

## BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKRESENSIES

## J.A.M.A. CLINICAL ABSTRACTS

*J.A.M.A. Clinical Abstracts of Diagnosis and Treatment.* Published with the Approval of the Board of Trustees, American Medical Association. Pp. 627 + vi. \$5.50. London and New York: Grune and Stratton, Inc. 1955.

*Contents:* 1. Internal Medicine. 2. Surgery. 3. Neurology and Psychiatry. 4. Pediatrics. 5. Gynecology and Obstetrics. 6. Dermatology. 7. Urology. 8. Ophthalmology. 9. Otolaryngology. 10. Therapeutics. 11. Pathology. 12. Radiology. 13. Anesthesia. 14. Physiology. Index.

One of the features of the Journal of the American Medical Association is 'Medical Literature Abstracts' to be found towards the end of the Journal. A great number of medical journals (more than 1,200) are referred to, their contents listed and the most important articles abstracted. Now, for the first time, some of these have been collected and are being presented in one volume. It is proposed to publish these abstracts annually; a sign of the times. Over the past few years there has been an increasing number of publications presenting abstracts of medical literature. The number of publications of this nature reflect the enormous number of medical journals available to the medical profession. While an abstract can never act as a substitute for the original article, the original can be consulted by those interested and the abstracts constitute a means of keeping in touch with current medical work and thought.

The J.A.M.A. Clinical Abstracts cover all aspects of medical practice, such as Medicine, Surgery, Radiology, Therapeutics etc. These are covered in some 612 pages and are well indexed. One of the better publications of this class.

I.G.

## MEDICAL PROGRESS 1955

*The British Encyclopaedia of Medical Practice, Including Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Other Special Subjects: Medical Progress 1955.* Editor in Chief: The Lord Horder, G.C.V.O., M.D., F.R.C.P. Pp. 311 + vi. London: Butterworth & Co. (Publishers), Ltd., South African Office—Butterworth & Co. (Africa) Ltd., Durban. 1955.

*Contents:* 1. Critical Surveys. 2. Drugs. 3. Abstracts. Index.

The British Encyclopaedia of Medical Practice is a well known publication and is to be found on the shelves of many a medical practitioner. Additions are constantly being made to medical knowledge and to keep the Encyclopaedia up to date a volume of 'Medical Progress' is published annually.

'Medical Progress 1955' follows the lines of the preceding volumes. Accepted authorities review some of the advance made in the past year. The reviews are brief and deal with but a few of the salient developments. Each section is followed by a list of references.

I.G.

## POCKET PRESCRIBER

*The Pocket Prescriber and Guide to Prescription Writing.* By Alistair G. Cruikshank, F.R.C.P.E. Sixteenth Edition. (Pp. 291 + vii Price 5/- + 4d. postage) E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., Edinburgh and London. 1956.

*Contents:* Preface. Some Points in Practice. Some Points in Prescribing. Incompatibilities. Synonyms for Drugs and Medical Preparations. Prescriptions for the following Diseases—Alimentary Diseases, Blood Diseases, Children's Diseases, Circulatory Diseases, Ear, Nose Throat and Eye Diseases, General and Metabolic Diseases, Infectious Diseases, Nervous Diseases, Respiratory Diseases, Skin Diseases, Urinary Diseases, Women, Diseases of. Diets. Selected National Formulae. Some Modern Remedies. Administration of Sulphonamides. Penicillin. Chloramphenicol. Streptomycin. Chlorotetracycline. Erythromycin. Oxytetracycline. Tetracycline. Posological Tables—Adults—Children. Enemata. Vitamins. Average Body Weights. Incubation Periods. Poisoning: Emergency Antidote Case. D.D.A. Regulations. Appendix—Tables of Weights and Measures—Imperial and Metric. Equivalents of English Weights to Grammes. Equivalent Measures of Capacity. Table of Strength of Solution. Methods for Converting Grains into Grammes and vice versa. Numerals commonly used in Prescriptions. Table of Quantities. Abbreviations. Proprietary Preparations. Index to Prescriptions.

This useful and inexpensive little book should be in the hands of every general practitioner and senior student. It is a perfect mine of information and of such modest size that it will fit in an ordinary waistcoat pocket. The young may often be at a loss for a good well-—tried remedy, especially for those common ailments about

which hospital teaching is silent, and for the elderly an 'aide-memoire' never comes amiss. Personally I have found the chapter on 'some modern remedies' especially useful; there are so many new and strange names that it is difficult to keep them all in mind. I cannot imagine any category of general practitioner who will not be happier for the possession of this little volume; the fact that it is now in its 16th edition speaks for itself.

F.R.L.

## OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY

*The Year Book of Obstetrics & Gynecology.* Edited by J. P. Greenhill, B.S., M.D., F.A.C.S. 1955—1956 Series (Pp. 544). Chicago: The Year Book Publishers, Inc.

*Contents:* *Obstetrics.* Pregnancy: Physiology, Abortion, Ectopic Pregnancy, Complications, Toxemia. Labor: General, Analgesia and Anesthesia, Complications, Operative Obstetrics. Uterine Hemorrhage. Puerperium. The Newborn. *Gynecology.* General Principles. Diagnosis. Infertility. Operative Technic. Infections. Nonmalignant Neoplasms. Malignant Tumors. Menstrual Disorders. Endocrinology.

The 1955-56 Year Book of Obstetrics and Gynaecology maintains the high standard set by its predecessors. This comprehensive review embraces all aspects of obstetrics and gynaecology, and continues to be one of the most stimulating medical books published.

The scope of the book is so wide that in this short review it is only possible to touch here and there on the many subjects it deals with.

