

BOOK REVIEWS : BOEKBESPREKINGS

VASCULAR SPIDERS

Vascular Spiders and related Lesions of the Skin. By William Bennett Bean, M.D. Pp. xix + 372. 130 figures. 63s. net. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1958.

Professor Bean's essays will appeal especially to devotees of the works of Parkes Weber, but there are few who will not find entertainment as well as edification in this discursive work. Vascular spiders have long been one of the author's favourite studies and a third of the text is devoted to their nature and occurrence in health, in pregnancy and in hepatic disorders. The rest of the book consist of observations on a great variety of vascular lesions of the skin, with digressions on non-vascular diseases which may or may not be pertinent to the main subject. 'Much of it deals with observations independent rather than necessarily original', and herein lies its interest. The proof-reading has been poor and some titles to illustrations are transposed. There is a splendid list of nearly a thousand references, with its own index.

J.M.

SKIN DISEASES

The Nursing and Management of Skin Diseases. By D. S. Wilkinson, M.D., M.R.C.P. Pp. 288. 13 figures. 32s. 6d. London: Faber and Faber. 1958.

This is a book for the general practitioner and the nurse; its theme is that of handling patients in a practical way.

Although there is a certain amount of repetition, this is only noticeable on reading the book as a whole. When it is read as a reference book, the fact that certain statements have been repeated is of value to the practitioner.

The figures and plates are good, but as in all books on dermatology one wishes, for obvious reasons, that they were in colour.

A.H.T.

HERMAPHRODITISM

Hermaphroditism, Genital Anomalies and Related Endocrine Disorders. By Howard W. Jones, Jr., M.D. and William Wallace Scott, M.D., Ph.D. Pp. xvi + 456. 466 illustrations. 128s. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. 1958.

This work is really an up-to-date version of Hugh Young's famous monograph on hermaphroditism, which appeared in 1937. It includes detailed clinical findings, radiological techniques, corrective surgical procedures, and descriptions of embryonic sex differentiation, all profusely illustrated. The chapter on embryogenesis is contributed by Prof. A. Jost, of Paris, and is judiciously and clearly presented. The chapter on the 'Criteria of sex' is quite fundamental, but it is generally felt that 'intersex' is a better term than 'hermaphroditism' where there is 'a contradiction of one or more of the morphologic criteria of sex' (*sic*). 'Hermaphroditism' is an old and picturesque label which has always indicated intermediate external sexual characteristics, and in this sense is hardly applicable to Klinefelter's syndrome for example.

True hermaphroditism occupies a disproportionate amount of space, with so many individual cases described and illustrated by diagram (why diagrams only for true hermaphroditism?). The far commoner conditions of Klinefelter's and related syndromes, and of gonadal dysgenesis with female body-form are afforded less space than they merit. More cases, too, of the testicular feminization syndrome are needed to do justice to its variations. It is not clear why Cushing's syndrome is included at all, while neither simple hirsutism nor the syndromes associated with hyperthecosis ovarii appear.

The production is excellent and the text seems to be accurate. This book is a first-class work of reference for the endocrinologist, the gynaecologist and the urologist and for the plastic or general surgeon when he needs such a consultation.

W.P.U.J.

RADIOTHERAPY

Progress in Radiation Therapy. Edited by Franz Buschke, M.D. with 13 contributors. Pp. iii + 284. Illustrations. \$9.75. New York and London: Grune & Stratton, Inc. 1958.

It is a pleasure to introduce this first volume of a new 'progress' series. The book is well edited, and the various chapters on the radiotherapeutic approach to cancer are provided by authoritative contributors.

In three chapters, with full bibliographies, the book emphasizes that, in radiation therapy, purely physical developments—mega-voltage radiation sources, accurate dosimetry, isotopes—have today reached a stage where further substantial improvements are unlikely, and that the next important steps must come from studies relating to the biology of the disease itself, to host cell physiology, and to radiation biology.

Thus, there is an excellent review of the theoretical and practical aspects of relative biological efficiency (RBE) of external beams of ionizing radiations as a function of the quality or photon energy of the radiation. A chapter on the time-dose factor as it affects biological response to various given series of exposures summarizes much data from which optimal protraction and fractionation procedures can be computed, so as to achieve the greatest statistical probability of uncomplicated cure. A third section, devoted to methods whereby the radio-sensitivity of tissues and tumours may be selectively altered by chemical agents, raises the possibility of 'sensitizing' the tumour and 'protecting' normal tissues during irradiation. Means of reducing lethality from systemic irradiation by pharmacologic agents is also discussed.

There are further excellent chapters of an essentially practical and clinical nature on the radiotherapy of renal embryoma and thyroid, cerebral and breast neoplasms; and also on the cytological evaluation of radiation response in carcinoma of the cervix. The reviewer regards this book as a most important and worth-while acquisition by workers and students in the field of cancer.

