted. The reason could be synthesis of folate by the parasites.

In vitamin A deficiency, there is a failure of mobilisation of iron from body stores, and interventions in many populations may have to include vitamin A with iron to obtain optimal results. (Mejia).

Dr Zipursky reviews and redefines anaemia in newborn infants. He reports that excessive vitamin C in multivitamin preparations and commercial weaning foods, can produce oxidative damage of the erythrocytes of infants and a Heinz body anaemia.

All 16 chapters are of the highest standards and the reported discussions should make readers wish that they had been present. The book is recommended for medical libraries and everyone with an interest in nutritional anaemias, especially neonatologists, paediatricians, obstetricians, haematologists and food scientists.

A. F. FLEMING

Books received

International Reporting of Periodic Drug-Safety Update Summaries. Final Report of CIOMS Working Group II. Pp. 61. SFr. 15. US\$13,50. Geneva: CIOMS. 1992.

International Nomenclature of Diseases. Vol. VII, Diseases of the Kidney, the Lower Urinary Tract, and the Male Genital System. Pp. xiii + 180. Geneva: CIOMS/WHO. 1992.

International Nomenclature of Diseases. Vol. VIII, Diseases of the Female Genital System. Pp. xiii + 180. SFr. 20. US\$18. Geneva: CIOMS/WHO. 1992.

Diethylhexyl Phthalate. Environmental Health Criteria 131. Pp. 141. SFr. 18. US\$16, 20. Geneva: WHO. 1992.

Human Organ Transplantation. A Report on Developments under the Auspices of WHO (1987-1991) Pp. 28. SFr. 8. Geneva: WHO. 1991.

International Digest of Health Legislation. Vol. 43 No. 2 1992. Pp. xxiv + 220. SFr. 45. Geneva: WHO. 1992.

WHO Drug Information. Vol 6. No. 2. Pp. i + 53. SFr. 20. Geneva: WHO. 1992.

Books

If you would like to obtain one of the books reviewed in this journal, or any book you need, you can order it through MASA Publications. Contact:

The Book Manager, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430, Ph: (02823) 3205, Fax: (021) 531-4126