

PHYSIOLOGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Physiologie des Bewusstseins in entwicklungsgeschichtlicher Betrachtung. Von Prof. Dr. U. Ebbecke. xii + 211 Seiten. Ganzleinen DM 27.00. Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1959.

In this book the author has tried to indicate the development of the nervous control of the organism, from simple reflexes to the most complicated cerebral associations which influence the emotions and behaviour. In short outlines he describes the phylogenetic development of the nervous system. He mentions primitive reactions like the reaction of polyps after mechanical irritation. In the latter part of the book human spinal reflexes are dealt with. Eventually Ebbecke, who is an experienced physiologist, explains sense-organ and higher cerebral functions, cerebral associations, interrelations between different parts of the brain, and consciousness of limbs and of the whole of the body; even the development of speech is mentioned. These few remarks are enough to indicate the vast field that is covered by Ebbecke's book and show that it is too vast for one author. The word 'consciousness' has many different definitions so that the author should have defined what he means by this word. Sometimes there is no difference made between 'Gefühl' (feeling) and 'Empfindung' (sensation). But these are minor faults. On the whole it is a very interesting book which unfortunately is written in rather difficult German.

H.W.W.

MEDICINE

The Year Book of Medicine 1958-59. Edited by Paul B. Beeson, M.D., Carl Muschenheim, M.D., William B. Castle, M.D., Tinsley R. Harrison, M. D., Franz J. Ingelfinger, M.D. and Philip K. Bondy, M.D. Pp. 782. 123 figures. \$7.50. Chicago: Year Book Publishers, Inc. 1958.

The Year Book Series has been established for many years and needs no introduction, and indeed no recommendation. It is enough to say that the original high standard of the Year Book of Medicine has been well maintained throughout the years, and in this edition it has in no way fallen back. It would be unfair, even impossible, to single out one section as being better than the rest. The papers received are carefully chosen and the summaries well written. The editorial comments at the foot of many are often particularly valuable and to the point. Most of the papers chosen are from American journals, but the English literature generally is fairly well represented, while at least 2 papers from South African journals are included.

In these days when medical literature has reached such alarming proportions that no man can hope to keep abreast of it, it is a real consolation to know that in this relatively small volume most of the best publications are covered. It is difficult to suggest a better way of keeping up with the yearly march of medicine. The book is a must for the busy doctor.

H.M.

GENERAL SURGERY

The Year Book of General Surgery 1958-59. Edited by Michael E. de Bakey, B.S., M.D., M.S. With a Section on *Anesthesia*, edited by Stuart C. Cullen, M.D. Pp. 588. 149 figures. \$7.50. Chicago: Year Book Publishers, Inc. 1958.

Once again the Year Book of General Surgery reflects the changing interests of the current years. One of the largest sections is that on the aorta and peripheral arteries, a field that until a few years ago had been almost entirely left to the attention of physicians. The good results that can be obtained by removal of localized patches of atheroma—and many cases show extreme localization of the pathological process—are stressed and reported.

The appendix, firm stand-by of three or four decades ago, is represented by a single article only—*eheu fugaces!*

No practising general surgeon can afford to be without a current copy of the 'Year Book'. It is as good as an educational tour of Europe and the States.

T.S.

PLASTIC SURGERY

The Year Book of Orthopedics and Traumatic Surgery 1958-59. Edited by Edward L. Compere, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.I.C.S. Section on *Plastic Surgery*. Edited by Neal Owens, M.D., F.A.C.S., F.I.C.S. Pp. 445. 227 figures. \$7.50. Chicago: Year Book Publishers, Inc. 1959.

With the advances that are steadily being made in orthopaedic surgery, different facets of the subject become high-lighted, while old problems are filed as solved.

This year the emphasis is on Trauma—about 20% of the abstracted literature is devoted to the treatment and difficulties of fractures and dislocations.

The problem of low back ache which was at one stage, considered by many to have been solved now reappears in this form: 'What can be expected today of operations for intervertebral-disc disease? They cannot be expected to return the patients' back to normal, if by 'normal' is meant complete unawareness of the back in any and all activities'. There is no doubt that excision of an intervertebral disc that is pressing on a nerve root will relieve the sciatica, but what of the subsequent back ache? Should routine spinal fusion be done? Despite the long series of results the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved and the tendency now appears to be towards greater conservatism. Backache as a cause of absenteeism in modern industry, is probably one of the largest single contributory factors.

Serious concern is being felt at the number of cases that are becoming infected after elective operations and it has evolved the challenging statement that 'organized negligence is the cause of most hospital infections'. Every surgeon and operating unit must examine their aseptic technique.

The present annual follows the same high standard as its predecessors.

A.S.

PHYSICAL DIAGNOSIS

Physical Diagnosis. The history and examination of the patient. By J. H. Prior, M.D. and Jack S. Silberstein, M.D. and contributors. Pp. 388. 193 illustrations. South African price: 102s. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Company. 1959.

