

BOEKBESPREKINGS : BOOK REVIEWS

BIOCHEMISTRY IN HUMAN DISEASE

Biochemical Disorders in Human Disease. 2nd ed. Ed. by R. H. S. Thompson, M.A., D.M. and E. J. King, Ph.D., D.Sc., F.R.I.C. Pp. xx + 1066. Illustrated. R12.00. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1964.

The second edition of this book, which has already been accepted as a standard text in its field, was fortunately completed before the untimely death of Prof. E. J. King. Although a multi-authored work, the original unitary approach and format have been maintained, which is particularly valuable in that fundamental biochemical changes in disease are stressed, and empiricism thus discouraged.

The chapters, which are arranged according to the different organs, have been revised and those on the pancreas, atherosclerosis, chemical anatomy, and protein anomalies on the lymphoreticular system are new. The text is up-to-date and experimental work is fully covered. References at the end of each chapter are comprehensive. In particular, enzymatic disturbances in many congenital diseases, which have been recently elucidated, are fully discussed.

This book can be recommended to all those wishing to bridge the ever-widening gap between fundamental biochemistry and human disease. M.C.B.

PULMONARY NODULES

The Solitary Pulmonary Nodule. The John Alexander Monograph Series, no. 6. By J. D. Steele, M.D. Pp. xvi + 226. Illustrated. \$12.00. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas. 1964.

This book is based on 887 resected specimens of solitary pulmonary nodules, for which 77 hospitals of the US Veterans Administration and Armed Forces contributed. 280 of these lesions proved to be primary carcinomas and the main emphasis of the book is that there are few indications for not removing these so-called 'coin' lesions. Apart from this, its usefulness is limited.

The first section was published in July 1963 in the *Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery*—a review and analysis of the material. The remainder of the book is a radiological atlas of 87 illustrative cases. H.P.H.

KLINIESE ONDERSOEKE

Clinical Examination. A textbook of physical diagnosis. By T. N. Stern, M.D. Pp. 381. Illustrated. \$8.50. Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers. 1964.

Hierdie is die tweede uitgawe van hierdie handige boek en die skrywer het dit nou aangevul met drie bykomstige hoofstukke wat handel oor elektrokardiografie, kardiaal kateterisasie en angiokardiografie respektiewelik. Hulle is waardevolle byvoegings en verhoog die bruikbaarheid van die boek.

Soos in die eerste uitgawe, is die hoofstukke almal meer prakties georiënteer; daar word egter doeltreffend gebruik gemaak van die wetenskaplike feite en die kliniese omstandighede in verband met kardiologie. Sonder om veel te borduur of om omslagtige verduidelikings te gee, word die essensiële kennis op hierdie gebied so oorgedra dat dit die gewone klinikus en die voorgraadse sowel as die nagraadse student baie kan help.

Die werk is natuurlik nie 'n naslaanboek nie en dit sal die kardioloog nie heeltemal bevredig nie. Daar word ook nie verwysings aangegee nie. A.J.B.

BACTERIAL VIRUSES

Papers on Bacterial Viruses. Selected by G. S. Stent. Pp. xxx + 365. R5.00. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1964.

This volume is a collection of 25 papers dealing with some important discoveries made during the past 14 years in the field of genetics, such as the transduction of bacterial genes by bacteriophages, the role of DNA as a germinal substance of bacterial viruses and the structure of DNA itself. The papers are in every case presented by well-chosen authorities (some papers are English translations from the original French or German) with references that give the reader a cross-section of the relevant literature. In addition to the reprinted papers the volume has benefited from an introductory text by Gunther S. Stent with its own bibliography 'in order to compensate for the necessarily incomplete and arbitrary nature of the selections'. For the student in genetics who requires a firm basis, background and the ability to read widely in this field, this book is warmly recommended. J.G.S.

RESPIRATORY DISEASES

A Synopsis of Respiratory Diseases. By J. Smart, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. Pp. vi + 154. R2.25. Bristol: John Wright & Sons. 1964.

This is a revised reprint from the late Dr. Letherby Tiddy's *Synopsis of Medicine*. An account of respiratory physiology has been included in this edition, but unfortunately no attempt has been made to incorporate these principles into later chapters. Functional concepts such as obstructive airways disease, which have contributed so much to our understanding of these conditions in recent years, are entirely overlooked.

Few would agree that there is use for intravenous cortisone in the routine management of staphylococcal pneumonia as Dr. Smart believes. Nor do we agree that there is no treatment for diaphragmatic hernia. In infants such cases should be handled as emergencies and must be referred to the nearest specialist paediatric surgery unit without delay.

Although the abovementioned shortcomings detract from the value of the book the subject has been thoroughly covered and it may prove of use as a supplementary text to those requiring a concise source from which to refresh their knowledge of the subject in a short space of time. M.K.

ALDOSTERONE

Aldosterone. A symposium organized by the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences established under the joint auspices of UNESCO and WHO. Ed. by E. E. Baulieu and P. Robel. Pp. xix + 523. Illustrated. R10.00. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1964.

This report of a meeting of the world's most prominent 'aldosteronologists' contains almost every fact known about this hormone and a great deal of speculation, besides. Contributions range from the purely chemical (Ulick's study of 18-hydroxycorticosterone as a precursor and Peterson's descrip-

tion of plasma aldosterone determination being outstanding) to the purely clinical (including an excellent review of primary aldosteronism by its 'discoverer', Jerome Conn).

Despite experimental work of great ingenuity and sophistication, many basic problems remain unanswered. The synthesis of the hormone needs much elucidation, a great deal still has to be learnt about the regulation of aldosterone secretion (particularly about the role of the renin-angiotensin system), and the whole relationship to arterial blood pressure and electrolyte metabolism is still uncertain.

Because of its emphasis on experimental work, this book will have a limited appeal; to those in the field, however, it is compulsory reading.

R.H.