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Scabies by Kenneth Mellamby

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BOOK REVIEW

SCABIES. Kenneth Mellamby. Second Edition, E. W. Classey Limited, London, 1972. vi, 81 p. \$3.50 paperback. Distributed in North America by Entomological Reprint Specialists, P.O. Box 77971, Dockweiler Station, Los Angeles, California 90007.

This pocket-sized book was first published in 1943 as one of a series of Oxford War Manuals which dealt with medical problems of importance at that time. This second edition is virtually unchanged from the original which contained the results of extensive research on human volunteers and was a definitive compendium on human scabies at the time of its publication. Subsequent to World War II scabies became a medical rarity and since that time has evoked little research effort. Within the last few years, however, there has been a marked increase in the incidence of scabies so the current re-issue of this publication again makes available a useful and concise reference source for dermatologists, physicians and medical zoologists, few of whom have had extensive experience with this disease.

The information concerning *Sarcoptes scabiei* is still current and accurate but the sections on treatment and the *Trombicula* portion of the chapter dealing with other mites of medical and veterinary importance are outdated. The materials recommended for treatment were in common use at the time the first edition was written and while they are still effective in eliminating mites, it is probable that most medical practitioners will prefer to utilize more recently developed proprietary drugs. The therapeutic agents now available for the irritation and secondary infections associated with scabies are much more effective than those suggested in the text, and this is mentioned in the preface to this edition.

The excellent descriptive narration in this text, together with its convenient size and modest price should make it an attractive addition to the libraries of physicians and the medical and paramedical professionals concerned with human ectoparasites.

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