D.D.

OPHTHALMOLOGY

The Year Book of Ophthalmology 1958-59. Edited by Derrick Vail, B.A., M.D., D.Oph. (Oxon.), F.A.C.S., F.R.C.S. (Hon.). Pp. 407. 78 figures. \$7.50. Chicago: Year Book Publishers, Inc. 1959.

Since the Year Book of the Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat appeared in two sections, the volume devoted entirely to Ophthalmology has been increased in size and in range. In this new series, the high standard of previous issues is maintained. In a special introductory article, Bernard Becker brilliantly reviews recent advances in chronic simple glaucoma. The remainder of the book consists of abstracts of more important papers appearing in the world literature for the year ending September 1958. Each abstract has been carefully selected, is sufficiently long to contain enough detail for appreciation of the original, and is accompanied by critical comment from Derrick Vail, who often disagrees with the author but is always constructive and helpful. Once again, this Year Book can be recommended for those who wish to be reminded of the highlights of the year's literature and those who wish to keep abreast with the latest information on ophthalmology.

L.S.

STAPHYLOCOCCUS PYOGENES

Staphylococcus Pyogenes and its Relation to Disease. By Stephen D. Elek, M.D., D.Sc., Ph.D., D.P.H. Pp. vii+767. 44 figures. XXII tables. 84s. net + 3s. postage abroad. Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1959.

The tremendous advances in knowledge and the great increase in our medical literature is well exemplified in this large volume which represents a monograph on a single organism, the staphylococcus. The biology of this pathogenic micro-organism, as the author remarks in his preface, is common ground to chemists, geneticists, veterinarians, physicians, pathologists and workers in the field of public health, as well as to others. All such investigators interested in this pathogen and in microbiology in general will welcome this excellent volume for its comprehensive chapters, and for its bibliography which comprises 187 pages of the book. Thus articles scattered throughout a wide range of journals are brought together here in appropriate context. The author also exposes gaps that are still present in our knowledge of this widely and intensively investigated organism; many aspects of staphylococci are still *sub judice*. Although there are certain omissions even in so large and well-documented a volume—for example in experimental details and methods and in certain clinical aspects of staphylococcal disease—this book will be a standard reference for many years to come.

N.S.

SELLA TURCICA

The Sella in Health and Disease. By Mahmoud El Sayed Mahmoud, Ph.D. Red., M.B., B.Ch., D.M.R.E. Supplement No. 8 to the *British Journal of Radiology*. Pp. xii + 100. 120 figures. 35s. London: The British Institute of Radiology. 1958.

This monograph is the outcome of a considerable amount of meticulous investigation, observation and enquiry by the author. He has studied the normal anatomy, histology and radiology of the sella turcica and the changes that occur in disease, especially intracranial tumour. He arrives at some interesting conclusions, among others for example: That the upper limit of the area of the sella profile is 130 sq. mm.; that there is a variable distance and angle between the sellar roof and the anterior end of the third ventricle; that a fully pneumatized sphenoid sinus protects the sellar floor from the effects of increased intracranial pressure; and that vascular disease within the skull produces no effects. The total result is a body of knowledge about the sella that will prove invaluable to all who are concerned with its radiological appearances, which are of very great importance for so often they provide the key to the diagnosis of intracranial lesions.

S.B.

ATLAS OF SURGERY

An Atlas of Surgery. By F. Wilson Harlow, M.B., B.S. (Durham), F.R.C.S. (Eng.). Pp. xiii + 363. 1,292 illustrations. 50s. net. London: William Heinemann Medical Books Ltd. 1958.

There is an abundance of surgical text-books available to the student, all relying primarily on the written word. This elegantly

produced volume breaks new ground in that it has been compiled on the premise that the undergraduate student will be attracted and impressed by a series of visual pictures. These have been devised to illustrate clearly basic points of surgical importance—anatomical, pathological, clinical and operative—a knowledge of which is essential in the approach to the patient with a surgical complaint.

The atlas covers a wide range, being divided into separate sections entitled 'abdominal surgery', 'urology', 'gynaecology', 'general surgery', 'special surgery', 'orthopaedics', 'management of operations' and 'surgical pathology'. The text accompanying each picture or diagram is succinct and appropriately dogmatic, considering that it is designed to teach the medical student who is about to enter the surgical wards. It serves as a pleasant, painless introduction to the problems of surgery and will stimulate interest in those students who are by nature less enthusiastic. While it does not aspire to replace any of the more conventional text-books, it constitutes a valuable supplement to them.

A.J.W.

GERIATRICS

The Care of the Geriatric Patient. Edited by E. V. Cowdry, Ph.D., Sc.D. (Hon.). Pp. 438. South African price 68s. St. Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company. 1958.

