

## BOOK REVIEWS

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**Atlas of Clinical Dermatology, Anthony du Vivier, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1987; 1552 colour plates, Price £ 98.**

There was a time when dermatology was considered to be a low-grade speciality and the dermatologists by and large were those who had been pushed into this speciality. The profession during that period was content with making spot diagnoses without touching the patient and prescribing some pet formulations without even bothering about the results. Atlases for dermatology served a useful purpose because dermatologists generally recognise diseases by their looks and the prescriptions were handy. Dermatologists and dermatology have since come a long way and we can already offer better results to our patients than any other medical speciality. The idea of atlases therefore seems to be obsolete except in certain specified instances. The Atlas of Clinical Dermatology by Anthony du Vivier is however a completely different approach. It should better be called an 'Illustrated Textbook of Dermatology', because the author has given fairly detailed descriptions of the diseases, their diagnosis and the treatment. There are 24 chapters namely, (1) The structure and function of normal skin, (2) Eczema, (3) Psoriasis, (4) Pityriasis rosea, lichen planus and pityriasis rubra pilaris, (5) Naevi, (6) Benign tumours of skin, (7) Malignant tumours of the skin, (8) Mycosis fungoides and allied conditions, (9) Bacterial infections of the skin and syphilis,

(10) Viral infections of the skin, (11) Fungal infections of the skin, (12) Infestations of the skin, (13) Tropical infections of skin, (14) Drugs and toxic eruptions of the skin, (15) Blistering disorders of the skin, (16) Developmental disorders of the skin, (17) Skin and systemic diseases, (18) Collagen vascular disorders and vasculitis, (19) Disorders of circulation, (20) Disorders of the sebaceous, sweat and apocrine glands, (21) Disorders of the nail, (22) Disorders of the hair, (23) Disorders of pigmentation, and (24) Psychological disorders of the skin. Obviously, the range of disorders covered is extensive. The text covers 387 pages. The most impressive aspect of this book is that for every disease Dr du Vivier has provided 5-15 pictures depicting almost each of the clinical variants of that disease. Thus, there are 1552 colour plates. This is extremely good for the beginner to learn, and the old-timer to revise his clinical acumen. The entire book is printed on art paper and the printing is flawless. The only major drawback of this book for the Indian readers is its price £ 98, which may be alright for the Europeans but is certainly a good pinch on the Indian pockets. An Indian edition at nearly one third of the original price as has been done in the case of some other non-Indian books would be very welcome.

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