The problem of how to manage women who have contracted rubella during the first 4 months of pregnancy remains an unsolved one. While it is recognized that a distinct rubella syndrome, characterized by congenital cataract, deafness and heart disease, may manifest itself in some of the newborn, it is also true that a normal full-term child may be born in these cases. While some authorities hold the view that termination of pregnancy is indicated one feels that as the baby has a choice of being normal, the pregnancy should not be terminated. It is well to point out that according to South African law the possibility of foetal abnormality is not a valid reason for terminating pregnancy.

The literature concerning Caesarian section is again enormous and the indications for this operation continue to expand. James T. Louw\* points out that foetal distress is an unsatisfactory indication for section and one that is easily abused. Greenhill is of the opinion that a previous Caesarian is an indication for repeat operation, even if the indication for the first section is no longer present. This opinion however is by no means a general one, and there are many who consider that a vaginal delivery may well be allowed in some cases where the cause for the original Caesarian section no longer exists. The trial labour in these cases must be conducted in a well-equipped maternity hospital.

In the section on gynaecology a large number of articles on the subject on cervical carcinoma indicate the tremendous interest shown in this subject.

As always, this Year Book is one of the best investments for the busy medical practitioner interested in obstetrics and gynaecology.

T. St. V. B.

\* S. Afr. Med. J., 1955, 29, 160.

## TEXT-BOOK OF BACTERIOLOGY

*Topley and Wilson's Principles of Bacteriology and Immunity.* Fourth Edition. Volumes I and II. By G. S. Wilson, M.D., F.R.C.P., D.P.H. and A. A. Miles, C.B.E., M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. Pp. 2331 + cxv. £8 0s. 0d. set of two Volumes. London: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd. 1955.

*Contents:* Volume I. Part I—General Bacteriology, Chapters 1-11. Part II—Systematic Bacteriology, Chapters 12-41. Index to Volumes I and II. Volume II. Part III—Infection and Resistance, Chapters 42-56. Part IV—The Application of Bacteriology to Medicine and Hygiene, Chapters 57-93. Index to Volumes I and II.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for a single individual or even a group of individuals to keep in touch with all branches of the rapidly advancing science of bacteriology. The authors of this text-book are themselves aware of the difficulty but they have nevertheless succeeded in bringing the 4th edition fully up to date.

According to their own statement the book is becoming increasingly a reference work for bacteriologists and less a suitable text-book for undergraduate medical students. This, however, is not an entirely acceptable statement. Many of its chapters certainly

contain more detail and deal in a more comprehensive manner with the subjects under consideration than the average undergraduate requires, nevertheless the book remains the outstanding text-book of bacteriology in the English language.

The authors are to be congratulated on the thoroughness with which practically every chapter has been revised. A great deal of subject matter not directly concerned with medical bacteriology has been eliminated and new discoveries given the appropriate prominence in their respective chapters. It is impossible to refer to all the major changes which have been brought about in the text. The following have been chosen almost at random:

The chapter dealing with antibiotics has been enlarged to give more detail of the structure and mode of action of penicillin and to include concise sections on some of the newer antibiotics.

Appropriate chapters (such as those on morphology of bacteria and bacterial variation) now deal also with some aspects of bacterial genetics. This field has risen to great prominence during the last few years and the authors are remarkably successful in giving a very concise and lucid introduction to the subject.

The virus field too has received attention and significant changes have been brought about in the sections of the text-book dealing with bacterial and animal viruses. The bacteriophage chapter in particular gives a very concise account of the newer developments in a field which has attracted the attention of an increasing number of research workers throughout the world.

The chapters on systematic bacteriology, as is the case with the subject matter they deal with, have undergone least change.

The second volume, as previously, is concerned with applied bacteriology and immunology. This too incorporates newer knowledge of epidemiology, prevention and treatment. Major changes have been brought about in some chapters, such as that dealing with infective enteritis in infancy, and those dealing with the virus diseases such as poliomyelitis. It is in the study of epidemi-

ology and prevention that the second volume is particularly useful.

This book, because of the extensive bibliographies at the end of each chapter, remains an outstanding reference work for use of the student in bacteriology. It is, however, also an authoritative work to which physicians, epidemiologists and public health authorities can refer with confidence for the problems concerning infective diseases with which they become confronted from day to day and for which they seek a reliable and ready answer.

W.v.d.E.

#### MEDICINE FOR THE GENERAL READER

*Is That You Doctor? Tabloids out of the Medical Bag.* By Imhotep. Pp. 207 + xi with illustrations. 15s. 0d. Cape Town Howard B. Timmins. 1955.

*Contents:* 1. The Doctor, the Patient and the Disease. 2. What we Inherit. 3. Acidity. 4. Mainly for Women. 5. Scientific Birth Control. 6. Skelton Health. 7. My Pore Feet. 8. Headaches and Heartaches. 9. Growing up. 10. Mother and Child. 11. Acne and Eczema. 12. The Bedside Manner. 13. The Specialist, The Generalist and the Public. 14. The 'Miracle' Drugs.

The author is well known under his nom-de-plume of 'Medicus' as a writer on medical subjects of general interest to the public, and he enjoys a wide popularity amongst readers of the *Argus* group of newspapers in which his articles are syndicated.

His selection of subjects in this book is wide and the chapters are written in a way which will appeal to the ordinary reader and show the insight of a man who has the broad humanity and understanding of the general practitioner of experience.

This is a challenging book which should be widely read. Although designed for the lay public, it could be read with profit by all doctors, especially younger general practitioners, who can learn a great deal from it as a guide in their approach to the everyday problems of their patients.

A.H.T.