Essentially this is a book for the medical student. Written by a team of experts of the Ohio State University College of Medicine, it seeks to stress the fundamental importance of the taking of a good and complete history and the making of a thorough and satisfactory examination.

The text is well illustrated with good photographs and such line drawings as are necessary.

There is little doubt that the student who develops the art of taking an organized, logical history, and carrying out a systematic examination as visualized in this work, will find himself greatly assisted during his clinical years of study and, indeed, throughout his life of practice. A.H.T.

PAEDIATRICS

The Year Book of Pediatrics 1958-59. Edited by Sydney S. Gellis, M.D. Pp. 496. 125 figures. \$7.50. Chicago: Year Book Publishers, Inc. 1958.

The 1958/59 Year Book of Pediatrics maintains its usual high standard under the continued editorial control of Dr. Sydney S. Gellis.

The abstracts are arranged under the 17 sections used in the previous editions; they cover a wide range of world literature not entirely restricted to American publications.

The editorial comments on the abstracts and the invited comments of experts in their respective fields are continued in this edition and undoubtedly add to its value.

The book is well indexed and well illustrated, and maintains its usual form. The increasing emphasis being paid to neonatal paediatrics is illustrated by the fact that this edition devotes a 55-page section to the premature and newborn in contrast to the 35 pages devoted to this field in the previous year's edition.

This current edition of the Year Book is again recommended reading for all concerned with child health. I.K.

SQUINT

Worth and Chavasse's Squint. The Binocular Reflexes and the Treatment of Strabismus. 9th edition. By T. K. Lyle, C.B.E., M.A., M.D., M.Chir. (Cantab.), M.R.C.P. (Lond.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.) and G. J. O. Bridgeman, M.C., M.A., M.B., B.Chir. (Cantab.), F.R.C.S. (Eng.). Pp. viii + 392. Illustrated. 52s. 6d. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox Ltd. 1959.

The ninth edition of this established favourite has now appeared, with Bridgeman joining Keith Lyle as joint author. The book has however been so completely rewritten and rearranged as to be almost a new one and has gained in clarity and conciseness.

Strabismus has always been a difficult subject, made more so by the absence of unanimity in definitions and classification, and the articles in the current journals do little to simplify matters. It is therefore timely to have this book, where the problems are clearly defined and fully and logically discussed. Representative case histories are fully illustrated and explained. Considerable additional material has been added, and the book abounds in Chavasse's epigrams and sound advice. The necessity is stressed for urgent treatment of the squinting child as early as possible. This book remains the standard work on squint and as such is unhesitatingly recommended. L.S.

'OFFICE GYNECOLOGY'

Office Gynecology. 7th edition, revised and enlarged, By J. P. Greenhill, B.S., M.D., F.A.C.S., F.I.C.S. (Hon.). Pp. 572. 145 figures. \$9.00. Chicago: Year Book Publishers, Inc. 1959.

This little book was originally published in 1939 and has been through 6 editions and 2 reprints, which testify to its usefulness to practitioners engaged in gynaecology.

It covers a wide field in gynaecology and the mode of approach will help the isolated practitioner forced to rely on his own resources. In this the author has succeeded admirably. The text is supplemented with a large number of well-chosen and clear drawings.

Office Gynecology should serve a useful purpose in many a doctor's room in the plateland. G.C.A. vdW.

DIE INFEKTIONSKRANKHEITEN DES MENSCHEN UND IHRE ERREGER

Die Infektionskrankheiten des Menschen und ihre Erreger.

In zwei Bänden. Herausgegeben von Prof. Dr. A. Grumbach und Prof. Dr. W. Kikuth. xxxii + 1,702 Seiten. 56 Abbildungen. Ganzleinen DM 198.00. Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1958.

These two volumes cover 1,702 pages of small print, which is enough to indicate how much was demanded of the authors in compiling this tremendous work. They deal with various antigens—whether bacteria, rickettsiae or viruses—and their counteraction by body defence. All possible forms of organisms are scrutinized and described in the minutest detail as regards their morphology, classification, history, method of diagnosis, treatment and prognosis.

In each case the clinical picture accompanies this description, together with a practical approach. This combination of clinical experience and theory makes the book very pleasant reading. An interesting feature is the authors' views on drug resistance, especially in dealing with the notorious strain of *Staph. aureus*. Their solution to the problem gives one the impression that they are clinicians of vast experience and practical approach. D.J.H.

ETRUSCAN ORIGINS

A Ciba Foundation Symposium on Medical Biology and Etruscan Origins. Edited by G. E. W. Wolstenholme, O.B.E., M.A., M.B., B.Ch. and Cecilia M. O'Connor, B.Sc. Pp. xii + 255. 60 illustrations. 45s. net. London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1959.

