

BLOOD DISEASES

Disorders of the Blood. Diagnosis: Pathology: Treatment: Technique. Eighth Edition. By Sir Lionel E. H. Whitby, C.V.O., M.C., M.A., M.D. (Cantab.), F.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. and C. J. C. Britton, M.D. (New Zealand), D.P.H. Pp. viii + 878. 124 Figures. 75s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1957.

Contents: I. The Origin, Development, Functions and Fate of the Cells of the Blood. II. Abnormal Haemopoiesis and Abnormal Cells found in the Circulation. III. The Principles and Practice of Haematological Diagnosis. I. Red Cells. IV. The Principles and Practice of Haematological Diagnosis. II. Leucocytes and Blood Platelets. V. The Principles and Practice of Haematological Diagnosis. III. Physical and Chemical Properties of the Blood Cells and Plasma. VI. The Biochemistry and Cytochemistry of Haemopoiesis. VII. The Causes of Anaemia. VIII. The Therapeutics of Anaemia. IX. Idiopathic Hypochromic Anaemia. The Plummer-Vinson Syndrome. Chlorosis. X. Pernicious Anaemia and Nutritional Megaloblastic Anaemias. XI. Anaemias due to Disease of the Alimentary Tract and its Associated Organs. XII. Miscellaneous Dyshaemopoietic Anaemias. Radium and X-rays. Scurvy. Thyroid Disease. XIII. Haematological Aspects of Pregnancy. XIV. The Haemolytic Anaemias. XV. The Purpura and Haemorrhagic Diseases. XVI. Anaemias in Infancy and Childhood. XVII. Diseases due to Aplasia or Hypoplasia of the Bone Marrow. Aplastic Anaemia. Agranulocytic Angina. XVIII. Polycythaemia, Erythraemia and Erythrocytosis. XIX. The Leukaemias (Leucoses). XX. Miscellaneous Disorders associated with Splenomegaly. Splenic Anaemia, Hodgkin's Disease, Diseases of Lipoid Metabolism. XXI. Infection and Infectious Diseases. XXII. Blood Groups. Haemagglutination. Blood Transfusion and Immunohaematology. XXIII. Miscellaneous Conditions. Allergy. Nephritis. Coronary Thrombosis. Diabetes. Cancer. XXIV. Disorders involving the Blood Pigments Enterogenous Cyanosis. Porphyruria and Porphyrinuria. XXV. Technique. Subject Index. Index of Authors.

This is an old and trusted friend. Ever since the first edition appeared in 1935 it has been a byword amongst students and practitioners. 'Whitby and Britton' has been quoted more often than most books on haematology especially in Britain and the Commonwealth. This new (8th) edition has acquired a degree of 'middle-age spread' and is no longer able to boast of the sylph-like figure of its youth; nor is it as cheap. Nevertheless it still remains one of the best books in this field which is available today.

One can of course always find details to criticize but one has to look a little more closely in this edition! Factor 5 is not reduced by the use of the anticoagulant drugs commonly prescribed nor is factor 7 believed to be required for thromboplastin generation. The coagulation time is not almost normal between attacks of bleeding in haemophilia; no one has been able to demonstrate any difference between the coagulation functions in the usual case of haemophilia when these are measured during a bleeding phase and during a quiescent phase. 'Gaisboks disease' appears to be a diagnosis which might well be discarded while the advice to eschew liver, kidney, and meat protein in this condition can safely be ignored in the absence of uraemia. The needle which is immersed in alcohol between successive finger pricks also belongs to an age which preceded the knowledge of icterogenic viruses.

But the chief criticism I would make is that while the authors review the evidence for and against many concepts in haematology they do not indicate often enough which one they most favour. Their difficulty is plain to see for one needs to be an expert in each of these fields to give a truly authoritative opinion. This is the strength of the text book which has multiple authors. One wonders, especially since the recent untimely death of Sir Lionel Whitby, whether the time has not now come to enlarge the panel of contributors.

DERMATOLOGIC FORMULARY

Dermatologic Formulary. Second Edition. By Frances Pascher, M.D. Pp. xii + 172. \$4.00. New York: Paul B. Hoeber, Inc. 1957.

