

Book review

Recent Advances in Sexually Transmitted Diseases (Number II). Edited by J R W Harris, 1981. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh. Pp 281. Price £18.00.

The second edition of this title, appearing six years after the initial one, illustrates the dilemmas of producing a book of this nature. Firstly, should every conceivable topic be covered? The editor has decided that it should, but unfortunately as one reads through it is clear that the advances are much greater in some areas than in others. For example, the excellent review of mycoplasmal infections clearly illustrates the growing interest and substantial advances in this field. In contrast some of the straightforward clinical chapters—such as those on syphilis, scabies, and

pediculosis pubis—could possibly have been excluded since there have been few, if any, advances. Other clinical chapters fail to do justice or to recognise some of the advances that have been made. The chapters on enteric pathogens—one of the fastest growing areas of interest—and genital warts are frustratingly short and do little justice to the recent increases in knowledge. The desire to cover everything, but some things not adequately enough, leads to a book that lacks balance.

The second problem of this type of book, and the most crucial, is the choice of contributing authors. The editor has identified some leading authorities to write certain chapters. Where could one find a better review of the advances in the clinical and

laboratory aspects of chlamydial infections than in this book? Unfortunately, the contrast between those authors who are steeped in their subject and those who are not is apparent.

Despite these criticisms the editor and contributors have worked hard to produce an attractive volume. Many of the chapters are authoritative and give excellent reviews of the advances that have taken place since the first edition and are not to be found elsewhere. My overwhelming impression is that I have been delivered a "mixed case," containing bottles of champagne, châteaux wines that are only half full, and finally some rather rough-blended wines. Here's to champagne all the way for the next edition!

M W Adler

Notice

First Asian congress on STD, family planning, and human sexuality

The Bombay Social Hygiene Council is organising the First Asian Congress on sexually transmitted diseases, family planning, and human sexuality in Bombay from 4 to 6 December 1981, with the co-operation of the Family Planning Association of India and the Association of Dermatologists, Venereologists, and Leprologists, Maharashtra. For further information please contact the Hon General Secretary, Bombay Social Hygiene Council, 10 Indian Mercantile Mansion, Bombay 400 039, India.

Correction

In the paper on chlamydial infections in homosexual men (1981;57:47-9), the name of the final author is P L K Mackie and not P M K McKie, as stated in the original manuscript.

Notice

CHANGE OF EDITOR

As from 1 January 1982, Dr A McMillan will be Editor of the *BJVD*. All papers for possible publication should be sent to: Dr A McMillan, Wards 45 and 46, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh EH3 9YW, as from that date.