

BOEKBESPREKINGS : BOOK REVIEWS

ANAESTHESIA FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN

Anesthesia for Infants and Children. By Robert M. Smith, M.D. Pp. 418. 182 illustrations. South African price: £5 2s. 0d. Local agents: P. B. Mayer, P.O. Box 713, Cape Town, and Westdene Products (Pty.) Ltd. Medical Book Department, P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Co. 1959.

It has been suggested repeatedly that paediatric anaesthesia carries a disproportionately high mortality. Statistical reports . . . show anaesthetic deaths to be higher in the first decade than in any other until the seventh decade is reached. Similarly, a survey on cardiac arrest reported by Stephenson and Reid points to an alarmingly high incidence of this complication during paediatric anaesthesia.

The above opening paragraph to Chapter 30 of this book, and subsequent analysis of the factors upon which it is based, provide ample evidence that the safe management of anaesthesia in infants and children differs in certain important respects from standard practices in adults.

In this book, Dr. Smith has provided an outline of the specialized physiological and anatomical considerations upon which paediatric anaesthesia is based. From a vast practical experience he has succeeded most admirably in assembling more information concerning the basic response of children to anaesthesia than has been available previously in one book. A noteworthy feature is the provision of apposite information concerning pathology, surgery, and paediatric medicine, and the relationship which these subjects bear to anaesthesia in the total care of the patient.

This book is a most valuable addition to anaesthetic literature in providing such full information, both theoretical and practical, in a field where very few anaesthetists have the opportunity of obtaining extensive practical experience.

A.B.B.

ANIMAL EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

Experimental Surgery. Fourth edition. By J. Markowitz, M.B.E., M.B. (Tor.), Ph.D., M.S. in Exp. Surg. (Minn.). J. Archibald, D.V.M., M.V.Sc., Dr. Med. Vet. (Giessen), M.R.C.V.S. and H.G. Downie, D.V.M., M.S. (Cornell), M.V.Sc. Pp. 800. 580 illustrations. 16 coloured plates.

£5 0s. 0d. plus 2s. 9d. postage. London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. Ltd. 1959.

This, the fourth edition of an original and valuable record of the field of experimental surgery, was the result of the happy collaboration of 3 scientists and veterinarians. The book's particular interest will be as a work of reference for those engaged in research, but every surgeon and student (graduate or not) will find it of great surgical and physiological interest.

The 35 chapters cover a great deal of work in a variety of fields, including tissue and organ transplantation and vascular surgery. Many surgical problems have been solved by means of experiments on dogs, but there is still a vast amount to be learnt. It is probable that life itself and adjustments to disease are very similar, if not identical, in all mammals, so experimental work of this nature will continue to be a source of information and instruction. On this, to a large extent, depends the advance of the science of medicine. The experimental work is discussed not only on the basis of the authors' own extensive experience, but with frequent reference to the work of other researchers in similar fields, whether positive results have been obtained or not.

Well-illustrated and documented with a comprehensive bibliography at the conclusion of each chapter, this is a most interesting book, well written and of considerable value either as a work of reference or as a textbook.

C.N.B.

SURVEY OF CONGENITAL HEART DISEASE

An Introduction to Congenital Heart Disease. By Leo Schamroth, M.B., B.Ch. (Rand), M.R.C.P.E., F.R.F.P.S. and Fay Segal, M.D. (Rand). Pp. ix + 116. 82 illustrations. 22s. 6d. net. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications Ltd. 1960.

This book has been written as a guide to the medical student or practitioner who might be bewildered by the complexity of new knowledge in this important field. The basic principles and facts about the more important conditions are presented with clarity in summary form and there are numerous well-conceived diagrams and illustrations. The beginner is thus quickly orientated and offered a useful stepping-stone to deeper study of the subject. Details of investigative and surgical techniques are, with some justification, not given, but the serious student will be disappointed by the omission of a classification of congenital heart disease and many important references in the bibliography.

L.V.