Contents: Preface. Introduction. Acknowledgments. Prefatory Notes and Abbreviations. Section I—Topical Remedies. Explanatory notes. Medicated

baths (No. 1-No. 4). Soaps, shampoos, and other detergents (No. 5-No. 18). Soaks and wet dressings (No. 19-No. 23). Liquid emulsions and oils (No. 24-No. 28). Shake lotions, magmas, and suspensions (No. 29-No. 38). Solutions, lotions, and tinctures (No. 39-No. 58). Creams and Ointments (No. 59-No. 115). Pastes (No. 116-No. 121). Powders and plasters (No. 122-No. 127). Lozenges (No. 128-No. 129). Section II—Systemic Therapy. Explanatory notes. A—Medicaments for Oral Use. Acids and antacids (No. 130-No. 132). Analgesics (No. 133-No. 134). Antibiotics (No. 135-No. 138). Antihistaminics (No. 139-No. 142). Hematinics (No. 143-No. 144). Hormones (No. 145-No. 150). Heavy Metals (No. 151-No. 153). Salts (No. 154-No. 158). Sedatives and hypnotics (No. 159-No. 162). Sulfonamides and sulfones (No. 163-No. 166). Vitamins (No. 167-No. 176). Miscellaneous (No. 177-No. 185). Antibiotics (No. 186-No. 188). Antihistaminics (No. 189). Hormones (No. 190-No. 192). Heavy metals (No. 193-No. 196). Sympathomimetic drugs (No. 197-No. 199). Vitamins (No. 200-No. 201). Miscellaneous (No. 202-No. 205). Section III—Articles for Clinic Use. Local anesthetics (No. 206-No. 210). Biologicals (No. 211-No. 215). Cauterizing agents (No. 216-No. 221). Dressings and bandages (No. 222-No. 231). Miscellaneous (No. 232-No. 242). Emergency kit for anaphylactic reactions. Section IV—Therapeutic Aids. Cosmetic and treatment aids (No. 243-No. 251). Directions for long-term corticosteroid and/or corticosteroid therapy. Printed instructions issuable to patients. For care of acne. For care of impetigo and other pyodermas. For care of scabies. For home care of scalp ringworm. For varicose veins. For wet dressings. Index.

The ever-increasing spate of proprietary and ethical products now flooding the market is proving a great strain on the memories of prescribing physicians. The Dermatologic Formulary is a very useful, compact little volume which allows us easily to find the most suitable preparations for different dermatoses and to discover the constituents thereof.

Under the name of each preparation we are given its contents, its action and uses, the indications for prescribing it, directions for its application and its contra-indications and side effects.

Many useful hints are given; for instance, stains on the nails from potassium permanganate may be removed by 3% hydrogen peroxide, and bath stains by 'hypo', cream of tartar or household vinegar. Two sunscreen lotions, greatly needed in South Africa, are described, one containing menthyl anthranilate and the other para-aminobenzoic acid. Another substance often required in our warm climate is a satisfactory anti-perspirant tincture; the author gives one containing aluminium chloride in alcohol.

The book is very comprehensive, but I think that more side effects should have been cited; for instance, erythema nodosum is not mentioned as a complication of iodide administration nor is pellagra described during isoniazid therapy.

Gold is still said to be helpful in lupus erythematosus and arthropathic psoriasis, but I think that it should be omitted from all modern books on dermatology because it is far more dangerous and less effective than the anti-malarial drugs.

Towards the end of the book some very useful directions are given for the care of patients undergoing prolonged therapy with the steroid hormones; schedules of treatment for acne, impetigo, scabies, tinea capitis and varicose veins are also listed.

This book covers the whole spectrum of the dermatologic formulary, ancient and modern and will prove an invaluable asset, not only to the harassed general practitioner, but to the busy dermatologist who cannot be expected to carry in his head all the details of the multitude of substances he may wish to use in treating his patients.

The science of Dermatology no longer consists of 'a name and an ointment'.

J.J.W.

GENERAL PRACTICE IN THE WELFARE STATE

The Doctor's Signature. By Hamilton Johnston. Pp. 255. 13s. 6d. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1957.

This is the sort of book that could be an autobiography of any one of a thousand doctors. Dr. Truscott the likeable, moderately respectable, moderately successful and moderately honest general practitioner describes life in general practice in the Welfare State.

The adventures that befall him are discussed with humour and modesty, all sorts of characters familiar to all of us are brought before us, Dr. Craddock, successful and portentous, Dr. Chalk, inextinguishable, elderly and cranky. Dr. Peebles and others can all be recognized among any doctor's acquaintances. The book is full of humour and clean fun. It is an ideal present for Christmas

or a present to a doctor on a sick bed but not for the post-operative case. The explosive character of the laughter that is associated with such a book would probably not be very good for the immediate post-operative case. Highly recommended for any of the profession who is feeling a bit 'browned off'.

S.T.T.