This book, written by a team of 22 experts under the editorship of a renowned gerontologist, comprises articles on many aspects of geriatric medicine. True to expectation, the material is carefully sifted, reliable and instructive; cross references avoid irksome repetitions.

Just because the book as a whole is excellent, the few demerits and omissions figure prominently. The chapter on drug therapy, replete with sound advice, is nevertheless inadequate. If lack of space was responsible for the exclusions, the author's reminiscences could have been omitted. The section on the medical aspect of geriatrics is excellent, but devotes too much space to the problem of cancer. The exposition is flawless but the place is wrong. The apparent advice to treat surgically all fractures of the neck of the femur goes counter to experience. Many such fractures unite satisfactorily without open operation. Furthermore, pinning and prostheses are not quite innocent of morbidity and mortality.

An ever-increasing number of persons now demand a periodic check-up from doctors, who commonly lack a working plan for assessing, recording and utilizing their findings. On pages 74 *et seq.* an ideal plan is outlined. It is, however, too elaborate, and liable to overtax the time, patience and pocket of the examinee.

Excepting the few digressions, this lucid, compact and informative book is full of reward to the reader. It postulates that many senile degenerative changes are avoidable, that some are reversible, and that most are postponable; means to obtain these ends are suggested.

If T. S. Eliot had read it, his famous Gerontion would not have depicted old age as meek submission to fate.

I.M.H.

HISTORY OF SEX CUSTOMS

A History of Sexual Customs. By Richard Lewinsohn, Dr. Med., Dr. Rerum Politicarum (Berlin). Translated by Alexander Mayce. Pp. xiv + 424. Illustrations. 31s. London—New York—Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co. 1958.

Transporting the reader from prehistoric times through the ancient civilizations to more modern times and finally to the present day, with Kinsey's revelations and artificial insemination, this book contains considerably more general history than its title would seem to suggest.

The general circumstances of the various historical periods and their effects on sex customs, and *vice versa*, make interesting reading. Wars, religions and other major sociological influences in the world's history have all left their mark and are admirably discussed by the author. Prominent people of the times, with their contributions, are well represented and add colour to the scene.

The numerous and varied illustrations are aptly chosen, while the reference and comprehensive index add further to the value of the book. There must be few (if any) books which deal so fully and authoritatively with this subject.

J.P.v.N.

ON SPINAL ANAESTHESIA

Physiology of Spinal Anaesthesia. By N. M. Greene, B.S., M.A., M.D. Pp. xi + 195. Illustrations. \$6.00. Baltimore: The Williams & Wilkins Company. 1958.

This monograph is a reflection of the transition of the speciality of anaesthesia during recent years from an art to science. Its nine chapters form a comprehensive appraisal of a very large volume of work in the fields of physiological and clinical research as it relates to spinal anaesthesia.

As may be expected, most of the book centres round the changes brought about by the effects of interference by spinal anaesthesia on the autonomic nervous system and through them on the circulation. The extensive subject matter is very well presented and apposite comments by the author emphasize those conclusions which are most valid and of greatest clinical importance without diverting the reader from the fuller more academic picture given.

The chapter dealing with obstetrical physiology is of particular interest and should do much to clarify the controversial position of spinal anaesthesia in obstetrical practice. A.B.B.

TEXT-BOOK OF PUBLIC HEALTH

A Synopsis of Hygiene (Jameson and Parkinson). 11th edition. By Llywelyn Roberts, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H., assisted by Kathleen M. Shaw, M.B.E. Pp. viii + 694. 22 illustrations. 60s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1958.

This new edition of Jameson and Parkinson's *A Synopsis of Hygiene*, edited by Llywelyn Roberts and Kathleen Shaw, although comprising less than 700 pages as compared to the 891 pages of the 10th edition, has nevertheless been so altered that the material now presented materially exceeds that of the old edition. Many of the chapters have been completely rewritten and their scope materially widened, so as to deal most informatively with such aspects as health education, mental health, accidents—both in the home and on the roads—rehabilitation, and atmospheric pollution, together with all their implications. It is disappointing to note that the epidemiological approach to ill health has been limited to the infectious diseases, and that the broader aspects of other forms of ill health have not been included.

The style is easy and the printing excellent and the layout of the book could not be bettered. The inclusion in the text of a list of references for further consultation can be wholeheartedly commended.

The work is a mine of information, and is as up to date as a text-book of this type could possibly be. While certain chapters—particularly that on public-health legislation—are only applicable to the United Kingdom, the remainder are fully topical for urban conditions in this country. I have no hesitation in recommending this treatise on public health to undergraduates, postgraduates, and all specialists in the public-health field. E.D.C.

