

"combined textbook" has recently appeared under the editorship of Sir Dugald Baird) was followed earlier and more often on this side of the Atlantic. Yet it was a book written in 1958 by members of the staff of Temple University, Philadelphia, under the leadership of J. R. Willson, which took the next logical step of arranging the text to form a sequential story of the life history of normal women and their diseases from birth to senescence.

This pattern has now been followed on a more ambitious scale by an individual author, and Professor J. W. Huffman, of Chicago, is to be congratulated on the sustained high level of his book. A single author must perforce borrow ideas and illustrations from others, but Dr. Huffman has blended them into a text for students which is clearly and warmly written and finely and fully illustrated from the opening chapter on applied embryology to the final section on geriatric gynaecology. The references, which are rather extensive for a students' textbook, contain for an American publication an unusually high proportion that are of British origin; the expression of the dosage of oxytocin in minims is even more unexpected. Technical details of obstetrical and gynaecological operations are not included, but principles, indications, and merits are fairly discussed. The index is commendably detailed.

This is a good textbook, even though its weight of 7½ lb. (3.4 kg.) might lead one to associate it with the crane rather than with the stork. Students and practitioners in this country may regret that the book is so heavy on hand and pocket, but they will certainly appreciate its availability on the library shelf.

S. BENDER.

#### DISINFECTING THE MAIL

*Disinfected Mail.* By K. F. Meyer, Ph.D., M.D. (Pp. 341; illustrated. \$12.) Holton, Kansas: The Gossip Printery, Inc. 1962.

This book treats of a specialized form of philately, the collection of disinfected mail. It gives historical information on postal arrangements, quarantine regulations, disinfection methods, and epidemic visitations.

Disinfection of the mail began in Venice and other European states in the fifteenth century and continues in some countries at the present time. The author groups it into four periods: early (1485-1730); interim (1730-1830); later (1830-1890), during the second pandemic of cholera, beginning with the appearance of the disease in Central Europe; and recent (1890-1957). Its use diminished after 1850, and from 1884 was discontinued as a general practice by most European countries. Though some methods did disinfect it is doubtful whether disease has been spread by mail. The text is well illustrated by reproductions of disinfected letters, seals, covers, state regulations, and so on, chiefly from the author's own extensive collection. As Professor C. E. Dolman observes in the foreword, the book will interest philatelists, bacteriologists, public health and medical historians, and sociologists.

ARTHUR S. MACNALTLY.

#### DYSHIDROSIFORM ERUPTIONS

*Investigations into Dyshidrosiform Eruptions.* By R. D. G. Ph. Simons. (Pp. 88; illustrated. Sw. Fr. 19.) Basle and New York: S. Karger. 1962.

In 1873 Tilbury Fox described dyshidrosis as an eruption of palms and soles due to sweat retention, a

view rejected by Jonathan Hutchinson (1876), who used the term "cheiro-pompholyx." The mechanism and aetiology of these eruptions have been disputed ever since, and this useful monograph sets out the history of this and allied subjects, especially of the "ides" from focal fungous or other infections. This collection of evidence provides a useful work with an index to some 180 references in the literature.

In addition the author has conducted his own investigations by serial histological sections and by examination, particularly of the pH of the contents of vesicles. He finds no evidence to relate the pompholyx eruption to sweat gland or duct activity. The relationship to fungous infection and to sensitizing contacts is discussed and dismissed, and pompholyx remains an idiopathic disorder still to be solved. It is not restricted to patients suffering from hyperhidrosis and is not clearly related to temperature, atmospheric pressure, or humidity, but is possibly related to exposure to sunshine.

So-called "Clinical Tinea Pedis" is discussed and emphasis placed upon the infrequency of a fungous aetiology.

J. T. INGRAM.

#### CAREERS IN HOSPITALS

*A Guide to Hospital Careers.* By Harry Gaston, A.H.A. (Pp. 160; illustrated. 15s.) London: Museum Press. 1962.

This book gives a short but comprehensive account of the many professions and occupations which form the hospital community—doctors and dentists, nurses and physiotherapists, administrators and architects, caterers and cooks, and the various professions supplementary to medicine—these and many other occupations which go to the making of a hospital establishment are briefly described, and their requirements and rewards given.

The author does well to point out that in the Health Service salaries are rarely an attraction. Hospitals, in which the only profit motive is the welfare of the patient, cannot compete with commercial organizations in the matter of remuneration. But all hospital workers partake in differing degree both in the responsibility for the patients' welfare and in the satisfaction coming from such work properly performed.

In the chapter on administration not sufficient reference is made to the large part taken by the senior administrative medical officer; and we should have liked to see a more extended account of the work of the district nurse, who so often has to look after a patient after he has left hospital. However, these are minor criticisms of a book which should be useful to all those who feel drawn to the very satisfying service of a hospital.

ZACHARY COPE.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*Review is not precluded by notice here of books recently received.*

*Microaerosols.* By Lucien Dautrebande. (Pp. 366+xi; illustrated. 96s. 6d.) New York and London: Academic Press. 1962.

*Alcoholism and Society.* By Morris E. Chafetz, M.D., and Harold W. Demone, jun. (Pp. 319. 49s.) London and New York: Oxford University Press. 1962.

*Selected Papers. Volume 4.* (Pp. 65; illustrated.) The Hague: The Royal Netherlands Tuberculosis Association. 1962.

*Psychosomatic Medicine in Practice.* Edited by Berthold Stokvis. (Pp. 210. Sw. Fr. 52.) Basle and New York: S. Karger. 1963.