At the Ciba Foundation's 50th symposium there were brought together experts in widely differing fields of humanities and science—archeologists, anthropologists, classicists, historians, geneticists and biochemists. They came together to discuss the recent contributions of medical biology to ethnology, with special reference to the Etruscans, a people of whose origin nothing certain is known. In the 8th century B.C. they were a powerful nation in north-west Italy. They worked in metal, exploited the minerals of Sardinia and Corsica, and carried on an extensive trade. They also exercised a powerful influence on Roman culture.

The book is primarily concerned with the origin of the Etruscan people and not their achievements. Evidence employed in trying to solve this problem has so far come from ancient literature, linguistics, and archeological material. Now at this symposium medical science has made its own contribution to the study of this intriguing problem, and it is in this contribution by geneticists and blood-group experts that medical readers will find their main interest in this book. E.M.S.

CANCER OF THROAT AND GULLET

Cancer of the Pharynx, Larynx and Oesophagus and its Surgical Treatment. By Ronald W. Raven, O.B.E. (Mil.), T.D., F.R.C.S. Pp. xiv + 292 + (10). 189 figures. 76s. + 1s. 9d. postage. London: Butterworth & Co. (Publishers) Ltd. South African Office: Butterworth & Co. (Africa) Ltd., P.O. Box 792, Durban. 1958.

From such a well-known worker on cancer as the author of this work an outstanding contribution is expected. The expectation is realized.

Mr. Raven has dealt with one of the gloomiest and most difficult aspects of the surgery of malignancy. The areas covered by his book present many apparently hopeless problems. His results show that there is hope even though at times it is but a glimmer. He has capitalized on the fact that 85% of cases of cancer of the head and neck die with the disease still confined above the clavicles.

The planning of the work is excellent, diagrams and illustrations are outstanding, and the text clearly presents all aspects of his thesis. The results of Conley, of the Memorial Hospital, New York, on restricted operations for malignant melanoma of the head and neck make more radical procedures unnecessary. Preliminary high ligation of the internal jugular before dividing it distally appears an unnecessary addition to an already lengthy procedure. These are but minor criticisms.

The problem of cancer of pharynx and oesophagus has not been solved but its management has been so well set out that the book will be the reference work for all interested in that field.

A.L.M.

PHARMACOLOGY OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

The Effect of Pharmacologic Agents on the Nervous System. Proceedings of the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease. Vol. XXXVII. Editor: F. J. Braceland, M.D. Pp. xi + 488. 124 illustrations. 34 tables. \$13.50. Baltimore: The Williams & Wilkins Company. 1959.

The above Association have been responsible for many worthwhile publications and this is among the best of their books. It is not that the material is of uniform excellence; as can be expected, there are many pedestrian chapters and some unrestrained opinions unsupported by valid evidence. Its importance lies in the fact that it is a major contribution to organized knowledge in a rapidly expanding field. Each new pharmaceutical discovery promises more than it delivers and waves of blind enthusiasm result in the wholesale use of one new drug after another; these fads are not prevented by the scepticism of the cautious nor even by the hazards of complications when the drugs are potent. It is the duty of every practitioner who uses a drug to make himself fully aware of its actions and side-effects and to weigh the risks ill-effects against the benefits. In the field of mental and nervous disease this book can be considered a standard reference.

The chapters on antibiotics in infections of the central nervous system, and on anticonvulsants, are both excellent and set a high standard which is not maintained throughout. Most of the book is concerned with the pharmacotherapy of mental illness. Drug therapy in psychiatry is largely empirical, and the effect of the personal and suggestive factor is always important; an interesting

contribution on placebos and another on sedatives and hypnotics emphasize this point in a most illuminating way. It is reliably concluded that over-active behaviour and psychomotor excitation are capable of control by drugs, especially the promazine derivatives. Drugs to lift moods of depression are less effective. The psychiatrist and neurologist will find this book invaluable and, having regard to the widespread use of tranquillizers and hypnotics by the general practitioner, he too is urged to read the book carefully.

S.B.

MEDICAL GENETICS

An Introduction to Medical Genetics. 2nd edition. By J. A. Fraser Roberts, M.A., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P. Pp. xii + 263. 107 figures. 35s. London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press. 1959.

This second edition preserves the lucidity and exhilarating quality of the first edition, while bringing the content, in an era of rapid development, up to date. Thus the genetics of the blood-group systems and the abnormal haemoglobins have provided a wealth of new examples, and the final chapter on genetic prognosis provides a sound basis for heredity counselling. Basic genetic principles and orientations are presented in masterly balance with clinical examples from diverse fields.

In my opinion, this work is a *sine qua non* for the medical student and practitioner alike, in guiding them aright in the ideology and practical applications of medical genetics.

L.A.H.