PAEDIATRICS

Recent Advances in Paediatrics. 2nd edition. Edited by Douglas Gairdner, D.M., F.R.C.P. Pp. viii + 378. 82 illustrations. 48s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1958.

In these days of super-specialization and increasing numbers of specialized scientific journals, a book such as this, summarizing recent advances in knowledge in succinct style, becomes very important. The specialist in the wide field of paediatrics and the general practitioner interested in the care and welfare of children need this book, not only for the information it gives, but also for the useful bibliographies at the end of each chapter.

This is the second edition (the first edition was published in 1954) edited by Douglas Gairdner, of Cambridge. There has been no attempt to follow up the articles in the first edition, except that on 'tuberculosis', which has been entirely rewritten. In this edition 3 experts from the USA—Falkner, McCrory and Fleischer—have joined a team of 12 British experts to produce a most interesting and informative book on theoretical as well as practical paediatric problems. Basic physiology is discussed in the articles on circulatory changes at birth, haematology of infancy, jaundice in the newborn, and physical growth. The subjects that are of great interest to the practising doctor are those on hypothyroidism, nephrosis, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever and osteitis. Of social

and practical importance are the contributions on hydrocephalus and the use of the Spitz-Holter valve, and that on deafness in children.

It is a pity that this book is presented only once every 4 years. More frequent editions would bridge the gap between text-books and journals. B.E.

RADIUM ISODOSE CURVES

Radium-Isodosen. Die Radiumdosierung in „r“. Von Dr. A. Verhagen. Mit einem Geleitwort von Prof. Dr. K. Nordmeyer (Deutscher und Englischer Text). viii + 96 Seiten. 34 Abbildungen. DM 19.50. Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1958.

This small work is really no more than what its name implies, for it consists essentially of about 70 pages of isodose curves, drawn on graph paper, around various radium containers and combinations of such containers loaded with varying amounts of radium. The text throughout is in German and English.

The foreword, by K. Nordmeyer, is best ignored. Here we read that 'it has long been the aim of the radiotherapist to use the uniform physical dosage in r for radium therapy', as though this aim has not long since been attained. The preface states the whole object of this work, namely that one should know the isodose curves around radium applicators and that one should state the dose in r units. It would have been better had the written text ended here. The 'introduction', of 10 pages, is largely devoted to a justification of why it was necessary to draw these isodose curves; but it also contains erroneous statements; e.g. 'In the past the dosage of radium radiation has not been measured in roentgen units'; and 'Below an isodose of 60 r/h no therapeutic effect can be expected'.

This brings one to the end of the written text. Then follows the isodose curves and dimensional drawings of applicators which will be of value only to those institutions which use these particular applicators. Only 10 references are listed and names such as Todd, Meredith, Paterson, Kottmeier and Heyman are conspicuous by their absence. J.A.B.

NUCLEAR SEX SYMPOSIUM

Symposium on Nuclear Sex. Edited for the Organizing Committee by the Secretary, D. Robertson Smith, M.A., M.D. and William M. Davidson, M.D. Pp. xvii + 188. 14 figures. 21s. net. London: William Heinemann Medical Books Ltd. 1958.

Notwithstanding the pioneer work of Hanking (1891), McClung and Wilson, Painter and others, and Young's classical book on genital abnormalities (1937), widespread interest in the subject of nuclear sex only really commenced in 1949 with the discovery by the Canadians Murray L. Barr and E. G. Bertram of a sexual dimorphism in the intermitotic nuclei of mammals. The practical applications of this and subsequent discoveries have produced a new scientific discipline or 'side-line' involving workers in many fields of medicine and biology, including anatomists, physiologists, geneticists, endocrinologists and cytologists. In order to bring all recently acquired knowledge into focus, a symposium was held in September 1957 at King's College Hospital Medical School, London—an admirable procedure, if for no other reason than that, at an early stage of this new game, initial misunderstandings and misconceptions were ironed out and nomenclature was agreed upon. The symposium was divided into 3 sections:

1. The genetic and cytological aspects of nuclear sex, by such speakers as C. E. Ford, B. M. Slizynski, Harold Klinger, J. L. Hamerton, Leo Sachs, and Mathilde Danon.

2. The application to the study of intersex and related states, with contributions by Peter Bishop, D. J. B. Ashley, R. E. Siebenmann, W. M. Davidson and others.

3. The application of nuclear sex to the study of tumours.

The papers and discussions in this publication are a fascinating story of the evolution of a 'new' scientific endeavour. The reviewer is deeply impressed with the way in which scientists with originally widely separate interests have adopted and pooled their meticulous techniques to produce the mosaic pattern of knowledge included under the simple title 'Nuclear Sex'. Every paper published is a positive contribution to our knowledge, and this small, well-edited book will be of great value to all who have any interest whatsoever in X and Y.

R.S.